



GOSPEL-WORK IN
COVENANT, BROKENNESS, & REDEMPTION

LifePointe Church
sharethelife.org
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Statement of Conviction Regarding

Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

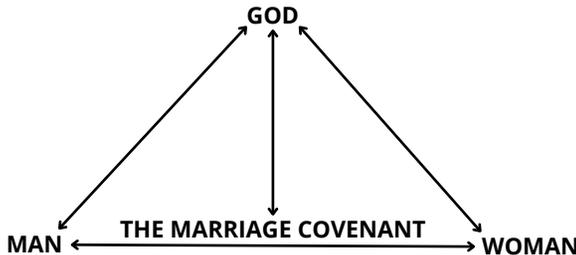
The Elder Board of LifePointe Church of Fort Collins
May 2010

Likely the most precious and profound of human relationships in this fallen world is that between a man and a woman in marriage. Established by God for the purpose of complementary companionship¹, chaste sexual intimacy², and procreation³, it is a covenant union of two human beings whereby the two become one flesh⁴. Through this union, and the family that it produces, marriage forms a special means whereby humans reflect, as God's image bearers, the relationship that is intrinsic to God's triune nature⁵. Marriage is defined by creation and the law of God to be a legal and moral joining of only one man to only one woman for the duration of their mutual earthly lives⁶. A Christian is to willfully and knowingly marry only another Christian⁷. Christian marriage, when lived in love and respect, becomes a portrait of the bond between Christ and His church⁸. As such, marriage is to be cherished, nurtured, and guarded with great attention and reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

Divorce, which constitutes the fracture and destruction of this most special of human ties, is hated by God⁹. Every effort should be made to prevent it from occurring. Nevertheless, there are specific sinful situations that may befall a Christian which warrant divorce. The first is physical sexual immorality by one's spouse, believer or unbeliever in Christ¹⁰. The second is desertion by an unbelieving spouse¹¹. In both cases, divorce should be considered only when all reasonable means to repair and restore the marriage relationship have been attempted. Though less clear in Scripture, a possible third situation warranting divorce is persistent unrepentant physical abuse.¹² Divorce for any other reason constitutes adultery, or unfaithfulness to the marriage covenant.

In the case where a spouse who professes to be a follower of Christ deserts a Christian, the church should follow the course of discipline and restoration, laid out by Christ, toward the deserting spouse¹³. If the deserting spouse remains unrepentant, refusing to return, he or she should be treated as an unbeliever, and the faithful spouse is not bound but is free to divorce and remarry. Remarriage is permitted in the case of the death of a spouse¹⁴, and following divorce for reasons of sexual immorality or desertion by an unbelieving spouse.

By the grace of God, the leadership of LifePointe Church of Fort Collins will strive to esteem and honor marriage; teach the congregation biblical principles about a joyful, thriving, and Christ-honoring marriage; provide biblical training and guidance for couples considering marriage; counsel and support marriage relationships to prevent divorce and to chart a course for marital success; discipline and restore offending spouses when necessary; and guide church members in discerning when legitimate grounds for divorce are present and in a healthy process of remarriage.



Genesis 2:18-25

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man."

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Ephesians 5:21-33

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

¹ Gen. 2:18; Mal. 2:14
² 1 Cor. 7:2 - 9; Heb. 13:4; Prov. 5:18 - 19
³ Gen. 1:28; Jer. 29:5 - 6
⁴ Gen. 2:23 - 24; Matt. 19:4 - 6; Mark 10:5 - 9
⁵ Gen. 1:27 - 28
⁶ Matt. 19:5 - 6; Rom. 7:2 - 3
⁷ 1 Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14
⁸ Eph. 5:22 - 33
⁹ Mal. 2:15 - 16
¹⁰ Matt. 5:31 - 32; 19:8 - 9
¹¹ 1 Cor. 7:12 - 15 (in relation to 1 Cor. 7:39)
¹² Mal. 2:16
¹³ Matt. 18:15 - 17
¹⁴ Rom. 7:2 - 3; 1 Cor. 7:39