

Marriage? It's only a bit of paper isn't it?

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The institution of marriage has taken a bit of a hammering lately, with people living together and calling it marriage. Or popping over to their boyfriend's or girlfriend's place for a bit of 'biological relief' every now and then and calling that marriage. Or 'staying committed to one sexual partner at a time' and calling that marriage.

Well, what is correct? Have things changed? As always, in all matters of faith and practice, let's see what the Bible says about fornication.

LET'S READ WHAT GOD SAYS

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

(Genesis 2:24)

God says that a man shall join with his **wife** - not his girlfriend; not a woman; not have a 'committed relationship' (whatever that is). No, when a man gets a wife, then he can 'marry' her by becoming one flesh with her. Marriage is a flesh union between husband and wife.

CONFUSION IS COMMON

People misunderstand the following terms and think they mean the same – 'marriage', 'marry' and becoming 'husband and wife'. In the Bible, 'marriage' or 'to marry' or 'marrying' always means physical union. Never is it confused with legal registration required first by the State or civil authority to become husband and wife.

HOW DOES A MAN GET A WIFE?

Quite simple. Upon registering with Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, a man gets a Certificate of Marriage to say that he has fulfilled certain legal requirements. He then has a wife. Every State has a register of each husband and wife and they have a Registration Number. Every child that is born is registered. Every person that dies has a Death Certificate and every couple that becomes husband and wife is registered.

SO BECOMING HUSBAND AND WIFE IS A LEGAL PROCEDURE?

Correct. There are rules and regulations to follow before the State can proclaim a man to be a husband with a wife

SO IT'S NOT UP TO A MAN TO SAY WHETHER HE HAS A WIFE OR NOT?

Absolutely correct.

WHAT ABOUT THE CHURCH SERVICE, ISN'T THAT GETTING 'MARRIED'?

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No. At the service, the couple sign the legal papers to become husband and wife - their marrying takes place on their honeymoon.

It works like this. The minister of religion who will perform the ceremony in the church (or the marriage celebrant or at the registry office), has previously informed the civil authorities, that a man and woman want to become husband and wife. All the relevant information has been sent to the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

This information is checked and the minister of religion is then given the authority to act on behalf of the civil authority, to oversee the signing of the 'marriage papers'. The couple, at the end of the ceremony, sign the legal documents with witnesses present. That's why after the signing, the minister proudly stands up and announces to the congregation present "I now present Mr and Mrs _____".

This signifies that they are now husband and wife. They are then free, at any time after that, to consummate their union (physically come together). The man has the wife to which he can now cleave (sexual union) to (Genesis 2:24; Deuteronomy 24:1).

SO BEING HUSBAND AND WIFE IS A LEGAL PIECE OF PAPER?

Some people say "Well marriage isn't just a piece of paper you know!" That's wrong. They confuse the issue of becoming husband and wife with the act of physical union. Being a husband and wife is nothing more, and nothing less, than a legal piece of paper.

NO TITLE DEED, NO LAND!

Put it this way, it's no use running around saying "That bit of land over there is mine." Someone could say "Oh really? Where's your bit of paper?" You've got to have the Title Deed to the land, otherwise it's not yours.

What about the owner of a car without the relevant papers? Got to have those papers! Similarly, for two people to say "We're married you know. We just don't have a piece of paper." Quite simply, if two people don't have a Certificate of Marriage issued by the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages to say that they are now husband and wife, it's just fornication and God hates fornication.

Becoming husband and wife is a legal thing with legal requirements and is a legal registration act with legal ramifications. If you don't have the deed to the land, it's not your land! If you don't have a piece of paper, you're not 'married'! You're fornicating!! You are illegal! You are outside of the law!

WHAT IS FORNICATION?

It's what people used to call "living in sin." Let's go to Webster's Dictionary for further clarification. There are two definitions:

"...is the act of incontinency (lack of restraint of the sexual appetite) in single persons;

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if either party be married it is adultery."

"In the Bible, any unlawful sexual intercourse, including adultery." Get that? Sexual intercourse is bound by law. To have sex, you need to fulfill certain laws.

LET'S READ WHAT GOD SAYS AGAIN "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her.." (Deuteronomy 24:1). There we have it! God knows the order of things - first get the wife then have the physical coming together.

LET'S READ WHAT JESUS SAYS

"Have ye not read ... For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?" (Matthew 19:5)

You'd think Jesus would know what he was talking about, wouldn't you? With no 'ifs' or 'buts', Jesus separates the becoming husband and wife part, from having physical sexual intercourse.

He says "First, a man needs a wife to start with and then he can marry her." Well that seems pretty straight forward doesn't it? Jesus says that a man needs to get himself first registered with the State authorities as being 'husband and wife' and when he has a piece of paper (a Certificate of Marriage) he then has a wife. Now having got a wife, he can now have sex (marry) with her.

LET'S READ WHAT PAUL SAYS:

"...It is good for a man not to touch a woman (stay single). Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."

(1Corinthians 7:1-2)

Isn't it interesting, that two people that are living together, never, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever introduce each other as "Oh, by the way this is my wife." Or "Have you met my husband?" Or "Oh, we're just living in sin."

The terms 'husband' and 'wife' have been replaced by 'partner'. I guess, if you are 'living in sin', you want to try and blot out the stain on your conscience of the sin of unlawful sex.

LET'S READ WHAT PAUL SAYS ABOUT FORNICATORS

"...But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that WICKED PERSON."

(1 Corinthians 5:9-11)

God wrote down what he wanted - to put it beyond all doubt. Let all who disobey be warned. Let all who think they know better, be called "**wicked**".

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IT'S CALLED SIN. THAT'S WHY IT'S CALLED `LIVING IN SIN'. Don't argue with me, I'm just a messenger. "Read it and weep" as they say. As I always say, "Don't believe my words, you go check it out for yourself." One day, you'll be judged by `the book'. No-one will stand before Jesus at his Judgment Seat or the Great White Throne Judgment and proclaim innocence. Ignorance will not be an excuse. Go sort it out with God Almighty and tell Him that He's got it all wrong. Best of luck!