

When God's Word Doesn't Seem to Make Sense **Man's Wisdom on Marriage**

Intro: Nowhere does man's wisdom and God's will clash more strongly than marriage.

1. Trial Marriage

- A. Human reasoning: Choosing the right person to marry is so important that it makes sense to live together to test compatibility. *Short answer:* Heb 13:4; Eph 5:5. God condemns fornication for *any* reason: rape, recreation, etc.
- B. Fallacy: Couples who cohabit and then marry have *higher* divorce rates. Why?
1. Living together without commitment is artificial. Lack of commitment leaves an "out" if things go sour. This is immature, irresponsible outlook cannot handle commitment if/when it comes.
 2. Disguised selfishness, a rationalization. Privileges of sex without obligations.
 3. Healthy sexual intimacy demands commitment/trust. We cannot "casualize" sex without destroying its beneficence. *Sexual sins are different* – 1 Cor 6:18. It is a unique mingling of body *and* soul, part of the one flesh fusion of two people (6:16). This is why our sex-drenched, hedonistic "cast off all restraints" society is full of miserable, neurotic people.
- C. Correct approach: Evaluate prospective marriage partners on grounds of character and spirituality that will insure (as far as possible) compatibility as friends, lovers, Christians, parents, retirees. Practical considerations: *How does he/she ...*
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| 1. Handle an automobile? | 4. Absorb defeat? |
| 2. Treat their parents? | 5. Value worship, Bible study, prayer? |
| 3. Spend money? | 6. View the future? Goals? Ambition? |

2. Multiple Marriages

- A. Human reasoning: How does God expect us to stay interested in the same person for life. **Illus:** Tim Hamrick – "The reason I did not get married until 30 was my uncertainty of whether or not I could be satisfied with one person." *Short answer:* Mt 19:4-6; Rom 7:2-3 – God has the right to regulate marriage.
- B. Fallacy:

1. "Variety" applies to matters of self-gratification, entertainment and lack of commitment: golf courses, hair dos, restaurants, etc. But when it comes to children, doctors, schools, political views, ***variety gives way to loyalty!***
 2. Such an outlook views people as disposable, commodity.
 3. It also ignores the welfare of the children born to the union (as does the "trial marriage" concept). Musical marriages have done irreparable harm to children who have been shoved aside, shuffled around and shamed by the immature antics of their parents.
- C. Correct approach: A lifetime of commitment to one person is full of exploration, experience and education. The scars, wrinkles and gray hair are signs of growth, honor, fidelity and character. *We truly find ourselves by giving ourselves outside ourselves.* People today are looking for themselves in the wrong place.

3. Second Chances

- A. Human reasoning: If marriage doesn't work out, people deserve a second chance to find someone who will make them happy. *Short answer:* Mt 19:9 (and related passages: Mt 5:31-32; Mk 10:7-12; Lk 16:18). Divorcing on unlawful grounds makes the parties of all subsequent unions *adulterers*.
- B. Fallacy: Should God's marital law be altered for extenuating circumstances?
1. What about marrying too young? Debt? Illness? Neglect? There are many sad, tragic circumstances wherein an innocent spouse is unfulfilled by but obligated to a less-than-worthy person.
 2. **Illus:** Crime. Many sad cases of neglected, abused teens who were pushed over the edge into crime. Should we excuse them? Does it nullify personal responsibility?
 3. As our society degenerates and we become more frivolous, irresponsible and unprincipled, should we *change* the law to reflect this or *preserve* the law as a beacon to show us where we ought to be?
- C. Correct approach: Teach children to respect God's design for marriage, instill in them the kind of character to honor their mate for life and search for someone who will do likewise.

Conclusion: Pr 14:12 – "*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.*" Our society is **dying** in large measure by the rejection of God's word concerning marriage and family. Let's be part of the solution rather than the problem.