

Theme: Jesus taught that God made humans male or female and that marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman. Therefore any alternative ideas of “marriage” or contexts for sexual activity violate God’s design and intent.

I. Intro - Chaos in the Family - Then and Now!

- A. For many years marriage was clear in America - one man and one woman in a life-long bond
- B. The sexual revolution of the 1960s challenged this
- C. Free love, cohabitation, and no-fault divorce accepted
- D. Obergefell decision (2015) legalized same-sex marriage
- E. Today polyamory is on the rise - “How Did Polyamory Become So Popular?” - New Yorker, 12/25/2023
- F. The 1st century also saw many similar issues
- G. How do disciples live? What is God’s will for marriage?
- H. A plea to hear and do further study - I can’t cover everything today (see more teachings in the booklet)
- I. We will take three weeks to cover various questions regarding marriage and divorce.
- J. Also After Hours and previous teachings

II. Jesus and the Definition of Marriage

- A. Confusion over what Jesus taught about marriage
 - 1. In the wake of all this cultural confusion, some have said Jesus never spoke about marriage.
 - 2. This betrays a faulty understanding of God’s Word
 - 3. I will deal with this more in After Hours

4. But Jesus DID speak about this topic in our text!

B. Jesus’ teaching on the marriage

“But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’⁷ ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,⁸ and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one.⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.” Mark 10:6-9

- 1. Jesus goes to Scripture to define marriage
- 2. There are four key pillars of all true marriage
 - a. Human beings are created male or female
 - b. Marriage is the union of a male and female
 - c. Marriage is the union of one man and one woman
 - d. Marriage is the union of one man and woman for life
- 3. Jesus clearly defines all four as essential to marriage
 - a. He combines two texts (Genesis 1:27; 2:24)
 - b. The texts are part of the creation narrative - they define the nature of marriage as given by God before human culture even exists
 - c. The texts are part of the creation narrative - they define the nature of marriage for all humans, not just God’s covenant people
 - d. Jesus adds the word “two” to bring out the original situation and intent of God
 - e. Jesus indicates that when marriage is built on these four parameters God actively creates a new marriage union
- 4. Theme statement

III. A Look At Modern Alternatives

A. Living together is not marriage

Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?”³ “What did Moses command you?” he replied. ⁴ They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.” Mark 10:2-4

1. Some say that marriage is a meaningless piece of paper & that they are “married” in the eyes of God.
2. Notice that Jesus is dealing with marriage and divorce - binding legal covenants
3. True marriage is a binding covenant that requires legal proceedings to end while living together is simply playing house.
4. Try to apply this to buying a house or car, or a legal adoption - no one would do this!
5. All sexual activity outside of marriage is sinful, no matter how much a person declares their love for another.
6. Living together is not an alternate form of marriage but simply the context for perpetual sexual sin.

B. Same-sex or transgender “marriage” is not marriage

“But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’⁷ ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife’ Mark 10:6-7

1. Marriage is the union of male and female.
2. Humans are created by God as either male or female; man, wife, father, mother - clear distinctions

3. This is not a modern (or ancient) cultural or social construct - it is God’s design and command that is woven into the entire cosmos.
4. This is NOT a call for harshly judging, demeaning, or mistreating anyone with same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria.
5. Every single human - including those who experience same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria - is created in the image of God and must be treated with love, and compassion, and pointed to Jesus.
6. Heterosexual sex outside of one man and woman married to each other is a sin - and we must not simply focus on sins we dislike while winking at others that are more common or respectable.
7. This teaching is unpopular in our culture but we must let Scripture form our thoughts and guide our actions.

C. Polygamy and polyamory are not marriage

‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,⁸ and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one. Mark 10:7-8

1. As noted above Genesis only implies ‘two’ but Jesus explicitly states it.
2. Faithful Jews rarely practiced polygamy in Jesus’ day but Jesus indicates it is not part of God’s original design and intent for marriage.
3. Polyamory was never allowed among God’s people.
4. What about polygamy in the Old Testament?
 - a. Abraham, Jacob, and David all had multiple wives

- b. The answer is the same as the question regarding divorce - this was God's permission due to our sin and hard hearts.
- c. But this was not God's intent, and under the new covenant polygamy was not to be practiced (this is why an elder has to be the 'husband of one wife - not a polygamist).
- d. NOTE: Because polygamy and divorce (serial monogamy) were still the union of male and female, God allowed them under the Old Covenant, but He NEVER allowed same-sex unions because they violate the male-female union which is the heart of marriage.
- e. Marriage is given to allow the intense union of two people - and we can not do this with many partners.
- f. This is why polyamory is an even grosser violation of marriage than polygamy or polyandry - it vitiates the union of two people.

D. No-fault divorce (serial monogamy) is not marriage

'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, ⁸ and the two will become one flesh.' **So they are no longer two, but one. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."**

Mark 10:7-9

- 1. I covered this last week and will only briefly speak about it now.
- 2. When marriage vows are taken, God actually unites two people into one in a lifelong bond.
- 3. No-fault divorce is a moral and intellectual oxymoron, and it undermines and destroys the very foundations of marriage in the culture at large.
- 4. This is why we must do all we can to foster the marriage union - more on this in 2 weeks.

- E. Marriage was created and given by God to be the lifelong union of one man and one woman, and all "alternatives" critically undermine and obliterate true marriage with massive damage to individuals and society.

IV. Applying the Word

- A. Is my mind being shaped by my culture or God's Word?
 - 1. Greco-Roman culture was far different than what Jesus taught as the truth for marriage!
 - 2. Even Jewish culture had drifted far from God's original intent!
 - 3. There is incredible pressure in our culture to form our minds contrary to God's Word on human sexuality and marriage.
 - 4. The sexual revolution of the 1960's has expanded into the LGBTQ+ sexual revolution of today and there is immense pressure to approve and applaud the sexual and marital choices of everyone.
 - 5. All of us probably also know someone we love who has embraced one or more of these false ideas and practices of marriage. This makes this question emotionally and relationally very difficult.
 - 6. But God's Word is abundantly clear on this topic, from Genesis 1 to the end of Revelation!
 - 7. As disciples of Christ, we must embrace the truth as revealed in God's Word regardless of the cost - this is part of bearing the cross of Christ.
 - 8. Has my mind been shaped by God's Word so that I see the utter lunacy and destructiveness of our culture's ideas regarding sexuality and marriage?

9. Has my mind been shaped by God's Word so that I see the glorious beauty and truth of God's will regarding sexuality and marriage?

10. Study this more - see discussion guide teachings

B. Am I glorifying God with my body?

1. This is not just about theoretical ideas - it must guide my actions!
2. We are to glorify God with how we use our bodies sexually!

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. 1 Cor. 6:18-20

- a. Paul had just quoted Genesis 2:24 (like Jesus) regarding sexual activity apart from the marriage of one man and one woman.
- b. As disciples it is not enough to know sexual immorality - in any of the forms discussed today - is wrong; we must actively FLEE from it!
- c. Our culture says "My body, my choice" but my body is NOT mine - it belongs to God!
- d. God dwells in me, I am not my own, I must glorify God in my bodily actions related to sex and marriage!

3. This is a universal call for all disciples

- a. The only context for sexual activity is a man and a woman who are married to one another.
- b. This requires all of us to submit our desires to Jesus and obey God's Word rather than our impulses.

c. This means my identity is found in Christ - not my sexual desires, activity, or identity.

C. The Wedding Supper of the Lamb

1. This Table reminds us that the ultimate marriage is between Jesus and His Bride, the Church!
2. We are to live in light of the Day of the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, when we will eat and drink with Jesus!
3. Come and renew our vows with Jesus!
4. I Am Not My Own as elements are passed out

Lessons for Disciples - Marriage (Part 2)

Mark 10:1-12
March 3, 2024
Communion
Acts 20:32

Teaching keywords: Marriage and family; LGBTQ+; sexual sin; divorce and remarriage; Kingdom of God; discipleship; creation

Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. Acts 20:32