

## **Doctrine of Marriage and More**

1. Interestingly, marriage is used as a metaphor to express Christ's relationship to the Church. Christ is said to be the Bridegroom and the Church the bride. (Eph 5:24-32; Rev 19:7-9).

Eph 5:24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

1.1 Both the individual believer and the church at large are always looked upon in the sense of being the bride, the female, in relation to Christ.

2Co 11:2 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.

1.2 The Virgin Mary expressed complete submission to the guidance and empowering of the Holy Spirit, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (Luk 1:38). Her submission is analogous of the relationship which should exist between the Holy Spirit and the Christian.

1.3 For the fruit of the Spirit must be brought out in the life of the believer (Gal 5:22-23), even as Christ was brought forth as the fruit of the Spirit in Mary's womb (Luk 1:42).

Luk 1:42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Gal 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Gal 5:24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Gal 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

2. Before we develop marriage as a category, let's review the Doctrine of Right Man/Right Woman.

### *Doctrine of Right Man/Right Woman*

1. The term Right Man/Right Woman (RM/RW) refers to two souls prepared in eternity past uniquely designed to come together in time as husband and wife.

Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Gen 2:18 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him ...

Gen 2:21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took (**LAQACH**-to seize with force) one of his ribs (**TSELEM**-a structural beam), and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

Gen 2:22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

Gen 2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Gen 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

1.1 From Gen 1:27 compared with Gen 2:24, we can safely conclude that the souls of the RM/RW were created in eternity past concurrently. Though created in eternity past they are to become one in time. Perfect souls housed in perfect bodies designed one for another.

2. It is God's desire that the RM/RW come together in marriage. There are those who have married someone other than their RM/RW. When this occurs God's protocol demands you take in the Word and enjoy the mistake.

3. If you are married, as far as the Scripture is concerned, you have your spouse. Your job is to acquire the skills to enjoy him or her. Even if you think you have missed the boat, the Bible tells you to row a little faster, you can still reach the port of "conjugal bliss."

4. The Scripture has so much to say concerning the RM/RW; we must therefore consider it a most important gift. One such example from Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus:

Eph 5:22 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

Eph 5:24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

Eph 5:26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,  
Eph 5:27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Eph 5:28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Eph 5:29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church --

Eph 5:30 for we are members of his body.

Eph 5:31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

Eph 5:32 This is a profound mystery -- but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Eph 5:33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

5. God has blessed planet earth with Woman. God created the first woman as a perfect completer of the first man. Man had a need for the woman even in perfection. God built her soul and body to perfectly fulfill his needs. Man is incomplete without his Right Woman.

Gen 2:19 Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.

Gen 2:20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. *But for Adam no suitable helper was found.*

5.1 God provided an essential helper for man in order to complete him, be he unbeliever or believer. Even the unbeliever can enjoy the RM/RW relationship.

Ecc 9:9 Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun -- all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun.

Ecc 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.

Ecc 9:11 I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all.

Ecc 9:12 Moreover, no man knows when his hour will come: As fish are caught in a cruel net, or birds are taken in a snare, so men are trapped by evil times that fall unexpectedly upon them.

5.2 As a result of the fall, the woman received three curses.

- One such curse was the desire to love and obey the husband. Men must recognize this curse; it can be either a wonderful blessing to man or a terrible curse. Unfortunately young men are often so insecure they squelch this God given desire.
- A careful review of the Hebrew according to R.B. Thieme, late pastor of Berachah Bible Church in Houston, indicates the Right Woman will often attempt to usurp man's authority.

- The physical curse is well known and needs little explanation.

Gen 3:16 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

6. The pattern of RM/RW was established in Gen 2:21-23.

Gen 2:21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs (*a supporting timber used to support a building*), and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

Gen 2:22 And the rib (*in this case a support for man*), which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

Gen 2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

7. The soul and body of the RM/RW were made compatible and designed for proper functioning in time but only after proper transformation from doctrine resident in the soul.

Rom 12:2 Be you not conformed to this world but be you transformed by the renewing of the mind in order that you might know the good and acceptable and perfect will of God in Christ Jesus.

7.1 Their souls are compatible and complement one another in their likes and dislikes, affinities, differences etc. Only doctrine cycled by the RM/RW will bring these propensities into harmony.

7.2 Sex with someone other than the RM/RW is less than the best and an abomination to God.

Pro 6:32 But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

1Co 6:16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

1Co 6:17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

1Co 6:18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

8. A man must look upon the wife as the weaker vessel much like a daughter given to him for his protection but always recognizing she has volition. Pat Boone was quoted as saying "I always carry a picture of my wife as a cute little girl." Such a device seemingly provides a nice reminder of the Right Man's responsibility to nurture and protect.

1Pe 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

9. This is a formidable task so the RM/RW must know a great deal about one another. Things the RM/RW should know:

9.1 To find a Right Woman is a precious gift from the Lord.

Pro 18:22 He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD.

9.2 To find your RM/RW you must be in the Word growing spiritually.

9.3 The Right Woman is the glory of the Right Man. The woman is under the authority of the man and her hair should always be longer than the man; it is a sign of her recognition of the divinely established organization chart.

1Co 11:7 A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.

1Co11:8 For man did not come from woman, but woman from man;

1Co 11:9 neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

1Co 11:10 For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head.

10. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

10.1 For the husband to love like Christ loved the Church and for the woman to be obedient even as was Sarah to Abraham calling him Lord is unique and yes impossible apart from a major transformation of the mind.

10.2 Notice how Peter describes this complex relationship.

1Pe 3:1 Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives,

1Pe 3:2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

1Pe 3:3 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes.

1Pe 3:4 Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

1Pe 3:5 For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands,

10.3 As the believer responds to doctrine so also should the Right Woman respond to the Right Man and the Right Man must love his wife even as he loves and takes care of himself.

Eph 5:31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

Eph 5:32 This is a profound mystery -- but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Eph 5:33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

10.4 The Right Woman must know her natural proclivity to be deceived.

1Ti2:11 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission.

1Ti 2:12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.

1Ti 2:13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

1Ti 2:14 And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.

10.4.1 The male likewise must be the wise protector of the weaker vessel even when she is hell bent for destruction and that takes maturity and skill on the part of man. The skill can only come from metabolized doctrine.

Gen 3:2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, Gen 3:3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

Gen 3:4 "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman.

Gen 3:5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Gen 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

10.4.2 As Eve in the garden should have called Adam when the snake began to speak, the Right Woman must not eschew the protection of her father and later her husband.

10.5 Both the man and the woman in deciding to become man and wife are making significant lifetime decisions with great potential both for blessing and discipline.

11. The greatest attacks on RM/RW are:

- man's rejection of doctrine and his failure to look beyond outward appearance,
- the failure of the Right Woman to take in the Word and wait for her knight in shining armor,

- woman's failure to submit after she has found her Right Man,
- the man reacting to his Right Woman,
- the woman in error, thinking she can change the Right Man
- and man's refusal to converse with the RW. Most women are stimulated by conversation and most men do not know this.

12. Reversionary attacks against RM/RW often take the form of:

### 12.1 promiscuity

Pro 5:1 My son, pay attention to my wisdom, listen well to my words of insight,  
 Pro 5:2 that you may maintain discretion and your lips may preserve knowledge.  
 Pro 5:3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil;  
 Pro 5:4 but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double-edged sword.  
 Pro 5:5 Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.  
 Pro 5:6 She gives no thought to the way of life; her paths are crooked, but she knows it not.  
 Pro 5:7 Now then, my sons, listen to me; do not turn aside from what I say.  
 Pro 5:8 Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house,  
 Pro 5:9 lest you give your best strength to others and your years to one who is cruel,  
 Pro 5:10 lest strangers feast on your wealth and your toil enrich another man's house.  
 Pro 5:11 At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent.  
 Pro 5:12 You will say, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction!  
 Pro 5:13 I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors.  
 Pro 5:14 I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly."  
 Pro 5:15 Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well.  
 Pro 5:16 Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares?  
 Pro 5:17 Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers.  
 Pro 5:18 May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.  
 Pro 5:19 A loving doe, a graceful deer -- may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.  
 Pro 5:20 Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife?  
 Pro 5:21 For a man's ways are in full view of the LORD, and he examines all his paths.  
 Pro 5:22 The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast.  
 Pro 5:23 He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly.

### 12.2 rebellion against God's organization chart

1Co 11:3 Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.  
 1Co 11:4 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head.

1Co 11:5 And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head -- it is just as though her head were shaved.

1Co 11:6 If a woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her head.

1Co 11:7 A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.

1Co 11:8 For man did not come from woman, but woman from man;

1Co 11:9 neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

1Co 11:10 For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head.

1Co 11:11 In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman.

1Co 11:12 For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.

1Co 11:13 Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?

1Co 11:14 Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him,

1Co 11:15 but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering.

12.3 Wide spread reversionism in a nation will result in the fifth cycle of discipline and the destruction of the four divine institutions (volition, marriage, family, nationalism).

Jer 12:7 "I will forsake my house, abandon my inheritance; I will give the one I love into the hands of her enemies.

Jer 15:8 I will make their widows more numerous than the sand of the sea. At midday I will bring a destroyer against the mothers of their young men; suddenly I will bring down on them anguish and terror.

Jer 16:2 "You must not marry and have sons or daughters in this place."

Jer 16:3 For this is what the LORD says about the sons and daughters born in this land and about the women who are their mothers and the men who are their fathers:

Jer 16:4 "They will die of deadly diseases. They will not be mourned or buried but will be like refuse lying on the ground. They will perish by sword and famine, and their dead bodies will become food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth."

13. The Mosaic Law called for capital punishment for 14 crimes and 5 of the 14 were designed to protect the RM/RW relationship.

- Homosexuality

Lev 20:13 "If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.



- Bestiality

Exo22:19 "Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal must be put to death.

- Adultery

Lev 20:10 ""If a man commits adultery with another man's wife -- with the wife of his neighbor -- both the adulterer and the adulteress must be put to death.

- Unchaste Status

Deu 22:20 If, however, the charge is true and no proof of the girl's virginity can be found,

Deu 22:21 she shall be brought to the door of her father's house and there the men of her town shall stone her to death. She has done a disgraceful thing in Israel by being promiscuous while still in her father's house. You must purge the evil from among you.

- Rape

Deu 22:25 But if out in the country a man happens to meet a girl pledged to be married and rapes her, only the man who has done this shall die.

14. Everyone has a RM/RW unless they possess the gift of celibacy.

15. It is God's desire that Christians take in the Word until their Right Man or Right Woman comes along and then they are to stay together forever; hopefully they will remain happy as two peas in a pod. Happiness in marriage does not, however automatically happen. Making a good marriage is hard work.

16. A young lady offered a comparison that seems appropriate to the "work" required for a good marriage. I shall paraphrase her suggestion, "Marriage is comparable to a savings account. The thought and care invested in marriage earns valuable 'interest,' a life of gaining a treasured friend and companion. No investment--no return." The young lady then said "you can use that idea in one of your "sermons." And so I have done.

17. Now that we have been reminded of our Doctrine of Right Man/Right Woman, we are ready to continue our study of marriage.

1. In Psalm 45 Christ is Himself foreseen in all His majesty and beauty along with His queenly Bride the Church to represent the purity which God desires of His children.

2. The Bride is greatly to be desired because of her beauty (v. 11) both outwardly and inwardly.

Psa 45:10 Listen, O daughter, consider and give ear: Forget your people and your father's house.

Psa 45:11 The king is enthralled by your beauty; honor him, for he is your lord.

2.1 Her raiment is fine and beautiful down to the smallest detail.

Psa 45:13 All glorious is the princess within her chamber; her gown is interwoven with gold.

Psa 45:14 In embroidered garments she is led to the king; ...

### 3. Monogamy

3.1 While polygamy was practiced for some time in the Old Testament, it was only permitted as a temporary measure.

3.2 It denied the principle of husband and wife being one flesh and led to many marital problems.

Gen 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

3.3 Only in monogamy is it possible to escape family jealousies and to correctly illustrate the relationship of Christ to the believer (Eph 5:23 ff.).

3.4 Let's review the *Doctrine of Polygamy*

#### Introduction

1. The teaching of the epistles is clear that a pastor-teacher must be the husband of only one woman. (1Ti 3:2)

1Ti 3:2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

1.1 The epistles also make clear a deacon must be the husband of but one wife. (1Ti 3:12)

1Ti 3:12 A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

1.2 Every believer is ordered to love his wife as Christ loved the church. (Eph 5:25)

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ...

1.3 The New Testament therefore obviously prohibits multiple wives.

## History of Polygamy

1. Polygamy was never authorized in the Bible but rather seemed to be tolerated as opposed to being sanctioned. The tolerance was found only in the Old Testament.

2. The wife of a man's youth was rather a prize to be forever appreciated said the Scripture.

Deu 17:16 The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the LORD has told you, "You are not to go back that way again."

Deu 17:17 He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold.

Psa 128:3 Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table.

Psa 128:4 Thus is the man blessed who fears the LORD.

Pro 5:18 May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.

Pro 5:19 A loving doe, a graceful deer--may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.

Pro 5:20 Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife?

Pro 31:10 A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.

Pro 31:11 Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.

Ecc 9:9 Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun--all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun.

3. The New Testament established the sanctity of marriage.

Heb 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.

4. Polygamy is related to "reversionism" and is an overt expression of a negative mental attitude. The anecdote of Lamech introduces us to the subject.

4.1 Polygamy was pervasive in the line of Lamech, a notorious reversionist.

4.2 Lamech, son of Methushael was our first recorded polygamist. He married Adah and Zillah. He was said to be the father of nomads, musicians, and metal smiths.

Gen 4:19 Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah.

Gen 4:20 Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock.

Gen 4:21 His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play the harp and flute.

Gen 4:22 And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artisan in brass and iron.

Gen 4:23 Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, hear my words. I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me.

5. Polygamy violates the concept of Right Man/Right Woman.

6. By acts of volition and a refusal to conform to God's protocol plan a man can destroy his right woman. You can either accept the woman God has provided or reject God's wisdom.

7. Man is not designed for an intimate relationship with more than one woman; man is not psychologically capable of more than a one woman relationship.

8. Polygamy is a form of self-induced misery for both the man and the woman.

9. Elkanah's polygamy contributed to Hannah's troubles. Hannah was one of the two wives of Elkanah, a Levite of the line of Kohath, who lived in Mount Ephraim.

10. Because Hannah was barren Elkanah had married Peninnah, a second wife, who bore him children.

11. Hannah was a woman of prayer and faith as well as a woman of strong desires. She begged God for a son, and promised that if God provided, she would give him back to the Lord. This she did when Samuel was born.

11.1 Jealousy between Hannah and Peninnah resulted in Hannah's trauma.

1Sa 1:6 And because the LORD had closed her womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her.

12. Gideon's polygamy caused trouble among his children.

Jdg 8:29 Gideon

Jdg 8:30 ... had seventy sons of his own, for he had many wives.

Jdg 8:31 He also had a concubine, who lived in Shechem ... she bore him a son, whom he named Abimelech ...

Jdg 9:1 Abimelech ... hired vain and light persons, who followed him ...

Jdg 9:5 they slew his half-brothers, the sons of Gideon ...

Jdg 9:6 ... the men of Shechem gathered together ... and made Abimelech king ...

Jdg 9:22 After Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel,  
Jdg 9:23 ... God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech:

12.1 The Lord disciplined Abimelech (a child of polygamy) because he dispossessed a rightful heir. Gideon's act of polygamy resulted in a problem for Gideon and his posterity.

13. Now let's look at further anecdotal evidence of problems associated with polygamy.

13.1 David's polygamy compounded his problems with his children and the discipline extended to the second generation.

1Ch 3:1 These were the sons of David born to him in Hebron: The firstborn was Amnon the son of Ahinoam of Jezreel; the second, Daniel the son of Abigail of Carmel;  
1Ch 3:2 the third, Absalom the son of Maacah daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith;  
1Ch 3:3 the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; and the sixth, Ithream, by his wife Eglah.  
1Ch 3:4 These six were born to David in Hebron, where he reigned seven years and six months. David reigned in Jerusalem thirty-three years,  
1Ch 3:5 and these were the children born to him there: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan and Solomon. These four were by Bathsheba daughter of Ammiel.  
1Ch 3:6 There were also Ibhar, Elishua, Eliphelet,  
1Ch 3:7 Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia,  
1Ch 3:8 Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet--nine in all.  
1Ch 3:9 All these were the sons of David, besides his sons by his concubines ...

13.2 The result of Solomon's failure to heed God's warning concerning polygamy is recorded in 1st Kings.

1Ki 11:1 King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter--Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites.  
1Ki 11:2 They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love.  
1Ki 11:3 He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.  
1Ki 11:4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.  
1Ki 11:5 He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites.  
1Ki 11:6 So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done.  
1Ki 11:7 On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites.

1Ki 11:8 He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

14. Now we are ready to consider the subject of divorce.

14.1 Divorce has always presented a serious problem. It is important that pastor-teachers teach what the Bible has to say about marriage and divorce. In the earliest teachings of the Bible man and woman were to “marry” and stay together refraining from sexual relations with any other; anything other than monogamy was forbidden.

14.1.1 But mankind being what mankind “was and is” has found staying married a difficult task; so polygamy early developed and God, given mankind’s wayward nature taught and authorized divorce.

14.1.2 So men began to have multiple wives and concubines; women were often divorced and family problems prevailed. Even kings were not spared incest, rape, murder, family rebellion etc. and all because they didn’t heed God’s call for monogamy.

14.1.3 So the New and the Old Testament are replete with accounts of misadventures in marriage.

14.1.4 Christ in His Kingdom teachings explained that God permitted divorce only because of the hardness of man’s heart and He further added that the only grounds for divorce was adultery.

14.1.5 Our Lord then expanded His teaching about adultery and fornication by saying if a man lusted in his heart for a woman, he was guilty. This then complicated everything, for what healthy red blooded male could avoid adultery/fornication by that definition.

14.1.6 Fortunately, next came the epistles which teach all sin is to be “attacked” in the privacy of the mind by using 1Jo 1:9, i.e., confession. The epistles, however, also stressed the heinous nature of sexual sins because they affect the body and the soul of the believer.

14.1.7 The body said Paul, is the temple of the Holy Spirit and therefore it was blasphemous to think of the body being joined to a harlot – a not so kindly description of a sexual union between two people outside of marriage.

14.1.8 So much for an introduction to the subject of divorce.

14.2 It was only because of the hardness of men's hearts that Moses allowed a bill of divorcement, but such was not says our Lord the original plan. (Mat 5:31-32; 19:8-9; Mar 10:2-9 and Luk 16:18)

Mat 5:31 "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'

Mat 5:32 But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

Mat 19:8 Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.

Mat 19:9 I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery."

Mar 10:2 Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"

Mar 10:3 "What did Moses command you?" he replied.

Mar 10:4 They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away."

Mar 10:5 "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied.

Mar 10:6 "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.'

Mar 10:7 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,

Mar 10:8 and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one.

Mar 10:9 Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

Luk 16:18 "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

14.3 Marriage is to be abolished only for marital unfaithfulness.

14.4 This means that a divorce could be allowed only when there had been sexual intercourse with another person other than the betrothed either in premarital sex or afterward in marriage.

14.5 Christ pointed out that a man could commit adultery just as well as a woman, by forcing an unjust divorce. This was contrary to the views of the Jews, who saw the woman as the only possible offender.

14.6 There are several interesting metaphors using marriage to teach various subjects. I want to take one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament.

The Old Testament

14.7 Hosea forgave and took back his adulterous wife Gomer because God commanded him; not once but twice and each time it was to remind the prophet Hosea and us of God's love for Israel and His future family. A synopsis of the events will suffice:

Hos 1:1 The word of the LORD that came to Hosea:

Hos 1:2 When the LORD began to speak through Hosea, the LORD said to him, "Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife ..., because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery in departing from the LORD."

Hos 1:3 So he married Gomer daughter of Diblaim ...

Hos 2:5 ... She said, 'I will go after my lovers, who give me my food and my water, my wool and my linen, my oil and my drink ...

Hos 2:7 She will chase after her lovers ... she will look for them but not find them. Then she will say, 'I will go back to my husband as at first, for then I was better off than now.'

Hos 2:10 God said I will expose her lewdness before the eyes of her lovers; ...

Hos 3:1 The LORD said to me, "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes."

14.7.1 And Hosea accepted God's plan. The Lord used the analogy to teach the error of Israel and God's ever present unrequited love for His people.

## New Testament

15. Now we are ready for a review of a most interesting metaphor: "Christ the Bridegroom and the Church the Bride."

### 1. Introduction:

1.1 First, I want to preview the differences between marriage today and the institution of marriage which existed at the time of Christ and the early church.

1.1.1 Most of you know about marriage today. You find your right man or right woman, go down to the court house, get a license, find a preacher or a J.P. and have them say a few words over the deal and bingo you are married.

1.2 It was quite different in antiquity. Marriages were arranged. Often the groom would find a girl to his liking, enlist the help of a friend and then a negotiation took place with the father of the bride.

1.3 The bridegroom's friend would act as the bridegroom's agent. The agent would go to the home of the young lady, speak with the parents and a deal would be struck.

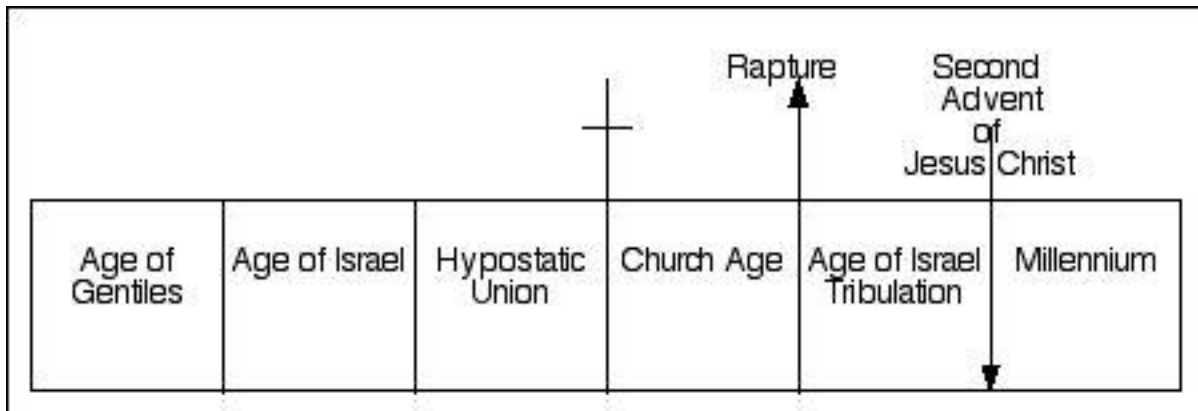
1.4 The dowry in most cases would be exchanged or promised and thus a marriage contract was recognized.

1.5 As part of the marriage contract the groom agreed at some undetermined time to come for his bride. The groom would first acquire a house and all that was needed for a secure home.



2. The bride, in our metaphor, is the universal church of the Church Age and the Bridegroom is Christ. Christ is at this moment building a home in heaven for us as His future bride.

2.1 Our agent is the Holy Spirit and the undetermined period is the length of the Church Age.



2.2 As was the marriage custom of Christ's day, we too as the bride now wait until our Bridegroom the Lord Jesus Christ, is ready to take us to His home in Heaven.

2.3 The shout of our Lord and the blast from the trumpet of God will signal the Bridegroom's readiness. We, as the bride are to wait expectantly for the call of the Bridegroom.

1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:  
 1Th 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

2.4 Now let's look further at how the Bible uses the analogy of Christ the Bridegroom, and the bride the church.

2.5 The metaphor is first used by John the Baptist in Joh 3:26-29.

2.5.1 John is the agent of the Messiah Jesus, the Bridegroom, and Israel is the potential bride. Unfortunately, Israel will not accept the proposal made by John and thus there is [at this point] no marriage. There was an offer but no acceptance.

Joh 3:26 They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan--the one you testified about--well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

Joh 3:27 To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven.

Joh 3:28 You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.'

Joh 3:29 The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.

2.5.2 Wycliffe in his Bible Encyclopedia has the following to say about Joh 3:26-29. I will first quote and then comment:

"John makes clear early on that he is not the Bridegroom ... Rather, he makes clear he is a friend of the Bridegroom. It was the function of such a man to act as go-between in making the marriage arrangements. This is the way it is still done in many Muslim nations. A friend, an agent, will contact the family of the prospective bride and discussions will ensue and then in many cases a meeting is set up under a most controlled situation. Usually the meeting is short and casual. After that first meeting many marriages are then arranged. John was such an agent for Israel. He introduced them to their Messiah."

2.6 Our agent, who arranges our marriage, is not John the Baptist but the Holy Spirit of God. We, as believers of the Church Age, unlike Israel accepted the proposal of marriage communicated by the Holy Spirit and we, as the Bride of Christ, are now waiting for our Bridegroom to come and take us to His home.

3. Let's look at a few points about John as the forerunner of Christ who declared I am not the Bridegroom, only his friend.

3.1 John's ministry had to fade as the ministry of Jesus increased.

Joh 3:30 He must become greater; I must become less.

3.2 John was a man of mystery. According to our Lord and Savior, John would have been the reincarnation of Elijah, had there been a national repentance on the part of Israel.

3.3 The nature of his role is made evident by his early charter and the prophecy of the angel to Zacharias his father. John could only introduce Israel to Jesus; he could not force them to accept their Bridegroom.

Luk 1:17 And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous--to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

3.4 John's role in our categorical study is the agent for the Messiah and prospective Groom, John came to call out a loyal and repentant remnant.

3.5 That remnant was to accept the advent of the greater than John and thus experience the long awaited Messianic Kingdom.

3.6 John's significance lies in his being Christ's forerunner, an agent who introduced Israel to their potential Bridegroom. The negotiations failed with Israel's rejection and the believers of the Church Age became the Bride-in-waiting.

4. So much with reference to John as the friend of Israel. Now let's return to the marriage procedure of Jesus' day..

5. The young man who marries is termed in the Hebrew a **Bahur**, a choice, stalwart in the prime of his strength. He was to be economically secure. This requisite would indicate the male would be older and well established and thus capable of caring graciously for his younger bride. So also our Bridegroom, Christ, is more than able to take care of us.

6. His bride is said to be a virgin, a **Betula**, a young maiden attractive and ready for marriage.

7. The father considered it his duty to secure wives for his sons. God also is not willing that any should perish. Even hell itself was not created for man but for Satan and his fallen angels.

Mat 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

8. Very often in countries surrounding ancient Israel the prospective bride and bridegroom would simply acquiesce to the arrangements made in the interests of their families.

9. On the other hand, there was opportunity in Israel for marriages based on courtship.

10. A young man could state his preference and open discussions with her family, through his agent. Jacob wanting Rachel is an example, thus he opened negotiations with Laban.

11. Jewish women were not kept secluded as in most Muslim lands.

12. Women tended sheep and some even carried water, gleaned fields and ran family businesses. Thus young men could themselves look for prospective brides.

13. The selection of the bride was followed by a betrothal.

14. It was a formal proceeding and far more binding than our engagement.

15. In fact the men who were betrothed were already considered to be sons-in-law and the lady was a bride in all respects except intimacy.

16. A betrothed man was deferred from military service so he could go get his bride consummate the marriage and live with her for a year. During that time they were to learn how to appreciate and love each other.

17. Sex before marriage and adultery were serious crimes in Israel. So also in the case for those betrothed to Christ who go "a whoring." The Lord Himself disciplines His own.

Heb 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

18. The betrothal was ordinarily facilitated by a friend or legal representative on the part of the bridegroom. The agent would negotiate the amount of the dowry and the method of payment. The amount of the "gift" or dowry was usually paid at once to her family. The dowry for us is the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, a payment totally acceptable to God.

19. Marriage, in both ancient Mesopotamia and Israel, was purely a civil contract and not formalized by any religious ceremony.

19.1. While the Bible does not specifically mention a written marriage contract, such contracts were stipulated in the Code of Hammurabi. Several marriage contracts have been discovered among the papyri at a 5th century B.C. Jewish colony.

19.2 The Mishnah (a part of the Talmud) describes such a contract and there it gives minute directions as to the handling of the dowry.

20. The essence of the marriage ceremony or festivities was the taking of the bride from her father's house and bringing her to the home of the bridegroom or his father.

20.1 Thus there was literal truth in the Hebrew expression "to take" a wife. We as church age believers will meet Christ in the air and from there Christ will escort us to His home in the Heaven, just as the bridegroom of Christ's day escorted his bride home.

21. Very often considerable time elapsed between the contract of marriage and the consummation of the marriage. The time stipulated for the consummation was not specified in the agreement. Not unlike the indeterminate period of the Church Age and the Rapture; such timing has been reserved to the Father.

22. In formal attire, the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends or attendants, was led by a band in a festive route to the bride's house. The bride was beautifully dressed and adorned with jewels.

22.1 The angels of heaven will escort our Lord to that point in the heavens where amidst the galaxies every believer will receive a uniform of glory for our resurrection body and together with Christ we will fly away to our heavenly abode

23. The book of the Revelation speaks of our future glory in fine linen, bright and clean when in heaven we become the bride of Christ.

Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

Rev 19:8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear."

24. In antiquity the bridegroom, his bride and their wedding guests would be guests of honor at a "marriage supper." After our wedding in heaven to our Bridegroom, we too shall attend a great wedding supper, above the millennial earth. Our presence will be celebrated when Christ proudly introduces us as His bride.

25. In closing our analogy let's look to the epistles for further perspective of our metaphor: Christ the Bridegroom and the church the bride.

2Co 11:2 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.

2Co 11:3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

26. As we await our beloved Savior at the Rapture we must avoid being led astray from our pure devotion and that can only be done by the consistent intake of the Word under the filling of the Spirit.

27. Your relationship with Christ is like a marriage in the sense it must get better every day; and it will get better to the extent we learn more of Christ and His will for our lives.

Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

## Summary

1. The analogy of Christ as the Groom and the Church as the Bride is especially meaningful now that we know more about marriage at the time of Christ.

2. We live in the Devil's world, and as unbelievers our father is the Devil.

3. Our marriage is arranged by our Heavenly Father.

4. The dowry is the spiritual death of Christ on the Cross.
5. The contract has been sealed and the Church is purchased from the slave market of sin and we are now betrothed.
6. We must however wait for the timing of the Groom and when He is ready He will call for His Bride the Church.
7. As we await the marriage with its glorious festivities our every thought must be upon our Groom as we anticipate the marriage when we will meet His many friends.
8. We must keep ourselves spotless and make ready by keeping every thought on the Lord Jesus Christ.
9. Premarital indiscretions will result in severe discipline so we must use the two power options to keep ourselves unspotted.
10. The marriage will of course occur at the Second Advent and Israel is called to attend the festive event-- the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Rev 19:9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

11. The Lord taught a sad parable: "Many from Israel were called but few came."

Mat 22:3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

Mat 22:4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

Mat 22:5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

Mat 22:6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.

Mat 22:7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

Mat 22:8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

Mat 22:9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

Mat 22:10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

Mat 22:11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

Mat 22:12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

Mat 22:13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

12. As the betrothed we must take our responsibility seriously and prepare by keeping every thought focused on our Lord and Savior, our Groom, even Jesus the Christ.

13. So hopefully now we understand the importance of marriage in the life of a Christian. Unless one has the gift of celibacy there is a right man for every right woman and for every right woman there is a right man.

14. God's plan though replete with many open and closed doors can best be summarized by the following commands penned by the Apostle Paul.

Eph 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body.

Eph 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Eph 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Eph 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Eph 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Eph 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Eph 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Eph 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Eph 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Eph 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Eph 4:29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Eph 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Eph 4:31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

Eph 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

15. In closing let me leave you with a primitive chart showing how the Right Man and Right Woman begin the Christian life as babes. The two are to cycle doctrine, thus developing capacity for marriage. They are to ultimately meet on the Z axis and then continue together their journey toward spiritual maturity.

