

WHO HAS THE DIVINE RIGHT TO MARRY?

Heb.13:4; Rom.7:1-3

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. When we ask, Who has the divine right to marry? We are asking, Who has the right in the sight of God or according to God's revealed will to marry?
2. In the matter of marriage civil law is to be recognized, but civil law alone does not govern marriage as God ordained it. God's law takes precedence; God's law supercedes civil law.
 - a. Rights granted by civil law or by the laws of the state may allow or permit what the law of God does not, or even condemns.
 - b. In marriage, as in other things, we must obey God rather than men, i.e., when to obey man's laws permits or demands that we disobey God, we must obey God rather than men, Ac.4:13-20; 5:25-29; Gal.1:10.
 - c. Civil law has its place in the institution of marriage as God ordained it, but not as the expense of God's written will.
 - d. In the case of marriage, civil law permits things condemned by God's law.
3. In light of the prevalence and popularity of divorce in present-day society and problems it creates in the matter of remarriage, in this lesson we are asking and answering by "book, chapter, and verse," Who has the divine right to be married?

II. DISCUSSION

A. BRIEF BASIC FACTS ABOUT MARRIAGE AS REVEALED IN THE BIBLE, THE WORD OF GOD.

1. God ordained it as a monogamous relationship between male and female, i.e., "mating in marriage with but one of the opposite sex," Gen.2:18-24; cf. Lev.18:22; 20:13.
 - a. This relationship was and is ordained between Jack and Jill, not between Jack and Joe, and not between Jill and Jane.
 - b. It is a life-long covenant – a till-death-do-us-part covenant, Rom.7:1-3.
 - c. God did not bind the evil system of celibacy on one group of people to the exclusion of another, Heb.13:4; 1Cor.7:2.
 - d. It's a privilege granted by God to believers and unbelievers alike, 1Cor.7:12-14; 1Pet.3:1,2.

2. The human sexual union is reserved for and restricted to a male and a female in the marriage bed, in a lawful, scriptural marriage, H.13:4.
 - a. Any such activity before or outside of a marriage relationship recognized by God as in harmony with his written will is sinful.
 - b. There are no exceptions!
3. God hates divorce because it always involves sin on the part of either one or both of the spouses; and he hates sin, Mal.2:14-16; Mt.19:3-6.
4. Even though God hates divorce, he permits it for one reason and one reason only – the innocent spouse is permitted to divorce the guilty spouse for the cause of fornication, Mt.5:2; Mt.19:3-9.
 - a. If divorce does occur for some other cause, the divorced spouses have only two options, as per 1Cor.7:11.
 - (1) To remain unmarried (cannot marry another).
 - (2) To be reconciled to one's original or former spouse.
5. Even permanent separation of spouses is condemned, 1Cor.7:1-5,
 - a. Each spouse is to render “due benevolence” – fulfill the conjugal rights pertaining to the marriage bed, v.3.
 - b. Each spouse has conjugal rights to the other's body, v.4.
 - c. “Defraud ye not (deny; signifies “to rob or despoil”) one the other (these rights)”:
 - (1) “Except it be with (mutual) consent for a season (a short, temporary period of time)”
 - (2) “that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer” (the reason stated while you are working out the problem)
 - (3) “and come together again” (no permanent separation allowed here)
 - (4) A warning and another reason for obeying these instructions: “that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency (lack of control)”. Cf. 1Cor.10:12; 1Pet. 5:8; 2Cor.2:11.
6. In view of these facts, obviously the marriage covenant is one involving three parties, not just two: the man, the woman and God!
 - a. God ordained and permits it on certain conditions.

- b. God is the one who ultimately joins the two in holy matrimony when permitted on the basis of his holy will, Mt.19:4-6.
- c. God, and God alone, can permit or allow divorce, and that for the one specific cause, Mt.5:32; 19:9.

B. ON THE BASIS OF THESE FACTS, WHO HAS THE DIVINE OR SCRIPTURAL RIGHT TO MARRY?

1. One who has never been married has the right to marry another who also has the right to marry, Mt.19:4,5; Heb.13:4; 1Cor.7:2.
2. The widow or widower, one whose spouse is dead, has the right to marry again to one who also has the right to marry, Rom.7:1-3; 1Cor.7:39.
 - a. Of course, she is not free to marry just anyone, i.e., to one which would involve her in an adulterous marriage, Mt.5:32b; Mt.19:9b; Rom.7:1-3.
 - b. "Only in the Lord" means "in harmony with the Lord's will," Eph.6:1; Col.3:18.
3. The innocent spouse who has divorced his or her guilty spouse for the cause of fornication, has the right to marry another, i.e., one who also has the right to marry, Mt.19:9

C. FINALLY, WHO DOES NOT HAVE A SCRIPTURAL RIGHT TO MARRY ANOTHER?

1. The spouse who has put away his spouse for a cause other than fornication does not have the scriptural right to marry another, Mt.5:32; Lk.16:18; 1Cor.7:11.
2. The put away spouse, for whatever cause, does not have the scriptural right to marry another, Lk.16:18; 1Cor.7:11.
3. The guilty spouse who has been put away for the cause of fornication does not have the scriptural right to marry another, Mt.19:9.
4. No other person has the scriptural right to marry any put away person, Mt.19:9b; Lk.16:18b; 1Cor.7:11.
5. The spouse who has a living spouse does not have the scriptural right to marry another, Rom.7:1-3.

III. CONCLUSION

1. The right of marriage is a great privilege that carries with it many blessings as well as great and varied responsibilities.
2. But man can by his own sinful actions deny himself both the privileges and the blessings, just as he can deny himself the blessings of eternal salvation.
3. But, one objects! Repentance remits sins! Thus they can remarry or continue to be married if they repent!

- a. Yes! Repentance brings forgiveness! But it will not bring forgiveness for continued sinful relationships, which adulterous marriages are!
 - b. Repentance will bring forgiveness for the sin of adultery. But a continuation in an adulterous marriage is not repentance. For repentance is a change of mind , resulting in a cessation of sin, and a reformation of life—continuing in an adulterous marriage is neither!
4. Remember: Rom.3:4; Psa.119:89,128,160; Lk.13:3.