

# Marriage

(The next three Bulletins will deal with Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage)

God ordained the marriage bond between a man and woman from the beginning. Moses records, *“therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh”* (Gen. 2:24). There is a comradeship, partnership, life long friendship, and love that is established the day a man and woman are joined in marriage that continues through the couples married days. This article shall examine the marriage bond, the process by which a man and woman become united in marriage, and God’s intentions for this bond.

## The Marriage Bond

The apostle Paul states, *“For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth...”* (Rom. 7:2). The word *“bound”* means “metaphorically to bind, enchain” (LS 181). Again, Paul states, *“A wife is bound for so long time as her husband lives; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord”* (I Cor. 7:39). The word *“bound”* is a perfect tense verb indicating that the present state of two people being enchained together in marriage is based upon their previous vows to each other (*“law”* of marriage). Jesus and the apostles tell us that this marriage chain (bond) cannot be lawfully broken except by adultery (Matt. 19:9) and death (Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:39). It is apparent by reading such passages as Matthew 19:9 and Luke 16:18 that the bond (marriage chain) can also be broken illegally by man the consequences which is sin.

## The Process by which Man and Woman are Joined in Marriage

Man and woman come into the bond of marriage by various methods depending upon the societies in which they live. The United States has very general marriage laws whereby a minister will perform a ceremony by which a man and woman say vows to each other and seal the marriage with a kiss and ring as a token of unending love. Our custom of marriage ceremony with gown, tuxedo, and exchange of rings is offensive to the Muslim world (cf. [www.zawaj.com](http://www.zawaj.com); article titled, “The Marriage Process in Islam”). Muslims find a woman to marry, gain two witnesses, and make an exchange of dowry. Many African Americans continue to “jump the broom stick” to indicate the joining of two lives that were otherwise unable to do so during slavery days. When Isaac married Rebekah they simply came together in Isaac’s tent after Abraham’s servant spoke to Isaac about the betrothal (cf. Gen. 24:61ff). The fact of the matter is, that when a man and woman decide to become life long partners there is some action that takes place that lets all know of the two’s decision to be married. Consider the word *“marry”* (*gameo*) as used in Matthew 19. Friberg’s Greek New Testament reveals the word *“marry”* to be a verb in the aorist tense and active (64). The process of marriage is an active process (i.e., giving traditional vows, jumping a broom stick, etc.). Once the marriage is done, two are *“joined”* together by God in the marriage bond.

## God’s Intention for Marriage

God intends for man and woman's marriage to be life long. Jesus said, "*What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*" (Matt. 19:6). The Word of God reveals adultery and death to be the only two events to legally break God's joining bond.

God intends for the man and woman to one day leave their father and mother and "*cleave*" to each other in the bond of matrimony (cf. Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5). The word "*cleave*" carries with the idea of sticking together as cement fuses two substances. The marital cleaving will see the marriage through the toughest and simplest of times. God also intends for the sexual desires of man and woman to be achieved in the marital relationship (cf. I Cor. 7:1ff; Heb. 13:4). When two people enter marriage understanding God's intentions they are starting on a solid foundation.

Next Sunday we will examine the unfortunate event of a divorce in our three part series of Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage.

*John C. Robertson*