

Marriage

Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4). Marriage is a relationship that God instituted at creation for the benefit of mankind. The man and woman must make the decision to get and be married. They must meet the requirements of God to get married and they must meet the requirements of the state. Upon meeting these requirements, God joins them together in the bonds of holy matrimony.

While the marriage relationship is honorable, precious, valuable, and esteemed; there are times when it is best not to be married. Paul discusses this type of situation in 1 Corinthians 7. Because of “the present distress” (1 Corinthians 7:26) it would be better to remain, as Paul, unmarried. He recognized that because of “the present distress” that those married would have “trouble in the flesh” (1 Corinthians 7:28). However, even during these times, it was not sinful to marry—inexpedient at the time, but not wrong.

There are also cases where an individual must remain unmarried. When the Pharisees tempted Jesus concerning the lawfulness of a man putting away his wife for every cause, Jesus gave the correct teaching. God designed marriage to

be one man for one woman for life. Man is not to put his wife away (Matthew 19:3-6). They continued to press him since Moses allowed them to give her a writing of divorcement and put her away. Jesus teaches that it has never been God’s intent for a husband and wife to divorce: “For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away” (Malachi 2:16). The disciples then state: “If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry” (Matthew 19:10). Jesus teaches them that not all can remain unmarried, but some cannot marry.

All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother’s womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it (Matthew 19:11-12).

John was involved with the situation of Herod and Herodias. They had married, but John told Herod: “It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife” (Mark 6:18). They did not have the right to be married to each other, thus they did not have the right to get married. Since not all have the right to get married, we must find out who has the authority from God to get married.

Those who have never been married have the God-given right to get married. In the discussion of “the present dis-

tre,” Paul shows that those who have never been married have the right to get married.

I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn (1 Corinthians 7:8-9).

Then he adds that “if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned” (1 Corinthians 7:28). He additionally tells fathers of virgin daughters that they do well for giving them in marriage. “So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well” (1 Corinthians 7:38).

A second group is those who have lost their mate by death.

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man (Romans 7:2-3).

Paul also discusses this matter in answering questions regarding marriage.

The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord (1 Corinthians 7:39).

Thus, if a couple gets married and one of them dies, then the mate who still lives has the right to remarry.

Then the one who put away their mate because their mate has committed

fornication. The general rule is if you divorce, you sin—you commit adultery.

And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery (Mark 10:11-12).

Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery (Luke 16:18).

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 (1 Corinthians 7:10-11; see also verse 39 cited previously).

Go back and reread Romans 7:2-3.

These plainly teach that once you are married, you stay married; you divorce, you sin. Possibly we have been guilty of discussing the exception to such an extent we have forgotten the principle.

The Bible does reveal an exception to this rule. When a mate commits fornication, God allows the one not guilty of fornication to put their fornicating mate away.

But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery (Matthew 5:32).

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication,

and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery (Matthew 19:9).

The innocent party has the right (it is not required) to put away the fornicator and marry another without committing adultery. God does not give that right to the guilty party (the one guilty of fornication); He gives the right to the innocent party and only the innocent party.

Those within these three groups: the person who has never married, the person who has lost their mate by death, and the person who puts away a fornicating mate have the right to marry. All others sin—commit fornication. They must, if they want to go to heaven, get out of any and all sinful relationship.



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