

Options That Married People Do Not Have

When two people are married, they often vow to love, honor and cherish one another for better or worse, in sickness and in health, and in prosperity and in adversity until death parts them. But many couples, both young and old, later decide that they don't want to and don't have to stay married. God has given them no such option! Jesus said, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not men put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

Some decide that they want a divorce from a mate because they are "no longer in love" with that mate. They should have been certain about their love before the marriage. And they need to know that God commands husbands and wives to love one another (Ephesians 5:25,28,33). Husbands and wives do not have the option of deciding to stop loving one another.

Some decide that they want a divorce because a mate has contracted a debilitating disease (M.S., M.D., etc.) or has been paralyzed by an accident, etc., and their continued care constitutes a "hardship." But God has not given them that option. The unfortunate mate needs them more than ever, and they need to show the nobility of their love, their character and their commitment.

Some decide that they want a divorce because they have found someone else that they "truly love" (or like better), someone who also shows greater love for them (their perception) than their mate. But, again, God did not give them any such option. Marriage is for life, and not "until you find someone you like better."

Some decide that they want a divorce because they "just don't get along well" with their mate, or they "really weren't ready for such a commitment," or they have found that "they are no longer compatible" with their mate, or they "don't feel loved and important," or they "argue all the time," etc., but God has given them no such option. Grow up, mature, get help, but work out your problems. The majority of divorced and remarried people admit that they were better off in their first marriage than they realized.

Marriage is of God; He who originated it has a right to regulate it; He has done so in the Bible. His plan is one man and one woman for life - with only one exception (Matt. 19:9). That one exception is fornication (sexual immorality). The innocent, faithful mate has been given the right to divorce the guilty party and to marry another. The guilty mate has been given no such right.

When two people marry, they have entered in a serious, life-long relationship. Both need to be sure that they are ready for such a commitment. God's law is clear and unchanging.

- by Bill Crews

Should Christians Observe The Sabbath?

The sabbath was first made known to Moses at Mt. Sinai (Neh. 9:13-14) and was given to the nation of Israel as a sign (Ex. 31:12-17) of their deliverance from Egypt (Deut. 5:12-15). It means no more to a modern Gentile than does the 4th of July to a Frenchman.

The Law containing the sabbath has been blotted out (Col. 2:14-17). If we attempt to be justified by that Law, we will fall from grace (Gal. 5:1-4). The sabbath law is not for us today.

Removal of the Ten Commandments does not mean we can live immoral lives. Every one of them is either repeated or strengthened in the New Testament except the sabbath.

Christians are taught to come together on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-26) and to contribute to the church (1 Cor. 16:1-2). The first day of the week is not the sabbath, but it is the day Christians must assemble to worship the Lord.

- by Keith Sharp

You Finish This Story . . .

Once there was a congregation in which every member was just like I am. Each one cooperated and supported all the teaching programs, just the way I do. Each one attended the Lord's services and gospel meetings just like I do. Each member had the same interest I do concerning the growth of the church, the lost who live in our community, and the edification of our

brethren. Each member put the same emphasis on their recreation, business, and other affairs of this life, to the same degree I do. Each member "gave of their means," as I do.

With a year or so, this congregation . . .

- *selected*

"Sons of God" & "Daughters of Men"

In Genesis 6:7 we read of God's gross displeasure with the wickedness of men: "And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

Just prior to this announcement there is a statement that has caused quite a lot of speculation. "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose ... There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown" (Genesis 6:1,2,4).

What does this mean? Who were the "sons of God," and where did they come from? Some have guessed that these were angels or heavenly beings of some sort. The theory goes that these beings lusted for and ultimately mated with human women. The "mighty men" that resulted from these unions are held up as proof that something 'other-worldly' had occurred. There are some major problems with this view. Briefly: 1) It ascribes human sexual desire to heavenly beings. There is nothing in the Scriptures that would support this conclusion. All we know of angels is that they "neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (Matthew 22:30). 2) It diminishes the uniqueness of the virgin birth of Jesus. His case alone stands out as one in which a child was born by some means other than by natural conception.

What is the answer then? A key verse is Genesis 4:26: "...then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." It seems that as human history began to unfold, some men began to make the conscious choice to follow God, and others did not. Those who "called upon the name of the Lord" would have been known - then, as now - as the "sons of God." But as time went on, even these men began to be corrupt (including their marriages to wicked mates). Finally, they also were so full of sin that "it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart" and only Noah "found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:6,8).

- *by Greg Gwin*