

Theme: Cohabitation is different in both purpose and practice from marriage, does not fit the biblical parameters for marriage and thus does not benefit the individuals or society.

## I. Intro – Modern Alternatives To Marriage

- A. Finished with subsection on choosing mate
- B. These texts show God's institution of marriage
- C. Is marriage still relevant today? A look ahead
  - 1. What does Bible teach about marriage?
  - 2. What about modern alternatives?
  - 3. Are the alternatives biblically acceptable?
  - 4. Do they work?
- D. A word about sources – *Case for Marriage*
  - 1. I will give many statistics in coming weeks
  - 2. Most from *Case for Marriage*
  - 3. Will note if from other sources

## II. Our Modern Marriage Confusion

- A. Modern confusion over marriage
  - 1. Confusion & attack - *Marriage*, 1
  - 2. Cohabitation, gay marriage, vowless marriage

## B. Why this matters

- 1. Undermines ability to marry successfully – *Marriage*, 3
- 2. Undermines marriage itself – *Marriage*, 11

## III. The Biblical Institution of Marriage

- A. Four key points (more later) – both texts
  - 1. Instituted by God – He defines
  - 2. A union of man and woman – two become one
  - 3. A lifelong bond – till death do us part
  - 4. A bond initiated by covenant vows (Mal 2:14-15)
- B. Anything violating these points is **NOT** marriage
  - 1. We may not define it as we choose & change
  - 2. We may not choose to remain separate
  - 3. We may not choose to split up at random
  - 4. It must begin with covenant vows

## IV. Is Cohabitation Marriage?

- A. A popular choice – even with Christians!
  - 1. Growing in popularity (W&G, 36)
  - 2. 33% of 18-35 Brit evangelicals support (Evangelical Alliance Survey)

## B. Is it marriage?

1. Cohabitors and public say no (W&G, 37)
2. God does not consider it marriage
  - a. God did not define it – modern arrangement
  - b. It is not a union – try to stay independent (W&G, 44-45, 73)
  - c. It is not lifelong (W&G, 37-38)
  - d. It does not begin with vows

## C. Cohabitation does not work!

1. Less sexually satisfied – back - (W&G, 83)
2. More infidelity –men 4x; women 8x (W&G, 39)
3. Financially – marriage = to 12 to 14% annuity at 30; 30% at 75 (114)
4. Abuse – 62 times more likely in cohabitation (Agape, W&G, 155-157)
5. Child abuse – 2% of nonparent childcare; 50% of nonparent abuse (159)
6. Breakup – Agape Report – see back
7. No support after breakup – 8% get child support; 43% of married do

## V. Conclusion & Summary

### A. Don't let your thoughts be shaped by culture

1. Cohabitation is not the same as marriage
2. Cohabitation should not be treated like marriage

### 3. It is merely a convenient way to sin!

### B. The path of blessing and curse

1. God's word works!
2. Cohabitation does not work – it is disobedience
3. We encourage people to obey God – and be blessed!

### C. The challenge to radically obey God

## Is Cohabitation the Same As Marriage?

Genesis 2:22-24; Matthew 19:3-6

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Communion

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In America over the last thirty years, we've done something unprecedented. We have managed to transform marriage, the most basic and universal of human institutions, into something controversial. Waite and Gallagher, 1

Americans are still the marrying kind. But our ideas about what marriage means have changed in subtle ways that undermine our ability – as individuals or as a society – to achieve the goals of wedlock, creating a lasting love between a man and a woman, and a firm bond of mutual support between a mother and a father. Waite and Gallagher, 3

Marriage can work its miracles only if it is supported by the whole society. Marriage cannot thrive, and may not even survive, in a culture that views it as just another lifestyle option. Waite and Gallagher, 11.

First Second Third

14 You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you **have broken faith with her**, though she is your partner, **the wife of your marriage covenant**. 15 **Has not the LORD made them one?** In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not **break faith with the wife of your youth**. Malachi 2:14-15

In 1970 there was one cohabiting couple for every one-hundred married couple households. Now there are eight couples living together for every one hundred married couples. Waite and Gallagher, 36

What some social scientists predicted – a virtual blurring of the social boundaries between marriage and cohabitation – has not taken place. Both the general public and cohabiters themselves typically make a sharp distinction between marriage and living together. Cohabitation is not “just like marriage” but rather an emerging social lifestyle with a different set of social meanings, which generally serves different purposes. W&G, 37

If the great theme of marriage is union, the counterpoint of cohabitation is individualism. In contrast, cohabiters, by and large, cherish their individual freedom. “Cohabitation is attractive as an alternative to marriage not only because it is a tentative, nonlegal form of a coresidential union, but more broadly, because it accommodates a very different style of life” concluded Waite, Clarkberg, and Stoltenberg. W&G, 44-45

Researchers have found that a desire to maintain one's autonomy - to keep a life apart – is one of the prime factors that drives individuals toward cohabitation over marriage. W&G, 73

The primary difference between marriage and cohabitation in contemporary American culture has to do with time horizons and commitment. What makes marriage unique...is the vow of permanence....Cohabitation by contrast is seen by partners and society as a temporary arrangement....For many cohabiters, the idea of a relatively easy exit with no well defined responsibilities constitutes cohabitation's biggest attraction. (W&G, 37-38)

Sexually – 48% married extremely emotionally satisfied, vs 37% of cohabiters; ; 50% vs 39 physically; women closer but still better in marriage

Only 44% of cohabiters ever marry, and of those who do, 75% will divorce before children reach 16, as opposed to 33% of children born to married couples. (Agape Press story, November 29, 2005)