

What Polygamy Can Teach Us About Marriage

Tuesday, April 19, 2016 by Douglas Wilson - 109 comments

I am not being bad, I promise. I am being serious. In fact, I want to lay some serious groundwork first, to prove that I am being serious. I am being serious, guys.

My topic here has to do with the potential lawfulness of remarriage after divorce, and secondarily, if a remarriage after divorce happens in fact to be unlawful in the eyes of God, what kind of unlawful it is. As I set out my premises, I am doing so simply to review what I have argued for elsewhere.



First, marriage takes place when two conditions are fulfilled. The first is when there is a recognized covenant, and the second is when the union is sexually consummated. Marriage is defined in Scripture as a covenant union relating to a one-flesh union.

Second, I want to make a distinction between adultery as crime and adultery as sin. Adultery as crime is a punishable violation of marriage vows, such that the guilty parties face a civil consequence. But are there instances of adultery that are sinful, but not actionable at law? Yes, there are several instances of this in Scripture. One would be lust. Jesus says that to lust after a woman is tantamount to adultery in God's sight, but the lusts of the heart are not something the civil courts are competent to deal with. The Tenth Commandment has no penalties attached. Another form of adultery that is sinful but not criminal is when a hard-hearted man divorces his wife and marries another. Jesus expressly says that this is *not* criminal, and explains why God did not make it criminal.

Third, the difference between those who say that remarriage after divorce is not a genuine marriage at all, but is rather adultery, and those who say that a second marriage after a divorce (even when unlawfully done) constitutes a genuine marriage, is a difference over the very nature of marriage. On one view, marriage is metaphysical marriage (MM) and on the other view it is covenant marriage (CM). A metaphysical union is indissoluble and a covenant union is not. Covenants have terms, and thus can be broken. A metaphysical union just is. Thus a man who divorced his wife for no good reason, married another, and was then converted to Christ ten years later, could recognize that his current marriage was adulterously formed back then, and yet remains a genuine marriage now. But if he divorced his second wife to make amends, he is trying to unscramble the egg by breaking another egg.

Fourth, the fact that we can learn some things about the nature of marriage from polygamous marriages in no way constitutes an approval of polygamous unions. God created one man and one woman in the beginning. Christ has one bride, the Christian Church. Christian leaders are required to be one-woman men. God's pattern is clearly monogamy, and so polygamous unions are substandard unions, not reflecting God's creation design. But polygamous marriages are still recognizable marriages, in the same way that a badly drawn triangle can be a recognizable triangle. Homosexual "marriages" are like a circular triangle, a contradiction in terms. It is the difference between a deficient marriage and an un-marriage. That said, we can learn things about monogamous marriage from what God required in polygamous settings. For example, when an Israelite man took a second

wife, he was prohibited from robbing his first wife of her due, and he he owed her was full closets, full cupboards, and full arms (Ex. 21:10). Thus a husband who has no intention of ever taking a second wife can learn something of his responsibilities to his one and only wife.

Having set this out, the outline of my argument is straightforward. MM is a view that could only develop after the monogamous view of marriage had largely prevailed in Western culture. If we try to place MM in the context of the Old Testament, we find ourselves defending absurdities. But of course, if MM is correct, it would have to function equally well in polygamous societies as in monogamous. But it doesn't.

Many examples could be multiplied. But here is one:

“And Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife” (Gen. 16:3).

Now Hagar was a wife with fewer rights, a concubine in effect, but she was nevertheless Abram’s wife. The word used here is *ishah*, the word used earlier in Genesis to describe Eve when given to Adam. Sarai, Abram’s *ishah*, took her handmaid Hagar, and gave her to Abram to be his *ishah*. Whatever Sarai was, Hagar was also.

The question before us is this. Can a man have two wives? (Again, I am not asking if he *should*. I am asking if he *can*.) In the Old Testament, he was certainly capable of having two wives simultaneously, and the Bible describes second wives as wives. Not as mistresses, or fornication partners, but as wives. But in our current debates, the MM position is forced by definition to say that a man cannot have two wives serially — the second one is considered to be no true wife at all. The first union formed is the only marriage union that can be formed, and all other unions are perpetually illegitimate.

But this means that the position is forced to argue that a polygamist is not an adulterer, and that a man married to a second wife today is an adulterer. Thus if Bob marries Suzy, and then later adds Sally, he is not committing adultery. But if Bob marries Suzy, later puts her away, and then marries Sally, according to the position he is committing adultery, and must divorce Sally to get out of the adultery. But as the logic-rot of Obergefell continues to work its way through our culture, we are not that far away from polygamy becoming fully legal. When that happens, could Bob get out of the adultery simply by marrying Suzy again?

If an advocate of MM wants to avoid such absurdities, he has to say that taking a second wife, even in the time of the Old Testament, was adulterous. But the problem with that is how the Bible describes such women as wives. But if MM is true, how could they be *wives*? And if they are wives, how are second wives (in our day) not wives equally?

In short, God takes us from where we are, and not from where we should have been. If there have been broken covenants in our past, we must repent and receive forgiveness for what we have done. But having received that forgiveness, we are not to compound the problems our sin caused by trying to fix them on a false principle.

Engaging the Culture

Sex and Culture

Have 'Em Delivered

Write to the Editor

109 COMMENTS

Oldest

**jsn** 7 years ago

If you see polygamy on the horizon perhaps you should write on how the church should handle this issue. If the remarriage was adultery at what point is it no longer adultery and becomes a legitimate marriage?



Reply

**Drew** 7 years ago| [Reply to jsn](#)

If there were not Biblical grounds for a person's divorce and the person gets remarried, then the act of taking vows and sexually consummating the re-marriage is what constitutes the adultery. But after the re-marriage is consummated, it is a real marriage, and the two people are not living in perpetual adultery. It would be wrong to get divorced, so the right thing to do is to stay married.



Reply

**Carter** 7 years ago

I'm not sure I follow this completely – is it fair to say that you believe that (assuming an unlawful divorce) getting remarried is adultery, but that at that point staying remarried does not constitute continued adultery?



Reply

**bethyada** 7 years ago| [Reply to Carter](#)

Yes



Reply

**jillybean** 7 years ago| [Reply to Carter](#)

I can't understand this. If getting remarried is adultery, how could staying remarried not constitute ongoing adultery? In my church, if you do this and there are children to consider, the least that is expected is that there be separate beds and no ongoing sexual activity.



Reply

**Carter** 7 years ago| Reply to [jillybean](#)

I'd also like to see the idea unfolded a bit more, jillybean. However, I suppose you could make a case something like this: I take it for granted that adultery can sever the marriage covenant such that a future marriage by the people involved does not constitute adultery. This is a standard Protestant reading of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 19:9. Suppose that someone gets married despite no adultery having occurred to sever the previous marriage. In getting married, that person commits adultery. Since they have committed adultery, their original marriage covenant is broken, so going forward the new marriage does... [Read more »](#)



Reply

**Conserbatives_conserve_little** 7 years ago

Let's step this back just a bit. Let's assume the Lord converts a Muslim man who has three wives and they are in a country where polygamy is legal. I don't believe he should divorce #2 or 3, just because he became a Christian. He should stay with them unless circumstances force otherwise. Why. If they are married, the Lord hates Divorce. Such a man could never be a church leader, but he should stay polygamous. If A then B. If polygamy is legalized, the same thing would apply here. Obviously, people can come up with what if scenaria and... [Read more »](#)



Reply

**Conserbatives_conserve_little** 7 years ago| Reply to [Conserbatives_conserve_little](#)

I just though about Leviticus 18:18 . If that came about, a church would have to demand separation. It seems that every Bible verse on polygamy is designed to protect the woman.



Reply

**Bike bubba** 7 years ago| Reply to [Conserbatives_conserve_little](#)

I think the church would offer separation as a remedy when it became clear that the man was not able to meet the needs of his wives. You could do this for incoming members—asking the wives whether they're getting the things they need—or in church discipline proceedings.

I would dare say that it is coming down the pike, and we ought to make sure it's in our church constitutions.



Reply



wisdumb 7 years ago

| Reply to [Bike bubba](#)

But, could those extra wives remarry without being adulterous?



Reply



Bike bubba 7 years ago

| Reply to [wisdumb](#)

I think so—does not 1 Cor. 7 say that each man should have his own wife, and vice versa, lest people burn? The way I see polygamy is that 99% of the time, it's an unjust system and the wives are the biggest victims. So to deny them a chance to remarry victimizes them again while letting their victimizers get off scot-free.



Reply



40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN 7 years ago

| Reply to [Bike bubba](#)

The way I see polygamy is that 99% of the time, it's an unjust system and the wives are the biggest victims. Of course you do. Male feminists always see women as victims, even when they're killing their babies, or deciding they want to marry a man who's already got one or more wives. If four women willingly choose to marry the same man, you feel bad for them, instead of the three men they've rejected. But, as we know, except for preachers, who are oh so very spiritual, men pretty much suck. So they deserve to go through life... [Read more »](#)



Reply



Dunsworth 7 years ago

| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

Let's see — what results in more men going through life alone: polygyny or monogamy?



Reply



40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN 7 years ago

| Reply to [Dunsworth](#)

Let's see — what results in more men going through life alone: polygyny or monogamy? Are you serious? Let's do the math. The ratio of men to women is about 1:1. Now, calm down — ratio isn't a cuss word. It's just a fancy word for comparing the number of one thing to the number of another thing. So if the ratio of men to women is about 1:1, that means that the number of women is basically equal to the number of men. Still with me? I don't want to go too fast. Now, let's consider a society where... [Read more »](#)



Reply



Dunsworth 7 years ago

| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

Absolutely nothing. I never meant to suggest otherwise. What made you think I did? I asked the question, believing the answer to be obvious and not requiring your extended explanation.

But then I wonder why your pro-polygyny argumentation includes a back-handed slap at men who ostensibly want men to be alone. It's defenders of polygyny that are willing to have men be alone, not those who argue against it (for whatever reason.)



Reply



40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN 7 years ago

| Reply to [Dunsworth](#)

Yeah.

Nice try.

LMAO



Reply



Dunsworth 7 years ago

| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

“Let’s see — what results in more men going through life alone: polygyny or monogamy?”

LOL this is amusing. I post the above, knowing the blindingly obvious right answer, and you assume that I believe the wrong one.

You never fail to disappoint. (And yes, I meant it that way.)



Reply



katie 7 years ago

| Reply to [Dunsworth](#)

Careful, Jane. He might go fuss and whine to Doug that the ladies are on the warpath again.



Reply



Bike bubba 7 years ago

| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

I guess you’re right. It’s not like we have 6000 years of history where polygamist men castrated their rivals or sent them off to war to die, and certainly it’s not like the majority of women in harems were slaves. Nope, it’s all like Hugh Hefner persuading women to share his bed, except we’ll ignore the fact they cheated on him.

Nope, it's feminism to object to men being killed and castrated, I guess, and I'll have to live with that. Maybe I can have lunch with Gloria Steinem or something.



Reply



40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN 7 years ago

| Reply to [Bike bubba](#)

I guess you're right. It's not like we have 6000 years of history where polygamist men castrated their rivals or sent them off to war to die, and certainly it's not like the majority of women in harems were slaves. Nope, it's all like Hugh Hefner persuading women to share his bed, except we'll ignore the fact they cheated on him. We're talking about polygamy. No one said anything about brutalization or killing or castration, or forcing women to marry against their will. You just brought those up to change the subject when called out for your feminism. Nope, it's... [Read more »](#)



Reply



Bike bubba 7 years ago

| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

A degree of cruelty, generally including the threat of death or mutilation, is historically required to sustain widespread polygamy. Exactly where do you think Ahasuerus got the harem keepers?

And yes, I would posit that a man involved in polygamy would in fact be deprived of the joy of loving one woman for life, especially if she clued in—as she doubtless would—to the cruelties that he'd perpetrated to get her and her harem buddies.



Reply



40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN 7 years ago

| Reply to [Bike bubba](#)

And you say the wives are the biggest victims, not the murdered men.



Reply



Bike bubba 7 years ago

| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

Absolutely. It is not the murdered men who are raped for years or decades in a harem before being shown the door to abject poverty when they get wrinkles, after all. A man who is murdered, if he knows Christ, knows a short time of terror and pain and is then in the arms of his Savior. And yes, I am saying emphatically that most women subject to polygamy are in effect raped. We do not have the term “white slavery” because harem inmates were there of their own free will. You know, there are these things called “books” and... [Read more »](#)



Reply

**40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN** 7 years ago| Reply to [Bike bubba](#)

Absolutely. It is not the murdered men who are raped for years or decades in a harem before being shown the door to abject poverty when they get wrinkles, after all. A man who is murdered, if he knows Christ, knows a short time of terror and pain and is then in the arms of his Savior. Oh, I get it – you’re saying Bathsheba was the real victim in that whole affair, and Uriah got off easy by being murdered. Straight to heaven – what a lucky guy! Really, David did him a huge favor, when you think about... [Read more »](#)



Reply

**Bike bubba** 7 years ago| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

Like I said, if you got into these “books” and “websites” and “logic”, you might learn something. For example, if you read the “Bible”, you might learn that there were a lot more victims of that case than you’re mentioning. Give it a try. It won’t hurt you.



Reply

**40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN** 7 years ago| Reply to [Bike bubba](#)

you might learn that there were a lot more victims of that case than you’re mentioning.

Which wouldn’t change the fact that you say Uriah got off easy by being murdered, and Bathsheba was the biggest victim in the whole affair.



Reply

**Bike bubba** 7 years ago| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

Well, apart from not being what I said at all...work on your reading comprehension, OK?



Reply

**40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN** 7 years ago| Reply to [Bike bubba](#)

You can deny saying what you clearly said all you want. Anyone can read the thread and see that you said that women in polygamous marriages are bigger victims than men who are murdered to reduce the competition. Here it is again for anyone who missed it: Absolutely. It is not the murdered men who are raped for years or decades in a harem before being shown the

door to abject poverty when they get wrinkles, after all. A man who is murdered, if he knows Christ, knows a short time of terror and pain and is then in the... [Read more »](#)



Reply



Christopher Casey 7 years ago

| [Reply to 40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

“If four women willingly choose to marry the same man, you feel bad for them, instead of the three men they’ve rejected.”

Who you feel bad for isn’t an either or proposition.



Reply



40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN 7 years ago

| [Reply to Christopher Casey](#)

Are you and Dunsworth related? Your debating styles are strikingly similar.



Reply



Christopher Casey 7 years ago

| [Reply to 40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

Not that I’m aware of, just refuting the implied false dichotomy in your statement.

Full disclosure: I don’t feel bad for the men or women.



Reply



jillybean 7 years ago

| [Reply to 40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

I’m sympathetic to those brought up in cults who are forced into plural marriages and who don’t believe they have any other option. Like the FLDS in that Arizona hell hole; the ones who wear little house on the prairie dresses.

Otherwise I would agree that they are the authors of their own misfortune.



Reply



40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN 7 years ago

| [Reply to jillybean](#)

I’m sympathetic to those brought up in cults who are forced into plural marriages and who don’t believe they have any other option. Like the FLDS in that Arizona hell hole; the ones who wear little house on the prairie dresses. Right. All of us are. Otherwise I would agree that they are the authors of their own misfortune. But Bike says that’s where you’re wrong, because women can’t willingly choose polygamy – virtually all polygamy is rape. David was a

rapist. Abraham was a rapist. Jacob was a rapist. Solomon was probably the worst rapist in history, with 1000... [Read more »](#)



Reply



Trumen 7 years ago

| [Reply to wisdumb](#)

Only “un-engaged” virgins and widows are able to marry in the bible all other women are women that belong to men (1 Cor 7v8-11) and hence of limit until the men that own them are dead. The church cannot offer separation as a remedy just as the doctor cannot offer hydrochloric acid as a remedy for a headache. Whenever polygamy is discussed people forget the Messiah’s word on divorce Mat 19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, EXCEPT it be for fornication(Woman cheating on man), and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her... [Read more »](#)



Reply



Lance Roberts 7 years ago

| [Reply to Conserbatives_conserve_little](#)

I think what happened in Ezra might come into play here.



Reply



Billtownphysics 7 years ago

| [Reply to Conserbatives_conserve_little](#)

I agree, women should not be punished because the law allows polygamy. If a man becomes a Christian, and he has two wives, “he should remain in his current condition” I think is the 1 Corinthians 7 principle that applies.



Reply



BPG 7 years ago

| [Reply to Conserbatives_conserve_little](#)

I agree with you here. When I was in college my anthropology teacher made a point of talking about Christian missionaries teaching villagers someplace that polygamy was wrong and men choosing their favorite wife and divorcing the rest. Obviously that would be a bad deal for those wives.



Reply



Trumen 7 years ago

| [Reply to Conserbatives_conserve_little](#)

Do you have a bible passage you quote that reflects you hatred and toleration of polygyny. I notice that you did not present any scripture for any of your directives for the church. The reason i ask for quotes

that reflect your disposition is because in my eight year study of the topic of polygyny in the bible i have not found any verse that is even slightly hostile towards polygyny. As for the church not performing a polygamous marriage, it seems strange that you would say this considering that The Maker was matchmaker between between Jacob and his 4... [Read more »](#)



Reply



ME 7 years ago

Ha! That is confusing. I like Matthew 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,” not just in terms of marriage, but regarding life in general. As Wilson says here, “God takes us from where we are, and not from where we should have been.” We are rarely “where we should have been,” so Jesus speaks to the ideal, the way it was in the beginning, the way God designed it, versus the path we have taken. Because we are so deeply flawed, we... [Read more »](#)



Reply



Lance Roberts 7 years ago

I agree as far as you’ve gone here, but I think you hit the slippery slope when you talk about covenant marriage as being something breakable. That quickly leads to people justifying divorce and remarriage when God made clear that was a sin. It may happen, and I don’t think trying to retro the whole thing does any good, but we still have to recognize it as sin (even if you don’t think it’s a crime, which I do think there is more to the argument on).



Reply



katecho 7 years ago

| [Reply to Lance Roberts](#)

Lance Roberts wrote: I think you hit the slippery slope when you talk about covenant marriage as being something breakable. God had a covenant marriage with Israel. “Can a virgin forget her ornaments, Or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me Days without number. ... And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also. ... “Surely, as a woman treacherously departs from her lover, So you have... [Read more »](#)



Reply



"A" dad 7 years ago

| [Reply to katecho](#)

The good shepherd looks after and searches for his sheep, regardless of how clueless and lost the sheep may be.



Reply

**katecho** 7 years ago| Reply to ["A" dad](#)

Remarriage (new covenant) is not out of the question (see also Jeremiah 3:12-14, and 31:31-33), but divorce is objective covenant language. Paul speaks positively of natural branches being grafted back into the covenant Root again, but notes that they were objectively broken out from it for unbelief.



Reply

**"A" dad** 7 years ago| Reply to [katecho](#)

I don't disagree . All sheep and all branches get in the wrong place some times.????



Reply

**Drew** 7 years ago| Reply to [Lance Roberts](#)

Jesus believed that covenant marriage was breakable. Breaking the marriage is the sin.



Reply

**bethyada** 7 years ago| Reply to [Lance Roberts](#)

English problem.

Breakable = able to be broken; can

Breakable = allowed to be broken; may

Doug means able



Reply

**Jonathan** 7 years ago

“Now Hagar was a wife with fewer rights, a concubine in effect, but she was nevertheless Abram’s wife. The word used here is ishah, the word used earlier in Genesis to describe Eve when given to Adam. Sarai, Abram’s ishah, took her handmaid Hagar, and gave her to Abram to be his ishah. Whatever Sarai was, Hagar was also.”

Thank you for clarifying that. I made that point repeatedly in a discussion about a month ago, and my conversation partner simply refused to believe that Hagar was actually Abraham’s wife.



Reply

**"A" dad** 7 years ago| Reply to [Jonathan](#)

Not only that, but Ishmael was Abe's son, and Abe was a stand up guy who loved both of his sons. Strangely enough, God asked Abe to give up both of them, and after a fashion, and Abe did!



Reply

**Darren** 7 years ago

I'm not sure that all insolubalists take the MM route. You say on the 2 wives at the same time, there is a difference between SHOULD & CAN... surely that's the same with sequential wives (or husbands). A 2nd marriage is a marriage, The question is, should it be encouraged, should Ministers agree to conduct them etc?



Reply

**bethyada** 7 years ago

Having read this a couple of times I think I am in agreement here. I think the new wife is a wife. The MM position is not feasible as Deut 24 specifically says that in the case of divorce and remarriage the wife cannot go back to her first husband after a second divorce. Paul alludes to this in 1Co 7 and tells the woman to remain unmarried so that she can be reconciled to her husband. What is not discussed is that Jesus' words are words to people bound in God's covenant (to the Jews at the time, and... [Read more »](#))



Reply

**timothy** 7 years ago

I will be collecting my pro-polygamy arguments and will attempt to defend them here against all comers. (I don't subscribe to them, I am just somewhat familiar with them) I will be adopting katecho's third-person debate custom for this sub-thread. First some definitions: 1. Polygamy : many spouses. blanket term for polyandry (many men) and polygyny (many women) . 2. The Bible defines only polygynous marriages, I am not aware of any instance of polyandrous marriages. 3. In a polygynous marriage of N wives, there are N covenants. (as distinct from 1 covenant into which N wives enter under the... [Read more »](#))



Reply

**jesuguru** 7 years ago| Reply to [timothy](#)

I'd been thinking about polygyny vs polyandry before coming across your post... If the culture continues down its current path, certainly polygamy is next on the list, and of course our egalitarian secular government/populace/judicial activists would have both codified equally. What should the church do when Suzy shows up with Bob and Dave?

Of course, Suzy will be able to show up "legally" with Bob and Dave AND Sally, but that's a little clearer Biblically.



Reply



timothy 7 years ago

| Reply to [jesuguru](#)

I was debating a man who argues that polygyny is a positive good, supported by scripture that the Christian churches should adopt to solve several cultural and scriptural problems.

The case of Suzy with Bob and Dave is not allowed under O.T. law. Yet, now that you mention it, the pagans will insist that not only must the cake be baked, but *that* specific variant of polygamy must be 'celebrated'.



Reply



Andrew 7 years ago

| Reply to [timothy](#)

Ezekiel 23 portrays YHWH as being in a polygynous relationship with Israel and Judah. While drawing direct lines from analogies between God / his people and us / us must be done with care, it's worth noting that no negative connotation attaches to the polygynous nature of the illustration (as opposed to the sisters' whoring, which provokes God to anger and grief).



Reply



timothy 7 years ago

(Pro polygyny*) Polygyny is established by God in Scripture in two places: First God establishes polygyny in : Genesis 2:24. 24Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.25And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Here is the grant of authority for the man (not the woman) to initiate marriage. It is not restrictive to any specific number of wives. Second, God affirms polygyny in the Law of the Levirate: Dueteronomy 25:5-20 5“If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies... [Read more »](#)



Reply



timothy 7 years ago

| Reply to [timothy](#)

(Pro polygyny *) The Law of the Lord is perfect. Psalm 19 tells us that “The law of the Lord is perfect”, we are not free to add to or delete from what He has written for our instruction. This means we are to take what God has written about polygyny in that spirit. My annotations to Psalm 19:7 serve to highlight the importance of taking polygyny seriously as God would have us do. 7 The law of the Lord (regarding polygyny) is perfect,[c] reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord (regarding polygyny) is sure, making wise the simple;... [Read more »](#)



Reply



timothy 7 years ago

| [Reply to timothy](#)

(Pro polygyny *) God does not change Malachi 3:6 “For I the Lord do not change” Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. And, Jesus, who is God came not to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it. 17“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 18“For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19“Whoever then annuls one of the least of... [Read more »](#)



Reply



bethyada 7 years ago

| [Reply to timothy](#)

Yes to Deut, no to Gen. Though your comment is correct, it is over-reading this to state that God is establishing freedom. The whole example in Genesis is one wife, so the lack of mention of other wives is irrelevant. It is better to argue by example so we see that Genesis actually teaches one wife. If we are to allow polygamy then Genesis implies that each marriage is its own marriage (Fred to Sal, Fred to Tina; not Fred to Sal and Tina). But polygamy needs to be established separately from Genesis: that is, if we knew nothing else... [Read more »](#)



Reply



timothy 7 years ago

| [Reply to bethyada](#)

With his comment on Genesis, bethyada is adding to Scripture by creating a restriction that God did not place there. This is something God tells us to not do. The law of the Lord is perfect. We are not to add restrictions to it that are not there. Regarding divorce, bethyada should note that the regulations in Deuteronomy were not handed down from God, but were a judgement of Moses. Jesus Himself says in Mathew 19 that 8He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has... [Read more »](#)



Reply



bethyada 7 years ago

| Reply to [timothy](#)

No restriction is placed, but idea that polygamy is endorsed established (which is what you originally claimed) here is not in the passage. If one is to look for what is in the passage it is clearly one man and one woman. So while no command may be given in Genesis, the principle of first things is there (what is meant the first time something is mentioned in Genesis). Perhaps Timothy does not like the principle of analogy because he wants to justify his two wives.* My idea of regulating sin was more subtle than Timothy has responded to. It... [Read more »](#)



Reply



timothy 7 years ago

| Reply to [bethyada](#)

No restriction is placed, but idea that polygamy is endorsed (which is what you originally claimed) here is not in the passage. I did not claim that God endorses polygyny in Genesis 3. I wrote: Polygyny is established by God in Scripture in two places... Perhaps my language needs tightening and I am open to bethyada's suggestion on the matter, but it is clear that God has placed zero prohibitions on the number of wives a husband can have and that God regulates polygyny. The two facts taken together clearly establish polygyny in God's eyes. Since God never establishes bad... [Read more »](#)



Reply



bethyada 7 years ago

| Reply to [timothy](#)

I answered from within Disqus so couldn't see your original comment and was writing from memory. Corrected though my argument is the same, Genesis does not establish any such thing. The most that can be said is that Genesis is consistent with polygamy, but that is a far cry from establishing it. Not certain if you are wanting to create your best argument for polygamy based on Scriptural teaching, or the best rhetorical argument. I am happy to respond to the former but less interested in the latter. Nevertheless, will try to read your thoughts as I have time. In... [Read more »](#)



Reply



timothy 7 years ago

| Reply to [bethyada](#)

Genesis does not establish any such thing.

Correct, but the two taken together do. In Genesis we see no restriction and in Deut we see God regulating it. This is what I mean by "establish".

In the spirit of Scriptural facts, God specifically commands against multiplying wives, and a husband is not to neglect provision including sex. These place a limit on the number of wives; “zero prohibitions” needs to be modified.

Scripture does what you say. I will post these things later in this series of comments.



Reply



40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN 7 years ago

Can someone explain how having your wife get implanted with embryos and give birth to another man’s baby is any different than just telling your wife to go have sex with another man?

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2016/04/21/my-wife-and-i-are-white-evangelicals-heres-why-we-chose-to-give-birth-to-black-triplets/>



Reply



invisiblegardener 7 years ago

| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

So you want someone to explain to you how not having sex is different than having sex?



Reply



40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN 7 years ago

| Reply to [invisiblegardener](#)

Hey, that’s a really insightful response!

But where sin abounded, deep thinkers did much more abound.



Reply



invisiblegardener 7 years ago

| Reply to [40 ACRES & A KARDASHIAN](#)

If you’re suggesting that excuses for sin can masquerade as deep thinking, sure. I don’t see that much deep thinking is needed to defend the basic idea of embryo adoption. If you want to make a case against embryo adoption, lay it out.



Reply



ME 7 years ago

| Reply to [invisiblegardener](#)

We once had a President who struggled with that very thing.



Reply



Chris Duncan 7 years ago

1 Corinthians 6:15-16 says, “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Then taking the members of Christ, shall I make [them] members of a harlot? Let it not be! Or do you not know that he being joined to a harlot is one body? For He says, The two [shall be] into one flesh.” This clearly references Genesis 2:24. (a) Have the harlot and the one being joined to the harlot become one body, one flesh? (b) Has the cleaving made them one flesh? (c) Is the cleaving and becoming one flesh a marriage to a... [Read more »](#)



Reply



Frank Turk 7 years ago

Jesus refuting the Pharisees endorsed the CM view over and above the MM view. When asked about the wife of 7 brothers in the resurrection, he did not say, “well, you guys got me: I never thought of that because she’s the wife of all of them, darn it.” Rather he said that marriage in this life is not transferable into the next life. Marriage in this life is finite.

Nice work, Doug. I’m with ya.



Reply



Apple 7 years ago

To those of you who call having more than one wife in the Old Testament adultery, you need to figure out what to do with the command for becoming a kinsman redeemer.



Reply



Jenn C 7 years ago

I’m researching plural marriage for a project I am working on. I want to get in touch with people who are looking for a 2nd or 3rd wife, and want to hear their story! I’m new to this world, so I have a lot of questions and am just looking to understand better. If that interests you, please email me at Jennifer.c8787@gmail.com .



Reply



High Noon Entertainment 7 years ago

NOW CASTING: A major Cable Production Company is currently seeking Polygamist couples seeking new a new wife/wives.

Are you a married Polygamist looking to find your second, third, fourth or even fifth wife?

If so, please email our Casting Producer at mparent@highnoontv.c



Jake Sanders 2 years ago

Thank you for this perspective. If I may add a thought. The Hebrew ishah simply means “woman”, it’s the same word in Ruth when Boaz calls her a noble woman, when she was still unmarried. Therefore, “ishah” cannot simply mean “wife” in every passage, it has to be determined by context. Eve was certainly Adam’s woman, but other passages tell us what kind of woman (a wife). And the Exodus 21 passage certainly is talking about a woman, but context says it is particularly a slave woman aka a concubine. These were rules for concubines, not wives. They are also... [Read more »](#)



Dmonay 1 year ago

“Christ has one bride, the Christian Church. Christian leaders are required to be one-woman men. God’s pattern is clearly monogamy, and so polygamous unions are substandard unions, not reflecting God’s creation design.” Christ is the head of the church (ekklēsia) aka the body, a congregation of 2.2 billion or so believers who submit to him. This is actually incredibly polygynous in nature not monogamous. God describes Himself as having 2 brides, Israel and Judah in more than one place. The scripture is littered with polygynous examples without a single word of correction from God/Jesus on the matter. Christian leaders are... [Read more »](#)



Hunchback luser 5 months ago

Remarriage is directly forbidden by Christ Himself, and polygamy only leads to ruin, as we see in the case of Solomon. Being a child in a such a household is not much better than growing up with step parents. Arguing for polygamy makes people look sex-obsessed anyway; as if you cannot control yourself, are slave to lust, because based on lust it is, since deeper relations will not develop with such a lifestyle. Sex is a curse from God anyway, just as work was cursed. The woman was clearly cursed, and the first deed after leaving paradise was Adam “knowing”... [Read more »](#)

