

Captive's Corner



"Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"

2 Corinthians 10:5

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Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

A marriage involves a total commitment of two individuals to one another knowing full well that they will be unable in their fallen state to totally satisfy one another. The covenant bond is, thus, critical, because it demands faithfulness in the face of unfulfilled needs. It is an agreement that goes beyond the two individuals because it involves the action of God to make of two one - Matthew

A lasting relationship should begin with an emphasis on the spiritual nurturing of one another. As believers in Christ, we need to set our standards and guide our conduct by His example and His Word and not by the patterns of our culture - Romans 12:1-2 and 1 Peter 1:13-16.

19:4-6. Marriage is seen to be a picture of Christ's relationship to the church - Ephesians 5:22-33. Thus, marriage involves a sacred agreement that is to reflect the spiritual covenant between God and His people. Some would say that if you make a commitment to someone and will be responsible, then its O.K. to have sexual relationships outside of marriage. Perhaps some think

this way because their thoughts are so contrary to God. In God's Word we learn that love is patient. Love can wait. Love thinks first of the other person's good. Lust is impatient, impulsive, selfish. Dare we humans change His order because of our unwillingness to pledge fidelity?

We live in a society that has male/female relationships turned upside down. It stresses the physical side of the relationship rather than the spiritual side. This is wrong. A lasting relationship should begin with

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an emphasis on the spiritual nurturing of one another. Then, as the two souls become more intimate and God's will for them to be one becomes evident, a covenant (marriage) is entered into that allows for the total sharing of two lives - spirit/ soul/ body. We are being

constantly bombarded with thoughts of impurity. In many cases the "abnormal" has become the "normal." As believers in Christ, we need to set our standards and guide our conduct by His example and His Word and not by the patterns of our culture - Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 1:13-16.

The first marriage of a man and a woman took place in the garden of Eden when God made Eve from Adam's rib and gave her to him as a helper comparable to him. Adam declared her to be "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." From this point on in the history of man, a man would leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they would become one flesh, joined

together by God Himself. This union was to be permanent - Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:3-6.

Sadly, the fall of man in the garden of Eden greatly affected the experience of this union.

God understands and is grieved by the hardness of men's hearts, and because of this hardness He permitted divorce and remarriage - Matthew 5:27-28; 19:7-12.

Immediately, the man and woman became self-conscious and accusative of one another. From this point on in the history of man, the marriage relationship would

be marred by the sin that affects all mankind. This union would now someday be ended by physical death - Genesis 3:1-24; 5:1-5.

Sadly, men abused the marriage relationship leading Moses to allow for divorce as an instrument to protect the woman. Later in the history of Israel, God's people were commanded to divorce their wives in order to put away the influence of foreign gods. However, Malachi made it clear that God hated the unfaithfulness of a man

Later, Paul would further reveal that a believing man or woman was free to divorce and remarry if the unbelieving partner deserted, for God has called us to peace - 1 Corinthians 7:12-16.

to his wife by covenant, for marriage was meant to be the institution that would secure a godly remnant. It was a treacherous act to put away one's wife in order to marry

another. Such an act was an abomination to God and of alien origin - Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Ezra 10:1-44; Malachi 2:10-16.

Jesus made it quite plain that He recognized all too well the evil heart in men. To even lust for a woman was to already commit adultery with her in the heart. God understands and is grieved by the hardness of men's hearts, and because of this hardness He permitted divorce and remarriage. He also made it clear that an actual act of immorality was grounds enough to dissolve the marriage contract. However, He never commanded

that we must divorce under such conditions. Later, Paul would further reveal that a believing man or woman was

Christ's redemptive work and our response to Him is the basis upon which we believers can live in restored relationships with our mates. Those who know Christ are thus told that they may separate while they work toward reconciliation. They are not to divorce - Ephesians 5:22-33; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11.

free to divorce and remarry if the unbelieving partner deserted, for God has called us to peace - Matthew 5:27-28; 19:7-12; 1Corinthians 7:12-16. For Paul to teach on the proper relationship of a husband with his wife, he had to draw upon the relationship of Christ with His people. Christ's redemptive work and our response to Him is the basis upon which we believers can live in restored

relationships with our mates. Those who know Christ are thus told that they may separate while they work toward reconciliation. They are not to divorce - Ephesians 5: 22-33; 1Corinthians 7: 10-11.

Obviously, there is much teaching and training that needs to be done in order to equip us to be faithful to our mates and to live together in right relationship to one another. The fact that many fail in this should not be a surprise nor a reason for their being shunned. We must all work toward the ideal while being realistic in our dealings with those who have fallen short. **The blood of Christ is adequate to cleanse our sins, including the sins that result in the breaking of a marriage covenant** - Colossians 3:18-19; Titus 2:1-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7; 1 John 1:5-2:2.

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