

Marriage and Divorce

Introduction:

Questions often arise as to what the Bible says about marriage and divorce. Our present culture teaches that it is OK for two individuals of the same gender to get married. That is not what the Bible teaches (Genesis 2:21-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13:4).

The following is a very brief discussion of a topic that is the subject of much longer studies. An excellent DVD study series on marriage is by Dr. Tony Evans entitled, "Kingdom Marriage."

The following questions will be examined:

- 1) What is God's definition of marriage?
- 2) What is the purpose of marriage?
- 3) What are the benefits and blessings of marriage?
- 4) What are "legitimate" reasons for divorce?

Definition:

- As defined in the study series, "Kingdom Marriage" by Dr. Tony Evans, "Marital unity involves a husband and wife combining their unique talents and gifts with a oneness of purpose to advance God's kingdom". Others have variations of that definition but I really like how he defines marriage, with an emphasis on "unity."
- See the Bible passages in the opening paragraph above.

Purpose:

- To reflect God's image; "Oneness" of marriage reflects the "oneness" of the Trinity and "oneness" of Jesus Christ (the "Groom") and the Church (His "Bride"). (John 17:20-26; Revelation 19:7)
- To bring glory and honor to God as we practice selfless love to Him and one other.
- An exercise of "**covenant**"; not a "contract," and not a "convenience."
- To have children. Blessed is he whose "quiver is full of them" (Psalm 127:3-5).

Benefits and blessings:

- Another comment by Dr. Tony Evans in "Kingdom Marriage" states, "Married couples will enjoy God's blessings and inheritance as long as they stay under the "umbrella" of His marriage covenant."
- "Completeness" by God's design
- Companionship and help (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).
- Romantic and sexual fulfillment that far exceeds the "cheap substitutes" offered by the world.

Cheap substitutes for marriage:

- Adultery (sex outside of one's marriage)
- Fornication (sex when unmarried)
- Pornography (virtual sex)
- Masturbation (self-sex)

Legitimate biblical reasons for divorce (note that whatever the reasons may be, God hates divorce (Malachi 2:14-16):

- Marital unfaithfulness / adultery (Matthew 5:32, 19:3-9)
- If an unbelieving spouse leaves a believing spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-16)

Why does God hate divorce:

- We are made in His image and are brought together as "one flesh" **never** to be separated. That is His design and intent for the institution of marriage. (Genesis 1:26, 2:24; Matthew 19:3-6)

(See past studies on marriage at www.awordoftruth.com)