



# F. Y. C.

**For Your Consideration**

❖ FEBRUARY 2020 ❖

*For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.*

Matthew 19:5



*“So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”*

Matthew 19:6

## Marriage

Cultures and nations throughout the world have various laws that regulate marriage. And they have various laws concerning divorce. It can be noted that the legality of polygamy varies widely around the world. The laws may or may not be in agreement with what is recorded in the Bible. Very few, if any, country's civil laws accurately mirror the teachings found in the Bible.

### LEGAL BUT SINFUL

In many countries there are things that are legal, but sinful. Think about it! In the United States there is no law against immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, envying, drunkenness, carousing, fornication, to name a few. Yet they are sinful. Here is the situation: one may be a law abiding citizen, yet be sinful in God's eyes.

### CIVIL LAW AND A HIGHER LAW

Christians are to obey the laws of the land, except where they are preempted by God. *Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.* (Romans 13:1) When God's "higher law" is different from civil law it takes precedent. A case in point, Jesus said, *“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”* (Matthew 19:9).

As children of God, we need to take the high road and obey the Higher Power of God who created us! The Good News of Christ is what cleanses one of the guilt and *practice* of sin. Yielding to the Gospel is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

*Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

Hebrews 13:4

# 'It's Only a Piece of Paper'

I have heard some say that a marriage license is only a piece of paper. I have even heard some brethren make the same comment. Whatever the reason behind the statement, those who make it are sadly mistaken or wilfully ignorant.

The marriage license (the legal document) is only a piece of paper? On this "piece of paper" are the names and signatures of the couple being united, duly solemnized by a person the government has empowered.

It's a declaration made to all people, and to the powers that be, that a marriage union, a covenant, a solemn exchange of vows and a marriage contract have been entered into.

The license is only the legal aspect of this union. It's what makes the marriage legal. It's a legal record of the union.

## WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE?

**First**, marriage is a union of two of God's crowning creation—mankind. One man and one woman joined together, becoming "one flesh."

**Second**, it is a covenant between two people. A compact entered into declaring that the man and the woman have covenanted to live together as husband and wife, forming a new family unit, with the intent of procreation—producing the next generation in their families.

**Third**, this marriage covenant is sealed by solemn vows made in the presence of witnesses and in the presence of God (Yes, God is a witness to such an action.) The vows often contain the words, "I take thee ..." and "until death do us part." That is a binding and permanent vow.

**Fourth**, marriage is a contract, agreed to by both parties. A binding contract with only one "escape clause."

**Fifth**, marriage is called "holy matrimony" for good reason. It is a union instituted and approved by God, the Father and Creator.

## NOT TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY

Marriages are not to be torn apart. *"Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."* Matthew 19:6

Covenants are not to be broken. *"If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth."* Numbers 30:2

Contracts and agreements are not to be violated. *"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."* Matthew 19:9

Marriage is to be treated as a sacred union. And He answered and said, *"Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh?'"* Matthew 19:4-5

"Legal" and "God-approved" are not synonymous. God doesn't necessarily approve of every legal marriage or divorce.

## ONLY A PIECE OF PAPER?

Are the title documents of everything you own only a piece of paper? Is your vehicle ownership document only a piece of paper? Is a diploma only a piece of paper? Is that Installment Contract you signed only a piece of paper? Is a dollar bill only a piece of paper? Is the Bible only a piece of paper? Yes, a marriage license is more than a piece of paper. **Much more!**



*"Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge."*

Hebrews 13:4

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# THOUGHTS ON MARRIAGE

## PREPARATIONS

Jeremiah's rhetorical question, (2:32) "*Can a virgin forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?*," came to mind the other day while I was in a restaurant. I overheard a young woman talking about the details of her upcoming wedding. Everything had to be just right; it must be a "perfect" wedding.

Yes, to the bride, the details of the wedding ceremony are very important. I wondered, though, if she and her prospective husband had thought much about making their marriage "just perfect."

Wedding preparations are fine, but what about marriage preparation? Many hours and days are spent in preparation for a wedding ceremony that is over in less than an hour. But the union is forever (that's the way it's supposed to be). How much time and thought are spent in preparing for it?

## VOWS

Many couples are very particular about the vows they make to each other. That is as it should be. Much thought is given to the content. Some write their own vows to make them more personal. But how much thought is given to keeping those vows of undying love and affection "until death do us part"?

It appears to many that their marriage vows fall into the category of "convenient items." That is, they will keep their vows as long as it suits their needs. When the union is no longer what they want, it is merely disposed of. Wedding vows are probably broken more often than all other vows. Proverbs 20:25: "*It is a trap for a man to dedicate something rashly and only later to consider his vows.*"

## BROKEN VOWS

Why is it so painful when couples divorce? Because a "body" is being torn apart. Mark 10:7-8: "*for this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and the two shall become one flesh...*"

Marriages don't "break up," they are broken up by one or both parties. A "break up" implies that something beyond their control caused it. "It just happened to us." "We just fell out of love." "It just wasn't working out." Such ideology relieves those involved of any responsibility. Unions need care and attention to remain healthy, and so does the marriage bond. Ephesians 5:33: "*Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.*" Proverbs 5:18-20: "*And rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe. Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love. For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress, and embrace the bosom of a foreigner?"*

## THE CYCLE MUST BE BROKEN

It's hard to convince children that marriage is for life when many parents are in their second or third union. Children are affected more by what parents and other adults *do* than what they *say*. It's tragic enough when worldly people freely divorce and remarry, but it's even worse when Christians follow in the steps of the worldly rather than in the steps of the Lord.

We may never see the end of divorce and remarriage among the population. But it can and must cease among those who follow Christ. Those who are married need to be determined to keep their vows at all costs. The union must be kept pure, Hebrews 13:4, "*Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral...*"

## SHOW AND TELL

Those who are unmarried need to hear this message. And it is the responsibility of parents and all concerned adults to show, as well as tell, the next generation the "facts of marriage."

# Words of Wisdom for Husbands and Wives

**Wives**, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

**Husbands**, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church.

Ephesians 5:22-29

*An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.*

Proverbs 31:10-12

*An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, But she who shames him is like rottenness in his bones.*

Proverbs 12:4

*A foolish son is destruction to his father, And the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.*

Proverbs 19:13

*Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.*

Proverbs 31:30

In the same way, you **wives**, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.

Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

You **husbands** in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

1 Peter 3:1-7

*Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.*

Ecclesiastes 9:9

*Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be exhilarated always with her love.*

Proverbs 5:18-19

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