

# **LET THE BIBLE SPEAK SERIES**

## **LEGAL BUT WRONG**

### **DIVORCE AND SAME SEX MARRIAGES**

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The family is the most basic and ancient of all institutions, and it remains the fundamental social unit in every society. All societies do not treat marriage, divorce and remarriage alike. In all western nations, the law insists that a man have only one wife at a time and a woman only one husband at a time. This ideal, however, is held by a minority of societies in the world.

In a cross-cultural study George Murdock (1949) found that of 238 mostly pre-industrial societies, only 43 insisted on restricting marriage to one mate at a time. In 4 of the remaining societies a woman was permitted to have more than one husband, and all the rest permitted husbands to have more than one wife at a time.

The divorce rate in the United States is the highest in the world, with fifty percent of all recent marriages ending in divorce. The average duration of a marriage is seven years. The rate of divorce among second marriages is sixty-three percent, and eighty percent for third marriages. Divorce is most common among urban couples, those who marry young, those who have known each other for only a short time, and those having relatives or friends who disapprove of the marriage.

Marriage is ordained and regulated by God. Genesis 2:24-25 "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh..." Matthew 19: 4-6 "And he answered and said unto them. Have ye not read, that the which made them at the beginning made them male and female. And said For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall twain be one flesh? Wherefore they are no longer twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

From these verses it is evident that God intends for one husband to be joined to one wife for life. God did make two women to be wives for Adam. He did not make two males to be husbands for Eve. God joins the husband and wife together. This union takes priority over parental loyalties. This union is for life and second marriages are adulterous. This is God's general rule for marriage. Jesus said "what therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Paul said "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." 1Corinthians 7:10-11.

General rules, however, have exceptions. In Psalms 90:10 we are told that "the days of our years are threescore and ten." That is the general rule. However this same verse contains an exception: "and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years..." In other words there are exceptions to the general rule that a man's life span is seventy years. Some by reason of strength live longer.

Jesus gave an exception to the general rule that marriage is to be for life. In Matthew 19:9 he said "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another committeth adultery..." Hence, divorce and remarriage are only acceptable in a situation where fornication has been committed. Because of this exception one may divorce his guilty companion and marry again without committing adultery. Divorce for any other cause may be legal, but it is not right in the eyes of God. Man has legalized divorce for any reason, God has not.

### **Same Sex Marriages**

The headline read "Massachusetts lawmakers recess without gay marriage ban" February 13, 2004. This was because on February 4, 2004 the Massachusetts court ruled that the ban on gay marriage was unconstitutional. From the west coast we read "More than 50 gay couples are married in San Francisco Feb. 13, 2004." California law states that "only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California. Nonetheless, the San Francisco county clerk issued the women an official marriage certificate and said the act was legal. The women were married by the county assessor. The next day it was even worse. Over 600 weddings took place for gay couples on Valentine's day. Although this is shocking, this type of assault on marriage is nothing new. Portions of our culture have been rejecting God's teaching on marriage for a long time. Over 100 years ago, the Mormons tried to institute polygamy. The government nearly destroyed the Mormon church before they complied with United States law. Then laws were enforced at gun point and the Mormons only surrendered their extra wives because they knew that the government was more than willing to shoot. The hippies of the previous generation experimented with communal marriage. Others went even further, suggesting that marriage itself be ended. This latest assault is designed to devalue marriage to the point that homosexual relationships are viewed as being equal to what God gave. However, homosexual marriage is not an extension or promotion of marriage; it is another step on the path of putting an end to it.

Homosexual marriage is wrong for the following reasons:

1. It is completely contrary to God's law.

Genesis 2:24 "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife and they twain shall be one flesh." Jesus teaches the same principle in Matthew 19:4-6. If homosexuality is condemned in the scriptures, and it is, (Romans 1:26-27; Leviticus 18:22) what makes anyone think God will smile on a union of two homosexuals?

2. Homosexual marriage harms marriage in general.

Stanley Kurtz a former Harvard anthropologist wrote "Same sex marriage has locked in and reinforced an existing Scandinavian trend toward the separation of marriage and parenthood...instead of encouraging a society-wide return to marriage...gay marriage has driven home the message that marriage itself is outdated, and that virtually any family form, including out-of-wedlock parenthood is acceptable."

3. Homosexual marriage fosters immorality in society and in other areas.

Sweden, Denmark, and Norway all of whom have incorporated full homosexual marriage rights over the past ten to fifteen years have seen jumps in out-of-wedlock births since they legalized homosexual marriage. The deterioration of the traditional family structure has ushered in an era where increasing numbers of children are born outside of marriage. How then can homosexual marriage strengthen the family? It will obviously weaken the overall family structure.

4. Homosexual marriages give a false impression of respectability to homosexual unions

Why does the homosexual bother with marriage? What do they expect to accomplish if it is not to give some respectability to this sordid and sinful behavior? If the homosexual rebels and ridicules God's law on homosexuality, what makes us think they respect God's law concerning marriage, commitment, fidelity etc. that comes with the union of two people in marriage?

5. Homosexual marriages are not just a political issue, but a moral issue as well. In fact, it is first and foremost a moral issue. The liberals have tried to move the issue of homosexual rights and now homosexual marriage off the moral table and into the "civil rights" arena which is purely political. This, however, is not a civil rights issue. It is a moral one. And while it may be legal in some States and Nations, it is clearly wrong. It is a slap in the face off God, and a denial of His sacred laws. All God fearing people must oppose it.