

BAHRAIN REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH
1689 LBCF, 25: Of Marriage 1

June 7, 2024

Preliminary

Current Challenge: Do marriage and sex still together as a moral obligation?

- The marriage-prerequisite for sexual relation is now widely discarded
- Unmarried couples (domestic partnership) seem to work just fine...

Point: Keep the purity and biblical view of marriage

1. What is marriage?

[1689 BCF: xxv.1] – “Marriage is to be between one man and one woman; neither is it lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time.”

Texts: Gen 2:24; Mal 2:15; Mt 19:5–6

[EBCF: 158] – “... a life-long human male-female covenant relationship established by God in creation.”

[Christopher Ash, *A Biblical View of Marriage*] – “Marriage is of a God-given, voluntary, sexual and public social union of one man and one woman, from different families, for the purpose of serving God”

The Creation Model: Gen. 2:18-25... Note: Jesus appeals to this as ‘from the beginning’ (Mt 19:4-6, 8)

[Simon Wartanian, *1689 BCF Commentary*]- “Marriage was instituted by God in the Garden, before the Fall on day six. The Lord wanted to find for Adam a mate, so He brought to him all the animals, yet “for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him” (Gen 2:20). Therefore, the LORD put Adam to sleep and made a woman from his side. The Lord created a human with the same nature as Adam’s, yet, different character and with different parts which complement each other (Gen 2:22)”

(a) Permanent Bond – It was for a lifetime relationship

- *leaving father and mother* – the union of spouses takes precedence to that of parental claim... Gen 2:24
- Marriage is a life-long covenant between a man and a woman wherein God is a witness... Mal 2:15

Cleave/ Joined = Heb. דָּבַק (*dābaq*) – strongest Hebrew term to convey the idea of togetherness... Lit: used of the joining of skin and bones... Job 19:20; Ps 102:5

Jesus’ application: What God has joined together, let not man separate... Mt 19:6

(b) Eve is like Adam but not *exactly* like him

Mandate: Eve was to help and assist Adam... ‘*a helper fit for him*’ (ESV); ‘*an help meet for him*’ (KJV)

Note: Adam and Eve were equal in nature, value, and being... [More on next topic]

Point: *Help meet* = a equal companion; a sharer of his thoughts; his joy; his helper; his comforter; his affection; a second self; or one to be at hand and near to him, to stand continually before him, familiarly to converse with him

[Matthew Henry, *Commentary*] – “That the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved. Adam lost a rib, and without any diminution to his strength or comeliness (for, doubtless, the flesh was closed without a scar); but in lieu thereof he had a help meet for him, which abundantly made up his loss: what God takes away from his people he will, one way or other, restore with advantage”

(c) Exclusive relationship: *the two shall become one flesh*

one flesh – intimacy and unity with the body as medium: Physically they are two, but spiritually they should become of one mind and one soul

Implication: This is a relationship that is unique to the pair, and unshared outside the pair

Point: Sexual intercourse is a gift and a privilege only of the married couple

Beware: Sexual relationship is not for more than the two, not for less than two (not a single activity)

(d) The divine norm for marriage is monogamy

Note: There was only one Adam and one Eve from the beginning – not multiple wives.

[Waldron] – “Gen2:24; Mt 19:5-6; 1 Tim 3:2 and Titus 1:6 plainly teach that the divine norm for marriage is monogamy... The instances of polygamy among OT saints like Abraham, Jacob, David and others were violations of God’s law for marriage. Due to the lesser light of the Old Testament dispensation, such polygamy did not manifest the same degree of hardness of heart as it would today. The contracting of such polygamous marriages under gospel light would manifest a much more dangerous degree of hardness of heart.”

(e) Marriage is between two persons of the opposite sex – *male and female*

Note: There was one Adam and one Eve – homosexuality is everywhere prohibited by the Scriptures...

Biblical Presentations: Gen 18; Lev.18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:26-27; 1 Cor 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:8-11

2. What is marital sex for?

[1689 BCF: xxv.2] – “Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife,^a for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue,^b and the preventing of uncleanness^c” – (a) Gen 2:18; (b) Gen 1:28; (c) 1 Cor 7:2, 9

Error: Roman Catholicism views procreation as the only purpose of marriage

[Waldron] – “Roman Catholicism views procreation as the only purpose of marriage... Sex must not be viewed as a necessary evil given only for the purpose of procreation. However, procreation is one of the purposes of marriage.

(a) Complimentary – *For the mutual help of husband and wife...* Gen 2:18; Mal 2:4; 1 Cor 11:11-12

Note: Eve was created to supplement and be a helper for Adam and vice versa... Gen 2:18; 1 Cor 7:3-5

Point: Within marriage, sex is to be seen as (i) a gift; (ii) a right; (iii) a duty... outside of marriage, it is sinful

(b) Fruitfulness – For the increase of mankind... Gen 1:28

Implication: The building of a family with children is one commitment of marriage

Mal 2:13-15 – Purpose of ‘one flesh’ union = ‘to have godly offspring/children’ = divorced denounced

[Wartanian] – “The Lord God wanted for man to multiply and spread upon the face of the earth so that His glory will be everywhere and the earth may be filled with His praise. This mandate is still valid and goes on, especially for Christians, who should raise children in the Lord, instructing them in the things of God, living the gospel before them and praying that God may grant repentance and faith to them.”

(c) Sanctification – For preventing of uncleanness

Note: This concerns the one who cannot keep his lust in control.

Point: A healthy sexual relationship is a means of preservation from immorality

Key Text: 1 Cor 7:2-5... cf. 1 Thes 4:3-5

Implication: Marriage is the only acceptable context of sexual satisfaction... v.9

Beware: The apostle does not instruct us to find a girlfriend and fulfill our desire with her, but rather that the person who does not have self-control in this area should *marry*

3. Who should a Christian marry?

[1689 BCF: xxv.3] – “It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry, who are able with judgment to give their consent;^a yet it is the duty of Christians to marry in the Lord;^b and therefore such as profess the true religion, should not marry with infidels, or idolaters; neither should such as are godly, be unequally yoked, by marrying with such as are wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresy.^c” – (a) Heb. 13:4; 1 Tim. 4:3; (b) 1 Cor. 7:39; (c) Neh. 13:25-27

[xxv.4] – “Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity, forbidden in the Word;^a nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful, by any law of man or consent of parties, so as those persons may live together as man and wife.^b” – (a) Lev 18; (b) Mark 6:18; 1 Cor. 5:1

The Specific restriction – (Waldron)

(a) The Christian Restriction

General Rule: It is duty of Christians to marry in the Lord... 1 Cor. 7:25-40 (39); 2 Cor 6:14

➤ Christian singles should not seek that companionship with unconverted members of the opposite sex which has frequently enticed Christians to marry outside the Lord...

Texts: Prov. 1:10; 2:20; 13:20; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Tim. 2:22).

➤ Christian singles to assess biblically the Christian profession of singles of the opposite sex before becoming entangled with them in a romantic relationship.

[Wartanian] – “Christians, who profess the true religion, should not marry with infidels, or idolaters neither with they who are wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresy. In other words, Christians should only marry other good-standing Christians. The Westminster and Savoy confessions say “infidels, Papists, or other idolaters”, therefore, it is most likely that Roman Catholics are included in the category of idolaters, otherwise in the category of they who maintain damnable heresy.”

(b) The Natural restriction

Beware: No one may marry within the degrees of consanguinity and affinity forbidden in the Word of God...

Lev 18:6-18; Mk 6:18; 1 Cor 5:1