

Polygamy - cont.

Argument: Exodus 21:10ff and Deuteronomy 21:15-17 are laws about the practice of polygamy.

Answer: These texts regulate polygamy, but do not approve it. Polygamy in the Old Testament is like divorce (Deuteronomy 24:1-4) and other sinful practices (Deuteronomy 23:19). God regulated these practices without approving of them.

Argument: The Levirate marriage law approves of polygamy (Deuteronomy. 25:5-10).

Answer: This argument assumes that the brother who marries his brother's widow is already married. But this is not necessarily the case. The brother doing the marrying could be a younger, unmarried brother (see Genesis 38).

Argument: Leviticus 18:17-18 teaches that you cannot marry a woman and her daughter / sister, but it says nothing of marrying another woman.

Answer: This is an argument from silence. The same line of reasoning applied to Leviticus 19:29 would permit one to turn another man's daughter

Polygamy - cont.

into a harlot.

The truth is, marriage is honorable (Hebrews 13:4) when it is homo sapien (not with animals), heterosexual (not homosexual), monogamous (not polygamous), and pure (not adulterated).

- Chris Reeves -

Warfield Blvd. church of Christ
290 Warfield Blvd.
Clarksville, TN 37043

Website
wbcoc.org

Radio Program
Sundays: 8:30 - 9:00 am
WVWB FM 105.1 The Wolf

Assembly Times
Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 5 pm
Wednesday: 7 pm

Everyone Is Welcome!
For More Information Call
(931) 647-1324

Published and Edited By
Chris Reeves
(615) 389-3250
chrisreevesmail@gmail.com
TheGoodTeacher.com

THE WARFIELD BULLETIN

October 6, 2024



For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

Polygamy: What Does the Bible Say?

Polygamy (lit. “many marriage”) is the practice of one person (usually a man) marrying two or more persons. This is actually popular in different places around the world and it is not limited to religious groups. Because of this, we would do well to examine this practice in light of the Bible in case we are approached about the matter.

Who practices polygamy?

Different people around the world practice polygamy. Tribal peoples, Muslims (see Qur’an 4:3), and Mormons / FLDS (see Doctrine & Covenants 132), all practice polygamy. The Christian Polygamy Movement, founded by Mark Henkle in 1994, continues to promote polygamy (see Truthbearer.org). The TV program “Sister Wives” has also popularized the practice.

What is God’s plan for marriage?

God’s plan for marriage from the beginning has always been monogamy — one man and one woman — “the two shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:15). Jesus also upheld this same arrangement in his day (Matthew 19:5-6; Mark 10:8), as well as the apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31). The New Testament law

on marriage speaks of one man and one woman only (Romans 7:2-3). Paul wrote that each man is to have his own wife and each woman is to have her own husband (1 Corinthians 7:2). All other deviant sexual relationships are wicked: polygamy, homosexuality, bestiality, adultery, and fornication (“living together”).

What about polygamy in the Old Testament?

Argument: There are several polygamists mentioned in the Old Testament (approximately 19), men like Lamach, Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, etc., whose polygamy is never condemned by God; therefore, polygamy must be right.

Answer: God’s lack of condemning these Old Testament cases of polygamy does not imply that he approves of such. No positive rule can be drawn from what God fails to do. God’s expressed will (not his silence) is in favor of monogamy (Genesis 2:24), not polygamy.

Why then was polygamy not immediately punished? God does not always immediately reward obedience or punish disobedience. Remember, suffering the consequences of polygamy was punishment enough for men like Abraham, David, and Solomon. The Old Testament records and

regulates polygamy without approving it. God’s silence (there is no “Thou shalt not commit polygamy” in the Old Testament) is not approval!

When it comes to marriage in the Old Testament, monogamy, not polygamy, was the norm. Read the following: Genesis 20:3-7; Exodus 20:7; 21:5; Leviticus 18:8,16,18; 20:10; 21:13; Numbers 5:12; Deuteronomy 5:21; 22; 28:54,56; Proverbs 5:18-20; 12:4; 18:22; 19:13; 31:10-31; and Ecclesiastes 9:9; Malachi 2:10-16.

Argument: God is depicted as a bigamist married to two women in Jeremiah 3 and Ezekiel 23.

Answer: These passages are symbolic and analogous of God’s love toward Israel and Judah. Note also that Israel and Judah were “sisters” in these texts. Can a man marry two sisters then (see Leviticus 18:18)?

Argument: God gave David his wives (2 Samuel 12:8).

Answer: God can give things without approving of them (Hosea 13:11). Note also that God would “give” away these wives to another (2 Samuel 12:11; see 16:22).