

“Marriage” And The “Bond”

Introduction. This lesson addresses two different subjects, which if properly understood, will clear up many questions that are raised and will straighten out many difficult scenarios which churches must face.

I. **Who Can Marry?**

- A. By this question we simply refer to those who have a scriptural right to marry. We must find a passage that authorizes the following people to marry. If one desires to marry or remarry and does not qualify as one that is given the right, then that marriage would be adulterous.
1. One who has never been married.
 - a) God intended that man should leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife (Matthew 19:4-5).
 - b) Paul said that marriage is honorable among all men (Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 7:9, 28).
 2. One whose mate is dead.
 - a) Paul stated in Romans 7:3 that one whose mate is dead is free from the law.
 - b) This is because the bond is severed, as we will see later.
 3. One who puts away his or her mate for fornication.
 - a) Jesus gave this as the only exception in Matthew 19:9.
 - b) It is argued by some that this verse teaches that one can divorce for fornication, but cannot remarry.
 - c) However, when one looks again at Matthew 19:9, it is obvious that if the man who puts away his wife for a cause other than fornication and remarries commits adultery, then the man who puts away his wife for fornication and remarries does not commit adultery.
 4. Couples who are reconciling.
 - a) After urging the couple not to divorce, Paul said that if they do, they should remain unmarried or be reconciled (1 Corinthians 7:11).
 - b) They have a right to remarry each other. That does not suggest that they necessarily have a right to remarry someone else.
 - c) While one party may have the right to marry or remarry, the one whom he or she is marrying must also have a right or that marriage will be adulterous.
- B. Authority and the silence of the scriptures must be respected. When God is silent, we are not to take that as permission to act and speak. The silence of God is not permissive (Hebrews 7:14).
1. The very reason that we must oppose instrumental music in worship is the fact that “God spake nothing” concerning the practice.

2. This same reason is why we must oppose anyone else other than those mentioned above getting married. We must be careful that we not allow our emotions and human reasoning to justify what cannot be found in the word of God.

II. ***The Marriage And The Bond***

A. A failure to distinguish.

1. When we fail to make a distinction between the marriage and the bond, our terminology becomes confusing.
2. A lot is said today about being married "in the eyes of men" and married "in the eyes of God." The same is true of divorce (e.g., divorced "in the eyes of men" and divorced "in the eyes of God").
3. A distinction is made between marriage (or divorce) that is "real" and "legal." If God approves, we are told that it is "real," but if God does not approve, it is not "real," but only married or divorced "accommodatively." Thus, to them there is no such thing as an unscriptural marriage, for if it is unscriptural, it is not really a marriage.

B. A difference exists between the two.

1. Marriage is a relationship entered into by agreement and ratified by compliance with civil law. The bond is a covenant with God that joins one to his mate.
2. When a couple scripturally marry, God "joins" them together (Matthew 19:6). God does the joining and only God can do the loosing.
3. The "law of her husband" refers to the bond or the "law which binds the wife to her husband" (Romans 7:2).
4. Notice that we are bound "by the law" to our mate. I believe that the law that binds us is God's law of one mate for life (Genesis 1:27; 2:24).

C. It is possible to be bound to one and married to another.

1. This is obviously the case in Romans 7:2-3. This woman is "bound by the law to her husband" even though she is "married to another man." This is what makes the second marriage adultery.
2. It is possible for one spouse to be released from the yoke and the other spouse not released. When Jack married Jill, God yoked or "joined" them together (Matthew 19:6). However, when Jack put Jill away for fornication, God released him from the yoke, while Jill is still yoked or bound (Matthew 19:9).

D. Marriage is marriage and divorce is divorce.

1. If the marriage is scriptural and approved of God, it is a marriage. If the marriage is unscriptural and not approved of God, it is still a marriage.
2. For example, Herod had "married" Herodias (Mark 6:17). However,

John told him that it was unlawful for him to have her. Nevertheless, God said he had married her.

3. In Matthew 19:9 we read that a man who puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery. Is this scriptural? No. Are they married? Yes. In Romans 7:3, the woman is called an adulteress because she is married to another man.
4. To further emphasize the point, consider Matthew 19:9. From this verse, two points can be observed: (1) The man who puts away his wife (for a cause other than fornication) and marries another commits adultery. (2) The man who puts away his wife (for fornication) and marries another does not commit adultery.
5. When Jesus said, "marries another," did He mean "really married" or "married only in the eyes of men?" In the text, Jesus only used the term "marries" one time. Thus, if He meant "really married" then both of the above men are really married, whether God approved or not. If Jesus meant that they were not really married, but only "in the eyes of men," then both of the above men are married "only in the eyes of men." The same is true of "put away" (divorce) in both cases.

E. Four positions.

1. One can be bound and scripturally married (Matthew 19:5-6; Romans 7:2).
2. One can be bound and unmarried (1 Corinthians 7:10-11).
3. One mate can be bound and unmarried while the other mate is free to remarry (Matthew 19:9).
4. One mate can be bound to his first mate while unscripturally married to another (Mark 6:17-18; Romans 7:2-3).

F. Loosing.

1. Loosing is what God does since He does the joining (Matthew 19:6). Divorce does not necessarily loose one.
2. As we have seen in Romans 7:2-3, it is even possible to marry another and be bound to the first mate.

G. Arguments considered.

1. Paul told a woman who is unmarried to be reconciled to her husband (1 Corinthians 7:11). The argument is that she was both unmarried and married (unmarried in the eyes of men and married to her first mate in the eyes of God). However, the word "husband" is translated from the Greek aner which is simply the word for "man." Thus, this woman is to be reconciled to the man to whom she is bound.
2. Mark 6:17-18 tells us that Herod was married to Philip's wife. The argument is that she was married (really) to Philip, but only in the "eyes of men" to Herod. The word "wife" is translated from the

Greek gune which is simply the word for "woman." Phillip was the man to whom Herodias was bound. The terms "husband" and "wife" do not always refer to one who is presently married (Romans 7:2-3; Luke 20:28).

Conclusion. It is with great hope that this will help us to discern truth from error and allow us to help those who are in adulterous relationships or prevent someone from entering into an adulterous relationship.

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