

DOES THE BIBLE TEACH MARRIAGE FOR ETERNITY?

Bible doctrine concerning the duration and purposes of marriage excludes the idea that marriage extends beyond the grave. An apostle of the Lord has written that marriage bonds are broken at death.

"Know ye not. . .how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman who hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed. . ." (Romans 7:1,2).

Responding to questions about the possibility of marriage beyond the grave, the Savior Himself explained that marriage is neither contracted in heaven nor is anyone presented to another as a marriage partner in heaven. The Lord illustrated what He meant by referring to the unmarried status of angels. ". . .In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (Matthew 22:30).

Marriage was designed as an institution for life on earth, not life in heaven. Speaking to Adam and Eve the Lord said, ". . .Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish THE EARTH. . ." [emphasis mine] (Genesis 1:28).

The Bible contains no command to practice eternal marriage, no ceremony for it, or any description of eternal marriage in prophecies dealing with the resurrection. Matthew 16:19 has been understood by some to prove the validity of eternal marriage because of Christ's words to Peter, ". . .whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. . . ." However, it should be noted (1) this power was committed to Peter and not a religious organization, (2) the binding concerns things and not people, (3) nowhere in the Bible is this principle applied to marriage, and (4) Matthew 18:18,19 interprets this same expression simply as a reference to prayer.

Since we have the Biblical promise, ". . .no good thing will he [God] withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11), we can be assured that eternal life in the presence of God far surpasses even the finest marriage imaginable. Family units will give way to a closer relationship of universal oneness. Residents of heaven will enjoy unrestricted fellowship with all the redeemed. This marvelous eternal life of the saved is available to each marriage partner and family member, but only through individual faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting His all-sufficient work in earning our eternal life for us. ". . .Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

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