

WHY MARRIAGE?

Soon Obsolete?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

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Is marriage on the way out?

Is adultery still wrong?

Is the institution of the home, with its family life, to disappear from society?

How and when did the institution of marriage originate? Does it, after all, serve any necessary purpose?

This booklet takes an in-depth new look at the institutions of marriage, the home, and family life and reveals a startling, even shocking truth which has been altogether overlooked by science, by religion, by education, and by society!

SOME psychologists, taking a new look at the institution of marriage, are voicing shocking predictions for the near future. Indeed, in their professional eyes, the trend toward obsolescence of the marriage custom has already started, and is gaining momentum!

Astonishing?

Yes, indeed! But marriages are not only breaking down all around us; the very usefulness and desirability of the custom is being seriously questioned!

Is marriage on the way out, after all these generations and centuries? Is the home, and family life, to disappear from human society?

Incredible?

Articles voicing this trend of thought are appearing more and more frequently in magazines and newspapers.

Predictions are appearing in print that marriage soon may not be the socially required way for sexual union. Premarital pregnancies are on the upsurge, coincident with an increasing tendency toward public acceptance, and a decreasing sense of stigma.

But does marriage, after all, serve any necessary purpose? To many that may sound like an absurd and foolish question. We take marriage for granted. Children growing up in a normal home with parents, probably brothers, sisters, or both -- other children in similar families in homes all around them -- assume naturally that they will be married some day. No one, in such circumstances, fifty years ago, would ever have thought of questioning marriage as an institution. No one, then, would have asked, even in the secret recesses of his own thoughts, whether or not the state of marriage was desirable for society.

Why Marriage, After All?

Why marriage? Even the very question seems shocking!

But some psychologists are beginning to question it. We should not take things for granted without question. If a tradition or custom is right, it will withstand the questioning.

So we dare to question!

How, then, did the institution of marriage originate?

Strange as it may seem, the “authorities” -- the psychologists, the sociologists, the doctors, the scientists, the educators -- do not know! The rank and file of these “authorities” accept the theory of evolution.

It’s worth thinking about! If man appeared by the evolutionary process, gradually descending through millions of years from some lower-than-human animal species, similar or ancestor to the anthropoid ape, how and when was the custom of marriage started? And WHY?

Animals are male and female. Mammals reproduce their kind, in the same manner as do humans. But animals do not marry! If man is merely the highest of the animals, at what stage of evolutionary development did the near-human or the human “animal” adopt the institution of marriage?

And WHY?

None of the “other” animals has done so!

If moral codes were not first given to mankind by a higher authority, when, why, and how did man devise them?

The “Christian Authority” Questioned

On the other hand, the Christian world has believed in a creation by a Creator.

So we still have a situation which needs to be seriously questioned!

If we are to accept traditional Christianity as the custodian of moral codes, we still must ask: Why marriage? Yes, why? The psychologists are asking: Does traditional Christianity have the answer?

Certain churches have taught that the unmarried state of celibacy is a higher state than marriage. And they have taught that the only purpose of sex is reproduction.

We need to think about that!

If procreation is the only purpose of sex -- if sex has no rightful use in marriage except to bear children -- and if the unmarried state is higher than married life, then, since marriage is not necessary for reproduction, must we not conclude that marriage is not desirable? Would it not, then, be better to use sex to procreate, while living in the higher state of unmarried life?

Of course that would mean that fornication is more righteous than married life! We need to think where such reasoning and such teaching leads!

I repeat. The reproductive process in mammals is the same as in humans. Animals reproduce -- but animals do not marry!

Marriage is not necessary for reproduction! There is a great deal of human reproductions today, without marriage! Indeed, this trend escalates. And society is fast becoming more tolerant, and tending toward acceptance.

Is there, then, any rational and right reason why humans who procreate should marry, while animals who also bear their young do not?

There is, indeed! But not many seem to comprehend it. The real answer has been overlooked -- by traditional Christianity as much as by the followers of the evolutionary theory.

Ever See a Calf Born?

You need to Understand.

The reproductive process is precisely the same in mammals as in humans. But beyond that, animals and humans are utterly dissimilar.

Ever witness the birth of a calf? The male parent -- the bull does not call for an obstetrical physician. Nor does he take the mother cow to a hospital for the delivery. The bull, in all probability, is nowhere around.

Mammals require no help for their young to be born. Or at least they never did until “scientific” or other modern practices of humans in the feeding and handling of animals produced a degenerated situation where, in some cases, human owners need call in a veterinarian.

But, normally, the cow simply, without help or attendant, has her calf born out in the field or, perhaps, in a barn. As soon as it is born, the baby calf begins to stagger to its feet, while the cow stands stupidly waiting. She does not need to care for her young, teach it to eat, or to walk. The newborn calf may be a little wobbly in the legs at first. It may fall back down a time or two. But in a few minutes it is up on all fours and starting to walk.

But is the calf going anywhere? Yes, indeed! No one need teach it or show it the way. It knows where to find its “dinner.”

How does it know?

Well, animals come equipped with built-in instinct. They do not need to learn, or be taught. They do not reason out a decision and act on a judgment. Instinct guides automatically.

With the newborn human all this is different. The purely reproductive process is the same. But, as stated above, beyond this the differences between animal and human are colossal.

How long does it take a human infant to learn to walk? Usually about a year -- often longer. A tiny baby is utterly helpless. It cannot manage even its own bodily processes. It has no instinct, in the strict sense of the word. It must be cared for. It must be taught. It needs parents to care for it, protect it, teach it, and give it love.

It matures so very much more slowly than animals. Yet its potential is infinitely higher. Instead of mere animal brain with built-in automatic instinct, the human baby has a mind. At birth there is, as yet, no knowledge in the mind. But it has the capacity to absorb knowledge and then to reason, to imagine, to think creatively, to plan and design, to formulate judgments, to make decisions, to exercise will and self-discipline. More, it has the faculty to appreciate music, literature, art, and, more important, to develop a sense of moral and spiritual values; to develop even righteous character.

The only purpose of sex in animals is reproduction. But, in humans, reproduction is not the only purpose of sex, as we shall see!

For the transcendently higher purpose of human life, the newborn baby needs parental care, teaching, guidance, love -- and the experience of home and family life.

Transcendently Higher?

But just a moment, please!

Did I say transcendently higher than animal life?

That's exactly what I said!

And though it may seem incredible, that's precisely what I mean.

If humans had evolved from lower animal species, brought about without purpose or design by resident forces devoid of intelligence -- if there had been no planned design by an all-intelligent Creator Being -- no purpose for which humans were put on earth -- then, indeed, we should wonder: "Why marriage?"

And yet the great minds through the centuries have groped in the dark, searching for, yet failing to acquire, the knowledge of that purpose. Perhaps most have taken marriage and family life for granted and themselves followed the custom.

But they didn't know the PURPOSE.

There is an astonishing reason!

The believer in godless evolution can see no transcendently higher purpose in the birth of a baby than in that of a calf or a kitten. He can see only that the human infant is further advanced in supposed evolutionary development. But no transcendent potential.

But let's face it. Let's be honest with the question. Isn't it a bit irrational that science has never proved the theory of evolution, yet believes it -- as a faith? And, further, that science has never disproved the existence of the all-intelligent Personal Being -- the Creator God -- whose existence is proved and provable? And yet, with few exceptions, scientists refuse even to consider the possibility of the supernatural in their postulates.

One writer explained that it is a matter of the reluctance of scientists to accept the existence of God. But it is not mere reluctance. It is psychological rebellion which refuses to accept the fact of the existence of their Maker!

This is written for those who are willing to consider! And what follows for you to consider may be so utterly NEW to you as to seem incredible.

Yet, consider! Think!

Weigh and compare that which explains the WHY of marriage with the only possible views that can be arrived at by the evolutionary approach.

Yes, consider! Consider what one claiming to be God -- the Creator -- reveals! And you judge whether this awesome revelation makes more sense than the only possible explanation founded on the evolutionary approach. You judge whether it gives more rational and inspiring MEANING to life. Check and balance it against the hopeless lack of meaning, purpose, or destiny for human existence offered by the evolutionary theory.

See, now, what the One quoted in the world's best-selling book, the Bible, calling Himself God the Creator, reveals about Himself, and about the reason for human existence, for sex, and for the institution of marriage.

You are not going to read the traditional superstitions rejected by science and labeled by scientists "fundamentalism." What follows is not a new "theory," or interpretation, or human-devised idea. It is merely what the Book plainly says, without interpretation. It is only what has been written there through the centuries -- yet expect to be surprised, shocked, to read what both "science" and "religion" have utterly glossed over!

Is This GOD Speaking?

Who is this speaking? The prophet Isaiah wrote it -- but he quotes the speaker who claims to be God!

“I am the Eternal, and there is none else, there is no God beside me,” says the One quoted (Isa. 45:5).

Further: “Thus saith the Eternal, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me. I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded” (verses 11-12).

Still further: “For thus saith the Eternal that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it ... I am the Eternal; and there is none else ... who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Eternal? and there is no God else beside me ... I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow ... (verses 18-23).

In due time we shall see whether this One claiming to be God shall not be able to force every knee of every atheist and agnostic to bow in humble acknowledgment before Him -- even if He must break their rebellious bones!

This One claiming to be God gives proof that He is God. That proof? Ability to FORE tell what shall happen -- with power to bring it to pass.

The One quoted claims to be GOD: “To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? ...Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am GOD, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure ... yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it” (Isa. 46:5, 9-11).

Then this Personage quoted, claiming to be God, challenges the doubters. He says to them (Moffatt translation): “CONSIDER”! Yes, I have asked the reader to consider! And now the One quoted as GOD says, “Consider and agree that the Eternal’s hand has done it, that Israel’s Majesty has made it all. Now, the Eternal cries, bring your case forward, now, Jacob’s King cries, state your proofs. Let us hear what happened in the past, that we may ponder it, or show me what is yet to be, that we may watch how it turns out; yes, let us hear what is coming, that we may be sure you are gods; come, do something or other that we may marvel at the sight! -- you are things of naught, you can do nothing at all!” (Isa. 41:20-24.)

Thus God challenges and ridicules the scoffer -- and shows that ability to prophesy and bring it to pass is proof of God.

This One who claims He is God has, in the biblical prophecies, foretold, 1900 to 2500 years ago, what was to happen to every major city in the world of that time, and every nation and every prophecy has come to pass!

How important are God-rejecting scientists, compared to the God they refuse to acknowledge?

“Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance [weighing scales]: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing All

nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will you liken God?" (Isa. 40:15-18.)

So now, let us consider what this One claiming to be God reveals. And, though you may have read the Bible, prepare to be astonished!

Man -- Evolved, or Created?

In the very first chapter of the Bible, the One quoted as our Maker reveals the overwhelming difference between animal and human reproduction.

Read it. Don't interpret -- I shall not! -- just consider it as it is.

"And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind ... cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind ..." (Gen. 1:21-25).

This says, without interpretation, God created fish after their particular kind -- birds after their particular bird kind -- cattle after the cattle kind. Each kind may have varieties, but each reproduces after its kind. God did not create animals after the fish kind. Nor fish after a single-celled amoeba kind. But fish after the fish kind. Fish did not evolve after the amoeba kind, but, says Genesis, they were created after the fish kind -- cattle after the cattle kind.

Now what about man?

Continue the quote: "And God said, Let us make man in OUR IMAGE, after OUR LIKENESS ... So God created man in his own image" (verses 26-27). This refutes the theory that man is the highest of the animals, evolving from lower mammals. It says God created man, after the God kind.

Whatever God is like, He made man like Him -- same form and shape. In His likeness -- after His kind!

So this says God made cattle after the cattle kind, and He made man after the God kind! In a way almost none has understood in our deceived world today, this revelation affirms God is reproducing after His kind! And that is rather startling! Yet it is affirmed all through the Bible, both in Old and New Testaments!

Let's make it plain!

This says man was formed in the likeness of GOD.

And what is God like? Many scriptures reveal what God says He is like. We need not guess, imagine, or create gods in our own image.

For example, it is revealed that God has hands in dozens of scriptures, starting with Exodus 9:3; Job 1:11, etc., etc. His "right hand" is spoken of. He has fingers (Exodus 31:18). God created man with hands and fingers, but animals have hoofs, paws, claws, wings, fins. It is plainly stated in the Bible that God has arms, legs, feet, two eyes, a nose, a mouth, a voice, two ears; in a word, God is formed and shaped like humans. God has mind, which can think creatively, design, plan, reason. So does man, even though imperfect. Animals have mere animal brain with automatic instinct, but incapable of the thought, wisdom, judgment, sense of moral responsibility or self-restraint of the human or divine MIND.

So man was framed and shaped to look like God in His likeness.

But God is a spirit (John 4:24). He is composed of spirit, but He formed man out of matter: “And the Eternal God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Gen. 2:7).

Man does not have a soul -- man is a soul, made of matter from the ground, which is to say the soul is made of matter and can die (Ezek. 18:4, 20) regardless of Satan’s lies (Gen. 3:4) which a deceived “traditional Christianity” has borrowed from the pagan religions. Genesis 2:7 is also cited in I Corinthians 15:45, followed with: “Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward [by resurrection] that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man [Christ] is the Lord from heaven And as we [speaking of converted humans] have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also [by resurrection] bear the image of the heavenly” (verses 46-49). This entire chapter carries the theme of the resurrection.

So -- God is described as composed of Spirit, yet formed and shaped as He formed and shaped humans, who are composed of MATTER, but who, by a resurrection, may be later composed of spirit, even as God.

Better read that again. The resurrection is the one hope given mortal man in the New Testament.

So -- what do we have -- so far? God, composed of spirit, created fish, birds, animals, each after its own kind. But God created man after the God kind. There is much more yet to be explained about that, but this much is so far affirmed:

Man is not an animal!

But, further, what is God like?

The Divine Family?

Did you notice, “And God said, Let US ...”?

Not “Let me!” “Let us, make man in our image, after our likeness.”

Why the “us,” the “our”? Why the plural form?

Go to the very beginning. The first words in all the Bible are: “In the beginning GOD created the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).

Those words are in the English language. But God inspired Moses to write them, originally. And Moses wrote in the Hebrew language. The English word “God” is translated from the Hebrew Elohim. Moses wrote the Hebrew word Elohim. And Elohim is a noun implying more than one in unity. It can be collective in the same manner that the words “family” or “church” are collective.

I am of the Armstrong family. We have had four children. I am “Armstrong.” My wife Loma was “Armstrong” also, from the moment she married me. Our first son Richard David was “Armstrong.” He was my son. I am “Armstrong,” and, though he is now deceased as a result of an auto accident, Richard David was “Armstrong.” We were two different persons -- but we belonged to the one family. Our second son was a different person, but he also was “Armstrong,” and part of the Armstrong family. The one Armstrong family.

So we were one family -- but we were six persons!

The human body is one body, but has many members two arms, two legs, ten fingers, ten toes, two eyes, two ears, one nose. God compares the one Church to the human body:

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into ONE BODY ...” (the Church). (I Cor. 12:12-13.)

Elohim is not two Gods, or three Gods, or many Gods -- Elohim is ONE God, but composed of more than one divine Person.

And Elohim is a divine family!

Have you not thought of God as a Person -- a single Personage?

The one God -- Elohim -- the one divine family -- has a Head. He is the One we call the Father. His name is GOD. Jesus called Him “Father.” He is the One most of us have thought of as the Personage who is God. Jesus was His Son. And Jesus, by a resurrection from the dead, is His divine Son (Rom. 1:4), and Jesus also is GOD (John 1:1; Heb. 1:Z).

Notice how plainly this is revealed.

Jesus Born God’s Son!

Paul writes of the gospel of God, “concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh ...” (Rom. 1:1, 3). That is, humanly -- according to the flesh as a human -- Jesus was a Son of David. Now read on into verse 1: “... And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”

Study that. Jesus was born of a human mother -- made human, just as you and I. Even though He was he begotten of God -- not of a human father -- yet He was a human man who could die. The very fact that He was sired by God -- begotten of God and conceived by a human woman -- proves that humans are after the God kind, not some animal kind. Humanly, through His mother, the virgin Mary, Jesus was a son or descendant of David.

But after having been born once, human, Jesus died. Then, by a resurrection, He was born a second time. And this time, He was “declared to be a Son of God.” This time, born “with power, according to the spirit of holiness.” But, read it without those descriptive words. He was “the Son of God ... by a resurrection from the dead.”

This says He was born a second time and this second birth by a resurrection!

And this is what the Bible means by salvation -- being saved -- in regard to the human family in general. For we, too, may be born again -- by a resurrection.

Jesus was born, by the resurrection, as the divine Son of GOD, with divine power. He who had been born human who had died -- was born again by a resurrection into the very divine God family. He is one with God. He is very God, even as God, the Father, is God. God is divine. Jesus, begotten of Him, was born divine by a resurrection.

Notice in the first chapter of Hebrews: “But unto the Son [Jesus] he [the Father] saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ...” (verse 8).

Jesus is God -- “by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4). And Elohim said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26), so that we humans, also, as Jesus was if begotten of God -- may be born into the divine family that is Elohim!

Jesus Born Again!

Jesus was born once -- as a human of the virgin Mary. He was -- at that time -- born a human being, a descendant of David, who could die. He was begotten (not born -- begotten) of God, in a manner such as no other human ever was begotten.

So far as begetting for His human birth is concerned, Jesus was the only human ever so begotten -- God's only begotten Son.

But Jesus also -- in addition -- was divinely begotten through God's Holy Spirit, even from the moment of human birth, to be born again -- this time made the divine Son of God by the resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4).

Thus, as very God, since His resurrection, He was the first so born of MANY BRETHREN! "... That he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). This being the "firstBORN" cannot apply to His human birth in Bethlehem.

This does not imply that Jesus was a sinner who had to be saved from sin. For Jesus, though tempted in all points as we are, never once sinned. He did not die to pay the penalty of His sins -- since there were none. He, rather, took on Himself OUR sins. He died to pay OUR penalty in our stead!

It is correct to say, then, that Jesus was "born again." "Firstborn," not as a human, but as God "by the resurrection."

I have shown you, from Romans 1:1-4, that Jesus was, indeed, born again, after His human birth of the virgin Mary, born of God by a resurrection from the dead. But that by no means implies He needed salvation from sin, as we do. Rather, His resurrection made possible our final salvation -- our being "born again" -- born of God, as Jesus was -- by a resurrection (Rom. 5:10).

This makes very plain why God made man after the God kind -- not after some animal kind. We are like animals only in that we are composed of matter, with the temporary existence from breathing air, the circulation of blood, and being required to eat food and drink water.

We were born once with this temporary physical existence. We have the glorious potential of being born again -- as Jesus was born a second time, by a resurrection. And then we shall be -- as Jesus now is -- composed of Spirit. No longer with temporary physical existence. Then we shall have life inherent eternal life!

The purpose of human life is to be born of God -- to enter into the Kingdom of God -- the divine God family!

What Is the Kingdom of God?

Let's understand the origin, meaning, and purpose of marriage.

Jesus was born once -- as a human, of the virgin Mary. He was born human, of a human mother. He was human, so that He could die -- for us (Heb. 2:9). He died, because of our transgressions. But He was born again, by the resurrection from the dead, into the God family, as a Son of God with power (Rom. 1:4).

What about us -- we who are human?

Jesus taught that we, also, may be born into the God family, which is the Kingdom of God, as we shall make plain.

The God family is also the God Kingdom.

Let's make that clear:

One of the kingdoms in the world today is the Turkish nation. The Turkish people are descendants of Esau. They are part of the family of Esau, twin brother of Jacob, grown into a nation a kingdom.

Elohim is the divine family. But "In the beginning Elohim created ..." (Gen. 1:1). The God family is the Creator family. And God rules over His creation. God's throne in heaven (Rev. 3:21; Isa. 66:1) is the seat of the government of the universe.

So the God family is the universe-ruling family -- a family which rules which governs -- which is therefore a government -- and therefore is also a Kingdom -- the highest Kingdom.

When Jesus came teaching about the Kingdom of God, He was talking about the family of God, and how WE humans, through Him, may be born into it!

Jesus taught: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

God IS that Kingdom. God is composed of spirit (John 4:24). Humans cannot see spirit. We cannot see God. Since God is the Kingdom of God, human eyes cannot see that Kingdom. (You need to write for our free booklet, Just What Do You Mean -- Kingdom of God?)

Begotten -- Then Born

But notice further: "... Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Now Jesus is saying we may -- when born a second time -- born of God -- actually enter into the God Kingdom. It is something we may enter into -- by a second birth -- by being born into it!

Next, verses 6-8, Jesus explains that when we were born, we were born of the flesh -- of matter -- and therefore we are, now, material flesh. But when born again, next time born of the Spirit -- which Spirit is God we shall then be spirit, even as God is spirit -- no longer flesh and blood.

But before we were born human, we were first begotten of our human fathers. We were begotten before we were born. We were born once. We may be born again. But next time, we must be begotten of the Spirit -- God -- before we can be BORN of God.

It is simple. It is very plain, in the Bible. It is astonishing, really, that almost no one understands it.

On the annual day of Pentecost (Old Testament, Feast of Firstfruits and Feast of Weeks) following Jesus' resurrection and ascension to God's throne in heaven, Peter gave the instruction: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

Then the Holy Spirit of God -- God's own Spirit, proceeding from the Father's very Person -- is received into the mind, to dwell in the human individual. He has then conceived the Father's life -- he has been begotten of the Father.

After this, what?

“But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead [when Jesus was born again into the God family] dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [make immortal] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Rom. 8:11).

If you are thus begotten of God -- of the Father of the God family and His Spirit dwells in you, then you, too, at the time of resurrection, shall be born again -- born of God, into the God family, even as Jesus was. You will no longer be human -- no longer composed of matter of human flesh. You shall then be spirit, even as God is spirit.

Already, Now, Sons of God

Once begotten -- having received the gift of God’s Spirit you are, already, though still human, a child of God. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Rom. 8:14). “For ... ye have received the Spirit of SONSHIP [margin], whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (verses 15-17).

Again: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be” -- that is, what we SHALL be, in the resurrection, does not yet appear -- not yet visible “but ... we shall be like him” -- like Jesus now is (I John 3:1-2). He now is spirit -- very GOD!

Notice now what God reveals through Paul.

He says the Kingdom of God is something we may inherit. But not while we are in this life -- not while we are human -- while we are flesh and blood. As explained before, we are now only HEIRS. If we are Christ’s! “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ...” (I Cor. 15:50). Jesus said we cannot see the Kingdom of God (John 3:3) or enter into it (verse 5) until born again. So we are not born again while still human!

Read that again!

God inspired Paul to say that while we still are “flesh and blood” -- human -- we cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. Jesus said that, now, we have been “born of the flesh” and therefore we now are flesh! But when born again -- born of the Spirit (God), we shall be spirit -- no longer flesh!

This says plainly that no one has as yet been “born again” while still human. We are now heirs -- begotten children of God. But we may be BORN again -- when we inherit the Kingdom -- enter into it. So no one is born again while still human.

No, but flesh and blood humans may be begotten of God -- not yet born spiritually, but begotten as God’s children -- and thus we become now His HEIRS (Gal. 3:29; Rom. 8:14-17). Only heirs, now -- but inheritors when we are born of the Spirit -- when we shall become spirit beings! -- when we enter into God’s family.

Read on, in I Corinthians 15 verses 51-54. It is by a resurrection, or instantaneous change from mortal to immortal; from material flesh to spirit; from human to divine; that we may inherit the Kingdom of God -- enter into -- be born into that awesome divine family!

Then even our vile bodies will be made of spirit like Jesus’ glorified body (Phil. 3:21).
But get this distinction:

Jesus was begotten by God, even prior to His human birth of the virgin Mary -- while all other humans have been begotten only by a human father. Further, Jesus was spiritually begotten as God's Son from the instant of conception, and from human birth -- we were not!

Jesus never sinned, or needed redemption. We have sinned, and do need redemption. But, through Him, we may repent, be forgiven -- be reconciled to God by Christ's death for us, and through His life (Rom. 5:10) (by His resurrection) receive God's Holy Spirit which then begets us as God's children -- His heirs -- to be later born of Him, becoming, then, inheritors -- entering into the Kingdom the divine God family. When we receive His Holy Spirit, we are then begotten as God's children. We call Him Father. (For a more detailed and technical exposition of this vital subject, write for our free booklet *Just What Do You Mean -- Born Again?*)

Origin of Marriage

What a wonderful mystery what wonderful truth!

Why should the world -- even its religions and its professing Christian churches be blinded to it? The Bible is full of it! It is the message of Jesus, of Peter -- of Paul!

Now what does all this have to do with the institution of marriage?

It has everything to do with it! It is the very reason for the institution of marriage.

Were it not for the very fact that we were created in God's very likeness, with the very purpose of being born of God -- born into God's own family -- the marriage institution -- giving us the experience of family life -- would never have been ordained. If we were mere animals, developed by evolution, marriage would never have existed.

Human men never did think out, devise, or institute the relationship of marriage, with family and home life. Marriage was ordained by God -- not by man. It is governed by the laws of God and man has no jurisdiction over it, in God's eyes.

God is a family!

He bequeathed to humans alone His kind of life -- family life.

God is a ruling, governing family and therefore God is a Kingdom.

Jesus was the Son of God. He called the great supreme Personage who is head of that family "Father." "Father" is a family title -- that of its Head! A father and son relationship is a family relationship.

When we mortal humans, now composed of flesh and blood matter, receive the Holy Spirit of God, God's very life has been implanted in us -- and we call Him "Father." We become His begotten children. It is a family relationship! We who are human flesh and blood then have implanted in us the divine "seed" of God's own life. This Holy Spirit in us changes us.

How ridiculous -- how nonsensical -- for professing Christians to claim they are "children of God" to call one another "brethren in the Lord" and to call God "Father," and then to deny that God is a family, and that we may actually be born into His very divine family -- becoming spirit as He is -- becoming divine as He is divine!

How stupid to call God "Father" -- to claim to be His children, to say we are already "born again," and then believe that we shall always be some utterly different kind of species some far lower kind of beings -- far below either the Father or Christ!

And how blind to deny this plain and simple Bible teaching and follow with the deceived Christian-professing crowd the false teachings of the false prophets! When the blind lead the blind, they all fall into the ditch of ignorance, superstition and deception!

But now notice further!

Who Is a Church Member?

Just who is recognized by God as being a member of His Church?

It is only those who are Christ's that are heirs of God (Gal. 3:29). One Gentile-born may become, through Christ, one of Abraham's children, spiritually, and an heir. But who, then, are Christ's?

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). So only those who have God's Holy Spirit dwelling in them are in the Body of Christ, the true Church.

Again, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized [immersed, put] into one body ..." (I Cor. 12:13). What "body" is this speaking of? "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles ..." etc. (verses 27-28). We are put into the Church of God by the Holy Spirit entering into us. The true Church is that collective body of members, in each of whom is dwelling God's Holy Spirit.

In other words, the true Church is composed of those begotten as children of God -- HEIRS of God through Christ. They have entered the Church, but not yet the actual divine family or Kingdom of God. The Church of God shall, at Christ's coming, become the Kingdom of God.

To MARRY Christ

And something else will then happen.

The Church is called in the New Testament the bride of Christ.

Notice the comparison: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church ... that he might present it to himself a glorious church ..." (Eph. 5:23, 27). This reveals plainly that the husband-wife relationship is also that of Christ and the Church.

When will Christ present the Church to Himself? Jesus has already been born the divine Son of God by the resurrection. He is very God, upholding, sustaining, the entire universe by the word of His power (Heb. 1:1-4). He has been glorified! He is the firstBORN of many brethren (Rom. 8:29). We who are begotten of God, now heirs of God, are to be glorified with Him (Rom. 8:17) -- our vile bodies of mortal fleshly matter changed -- made like His glorified body (Phil. 3:21).

He will present the Church to Himself a glorious Church -- when it has been glorified -- changed from matter to spirit -- from human to divine.

And when shall that be? At His coming as the King of kings and Lord of lords, to reestablish the government of God over all nations (Rev. 19:11-16). The God family -- the God Kingdom -- will rule and govern all nations.

That will occur at the time described in the prophecy of the Revelation as "the last trump." "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying,

The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 11:15).

Again, “And I heard as it were the voice ... saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the MARRIAGE of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints” (Rev. 19:6-8). The Church -- the righteous saints -- are here described as being presented to Him a glorious (or glorified) Church, without spot or wrinkle.

But continue, same passage: “And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb” (verse 9).

The “Lamb,” of course, is Jesus Christ (John 1:29, 36; Rev. 5:6).

Christ to Marry Again?

There was a typical marriage between Christ and the ancient congregation of Israel. The Old Covenant was a MARRIAGE covenant (Jer. 3:14). But because of her adulteries He had divorced Israel (Jer. 3:8). This was in accordance with the laws God gave Israel (Deut. 24:1, Ezek. 16:38). But marriage, especially as in the New Testament, is intended to be for life. The death of either party dissolves it. Israel, of course, was the Old Testament Church -- (Acts 7:38) -- called the “congregation of Israel.” “Congregation” and “church” are synonymous terms.

But the true Israel of the New Testament are not unconverted natural-born Israelites by race, but through grace by the Holy Spirit, as explained in Ephesians 2:11-22 and Romans 11.

Let me make that point very plain.

The Apostle Paul said to the Gentile-born Christians of Galatia: “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye [you Gentile-born Christians] Abraham’s seed [Israel], and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:29). It has been made plain (Romans 8:9) that only those in whom is dwelling the Holy Spirit from God are Christ’s. They are Israelites by grace, not by race!

Spiritual Israel

To Gentile-born Ephesians, Paul wrote, “Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh ... that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel ... but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off [from the nation Israel] are made nigh by the blood of Christ Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God [family relationship]” (Eph. 2:11-13, 19). Romans 11 shows plainly that spiritually “Israel” today means the Church -- regardless of whether Israelite- or Gentile-born. Unconverted natural-born racial Israelites are cut off by sin.

The Old Testament “marriage” ended in divorce (Jer. 3:8). Later Christ came to earth and died for the sins of humanity. But He was born again, by the resurrection born divine, as very God the first so born of many brethren!

And when they -- these “brethren,” these Christians who now form, spiritually, the true Israel of the New Testament -- having been perfected (Eph. 4:12-13), are resurrected at the time of Christ’s return in glory and divine power -- and thus also born of God -- are presented to Him “without spot or wrinkle,” they shall be marrying Him!

Entering the Kingdom of God

What, then, will be the status?

The changed, converted Church of God shall then become the Kingdom of God. That is to say, it shall enter into -- be born into -- the Kingdom.

The Father is the Head. Christ is His Son. The Church is then to be changed to spirit immortality, to become Christ’s wife -- and also children of God in the divine family. It is a family relationship!

Notice further!

Jesus gave a further picture of this marriage in the parable of Matthew 25: “Then shall the kingdom of heaven [Mark, Luke and John all use the expression “Kingdom of God.” It is not a kingdom in God, or in heaven, any more than the bank called “Bank of Morgan” is a bank inside of Mr. Morgan. The word “of” denotes ownership. Morgan owned the bank. God owns and rules the Kingdom. It is a kingdom ruled from heaven.] be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.” This pictures Christ’s coming, and His Church rising to meet Him in the air. “... And they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut [on the others]” (verses 1, 6, 10).

The marriage of the Church to the glorified Christ is referred to also in Matthew 22:2, where the Father (God) pictured as a King making a marriage for His son.

Children to Be Born

Then what?

Why this divine marriage -- this marriage within the very family or Kingdom of God’?

First, this gives us additional positive evidence that the Kingdom of God is a family -- with Father, Son, and His wife. Those in the true Church of God, now begotten as heirs, are already now children of God, not yet born, who call Him Father. But, then these begotten children of God will be born of God -- still His children just as Christ is still His Son -- then divine -- but also then we (collectively) shall be Christ’s wife.

And why? What then?

Then many children will be Spirit-born of that divine union -- it will greatly enlarge the divine family which is the Kingdom of God.

How?

During the thousand years beginning from the time of that marriage, God, through Christ and His divine wife, will set Himself to save the world!

Few grasp and understand this wonderful truth. This, now, is not the time when God has set out to really save the whole world, as the god of this world, Satan, has deceived the “Christian” world into assuming. Satan is very active today. Christ is not striving to compete with Satan, as nearly all professing Christians assume.

To make this completely plain would take a full booklet in itself. I shall explain in summary, briefly.

Not the Only Time of Salvation

God has marked out a duration of 7,000 years for His master plan, working out His purpose here below. The first 6,000 years, God is, primarily, keeping “hands off,” except for certain limited divine intervention. God did call His prophets. He raised up His Church to be His instrument in fulfilling a certain definite mission in the world.

Yet, in the main, God has not interfered in this world’s affairs or in individual lives. This world is Satan’s world -- and God has allowed it. God made humans to be free moral agents. He set in motion His inexorable law, which if obeyed causes peace, blessings, abundance; but which, when disobeyed, causes curses. He compels humans to choose. Each must make his own choice -- either positively or by neglect. God has made His truth available! But He has not “crammed it down humanity’s throat.”

Jesus came and was subjected to the supreme test, tempted by Satan. He overcame Satan. By obeying God under most severe test, He qualified to displace Satan as ruler over the earth. But Jesus did not, then, take over that rule. He was not, then, inducted into office. Satan has been allowed, by God, to continue plying his nefarious work of deceiving this world.

The churches professing Christ (but not obeying Him) have supposed that for the last 1900-plus years God has been entering into frantic competition with Satan. They think God has been desperately trying to “get everyone saved.” Satan has been ferociously, in all cunning, resisting God and trying to “get everyone lost.” And this, they believe, is the only “day of Salvation.” If this were true, Satan would be proving much more powerful than God. Satan has the overwhelming majority “unsaved.” This pictures Satan as victor over God.

But God’s power is supreme -- and His purpose stands.

This is not the only “day of salvation.” The expression in II Corinthians 6:2, quoted from Isaiah 49:8, should read “a” day of salvation.

Jesus said plainly: “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day [by the resurrection]” (John 6:44).

Again: “... No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father” (John 6:65). (Our free booklet “What Is the Reward of the Saved?” and the reprint article “Is This the Only Day of Salvation?” explain this biblical principle in greater detail.)

But, when Christ returns to this earth, He is coming in all the supreme, awesome power and glory of the Almighty God! He is coming in glorified splendor! He is coming as King of kings -- to put down every government of man on earth, and set up world government -- the government of God.

Christ Coming to Save

He is coming already coronated -- the crowns, many of them, already bestowed on Him. He went to heaven to have the government over the whole earth conferred on Him by the Father -- Ruler of the universe. One of the first things He will do is to depose Satan (Rev. 20:1-3). There will be no competition! Satan won’t be around to compete. Man

shall have had his allotted 6,000 years to write the lesson of rebellion against the laws and government of God. Man has written that lesson, in human anguish and suffering, and in human blood. But man, to this day, refuses to learn or heed the lesson.

But, with Satan out of the way, with the glorified Christ ruling, with His glorious marriage to His Bride, the Spirit born of God, that marriage will beget millions upon millions of children.

Christ, then, will set His hand to save the world! And that means to change the individual humans by this process of conversion, from mortal to immortal -- from human to divine.

The Father, by His Spirit, then will draw all men to Christ! Not all will respond. The parable of Matthew 25:31-33, 41-46 reveals plainly that God made us free moral agents. We must make our own decisions. But, none will then be deceived, as all nations are today (Rev. 12:9; 20:3; 17:2; 18:3). All will then know the truth (Isa. 11:9). All will be called -- drawn by God's Holy Spirit -- granted repentance if willing.

All will be living in a world ruled by Christ! And under His supernatural divine government, the earth will soon be filled with happiness and abundance. The illiterate will be educated. The miseducated will be reeducated in truth. The slums, blighted districts, areas of squalor and filth, will be replaced with beautiful, inspiring, health-giving living quarters.

All the world will know the terrible, unhappy results of 6,000 years of man's way, under Satan's sway -- the way of rebellion against God's laws. All the world will see the beauty, the prosperity, the invigorating health and happiness resulting from the enforced government of God's laws. All will know they may have God's gift of eternal life.

Yes, even then, some -- perhaps many will still rebel. Still reject God's way. Still refuse to repent. Still refuse to come to God by and through Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. But surely most will come to salvation and eternal life, then!

But how will this marriage produce children?

Christ's Marriage to Produce Children!

Those who are called, now, during this time, and who do repent, who do receive Christ as Saviour, do follow God's Spirit, do overcome, not only will be in the marriage to Christ - - they are to rule with Him (Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; I Cor. 6:2-3), and they shall be priests as well as kings (Rev. 5:10; 20:6).

With the saints made immortal -- the collective wife of Christ -- the human mortals left alive on earth will be ruled by Christ and by them. The human mortals will be taught and ruled by immortals. Those who do then repent and come to salvation through Christ will then receive God's gift of His Holy Spirit. And then they shall inherit the Kingdom of God.

After His return as King over all nations, sitting on the throne of His glory, then shall Christ say to the converted: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom ..." (Matt. 25:31-34). Thus they shall be born of God -- be born into the family of God.

Thus the marriage of the converted Church to Christ will result in the begettal and birth of divine children -- children who, during the thousand-year reign with Christ, are Spirit-born -- and in all probability, untold millions of them. Read it also in Isaiah 11:10-1:3 and Romans 11:25-26, and many other scriptures.

Finally -- the Stupendous Truth

So, finally, grasp this stupendous truth.

Incredible as it may sound to those deceived by the god of this world and his false ministers, God is a family!

God is the Creator family, who rules His creation. Therefore God also is a Kingdom! And in man, God is reproducing His kind (Gen. 1:26).

Marriage and family life is a God-plane relationship.

Man's potential -- the purpose for human life on this earth -- to be born into the Kingdom of God -- the God family!

Down through history, the philosophers, the great minds, the priests -- cut off from God's revelation -- have sought in vain to reason out in their minds some meaning to human life -- some purpose for our being. The true answer has been written all along, in God's Word.

Animals reproduce -- but animals do not marry. Animals do not enjoy the blessings of home and family life.

Angels do not have sex (Matt. 22:30) and do not marry. Of all life forms -- whether plant, animal or angel -- none has been given this God-plane relationship of marriage and family life, except humans who are potential heirs of the God family.

God is more than one Person. There is only the one God -- but that God is a family of more than one divine Person -- having the Father at its Head -- Jesus Christ as His divine Son -- those converted up to the time of Christ's coming in power and glory, as Christ's wife -- and those converted and changed to divine immortals afterward, during the Millennium, as the divine children of that union.

Man's stupendous potential is to enter divine family life!

Man's super colossal reason for being is to be married to Christ.

Marriage is of God!

Marriage is for man -- as well as for God -- because man was made in God's likeness, to bear His divine image!

Marriage is a most sacred supernatural blessing -- and (apart from the clearly defined biblical standards) its dissolution is a capital sin, imposing the penalty of capital punishment! -- eternal punishment! Eternal death! Unless each repents -- turns from the sin -- and receives salvation by God's grace through Christ.

Marriage was given mankind to prepare us for eternal life in the divine God family! Two of the Ten Commandments of God's basic spiritual law directly and specifically protect the sacred marriage state.

There can be no more wonderful physical blessing in this mortal human life than a happy marriage, based on true love, honors integrity and faithfulness -- especially when there are growing children to love, care for, teach, and rear in the nurture and admonition of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Marriage soon to become obsolete ? Never!

On the contrary, the only humans left in existence after God's master plan has finally worked out His purpose here below will be those made immortal and divine, living for eternity in the happy, blissful, family union that is the life of the Everliving God!

Can you grasp this colossal truth?

I have given you, here, the greatest, most precious and valuable truth you can ever know.

Man, and only man, of all life forms in existence, can be born into the God family -- which is the Kingdom of God. This was the gospel of Jesus!

The family relationship is a GOD-plane relationship. And of all His creatures, God bestowed it solely on man.

Of all life forms -- whether plant, animal, or angel -- man alone was created for marriage! For enjoying a home and a family relationship!

And man's potential -- the very purpose of human life -- is that man, born again -- born of GOD born into the God family -- may enjoy that blessed marriage and family life in blissful happiness forever!

Think on that!

And give God thanks!

END