

Of What Does Marriage Consist?

TEXT: Heb. 13:4

INTRODUCTION:

- A. CONFUSION OVER WHAT CONSTITUTES MARRIAGE.
- B. LET'S NOT MAKE DISTINCTIONS THE BIBLE DOESN'T MAKE.
- C. AGREE TO LOOK OBJECTIVELY, DISCOUNTING EMOTIONS AND PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS.

I. GOD HIGHLY ESTEEMS MARRIAGE.

- A. GOD'S WISDOM REFLECTED(**Isa. 55:8-9; Gen. 2:18**).
- B. **Eph. 5:25-32**. COMPARISON - MARRIAGE/CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.
- C. HOW IMPORTANT IS THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP?
 - 1. Marriage is sacred, ordained by God(**Mat. 19:6**).
 - 2. The unmarried state is undesirable(**Gen. 2:18**).
 - 3. Yet, in some instances, the celibate state is demanded by God in order to avoid adultery(**1 Cor. 7:10-11**).
 - 4. Difficulty in understanding this last point results from a **materialistic, social** view held by many toward the marital union. **Society determines acceptability**.
 - 5. Such a view **regards marriage as the most important relationship**, absolutely vital to happiness. Therefore, **some are even willing to relinquish eternal life to preserve a marital union**, though it be unscriptural.
 - 6. Is the marital relationship the most important?
 - a. **Luke 14:26...Our relationship to God is most important.**
 - b. The greatest source of happiness is seen as being achieved in men and women's relationship to God, **not to each other**(**Mat. 6:33**).
 - c. Marriage is **important**, but **not "vital."** Certainly, it is not vital to eternal life(**Mat. 19:12**).
 - d. What it all boils down to is this: Am I more interested in the present gratification of this temporary life, or am I more interested in my relationship to God?

II. TO BE MARRIED, THESE ELEMENTS ARE INVOLVED:

- A. AGREEMENT.
- B. CIVIL SANCTION.
- C. COHABITATION.

III. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "MARRIED" AND "BOUND."

- A. **"BOUND"** REQUIRES THE SANCTION OF DIVINE LAW.
- B. ONE CAN BE MARRIED **IN VIOLATION OF GOD'S LAW, THEREFORE NOT BOUND. IS HE MARRIED?** OF COURSE, BUT UNDER CONDEMNATION OF GOD'S LAW.
- C. ONE CAN BE **BOUND TO ANOTHER, THOUGH NOT ACTUALLY MARRIED TO HIM**. SHE MAY EVEN BE MARRIED TO SOMEONE ELSE (**Rom. 7:1-3**).
- D. TO BE PLEASING TO GOD, IF ONE IS MARRIED, HE SHOULD BE BOUND TO THE ONE HE IS MARRIED TO.

IV. IF ONE IS MARRIED, HE IS MARRIED "IN GOD'S EYES."

- A. SOME BELIEVE THAT IF ONE IS MARRIED OR DIVORCED WITHOUT GOD'S APPROVAL, THAT GOD DOES NOT RECOGNIZE IT.
- B. IS THERE SUCH A THING AS **"MENTAL PUTTING AWAY?"**
 - 1. **Where** is the **Biblical reference?**

2. All passages deal with "**writings of divorcement**"(**Mat. 5:31; 19:7**).
3. Is God concerned about "what goes on down at the county courthouse?"
 - a. **Who established** the "county courthouse?"(**John 19:11; Rom.13:1-2**).
 - b. "The powers that be" were established to regulate society, **including the legal aspects of marriage**. What is our disposition toward civil authority to be?(**1 Pet. 2:13-17**).
- C. IF ONE HAS BEEN DIVORCED WITHOUT "SCRIPTURAL CAUSE," **HE IS DIVORCED AND CANNOT WAIT FOR HIS EX-MATE TO COMMIT FORNICATION AND "MENTALLY PUT HER AWAY."**

CONCLUSION:

- A. WE NEED TO HAVE A REALISTIC VIEW OF WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT MARRIAGE AND WHAT IT IS.
- B. WE CANNOT CHANGE THE TRUTH BY CHANGING DEFINITIONS.