



Where did Jesus point to find the ideal marriage?

To “the beginning!” Where in the Hebrew Bible would you turn to find a good example of marriage? Abraham and Sarah, Jacob and Leah/ Rachel/Bilhah/Zilpah, David and Bathsheba, Solomon and his 700? Where should WE look in Scripture to find the ideal marriage? When Jesus was questioned by the Pharisees about Moses allowing divorce, Jesus took a strong stand. Matthew 19:4-8 states:

“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate...”

Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.”

Two times, Jesus revealed his point of reference. Anything after “the beginning” reflects the fallen culture, the sinful world. Jesus pointed to the first marriage before the Fall as the model for God’s design for marriage. We must study and meditate on the significance of God’s design and commission of the first man and woman. We must keep this blessed and strong alliance firmly in mind because so many other voices call out, tempting us to conform.

Culture screams loudly

Perhaps your culture goes back centuries or even millennia. The ways men and women relate in your society may be so engrained that, apart from God’s direct intervention, *nothing* about your culture will ever change. Or, perhaps media or entertainment or “elite intellectuals” challenge and attack everything your culture previously believed regarding men and women. Perhaps your culture is suddenly undergoing a radical shift, even to the point of denying that men are men, and women are women. Apart from God’s intervention, the moral fabric of your society seems to be ripping apart. Whether you come from a society that seems like unthinking concrete, pulling you backward, OR from a culture that has lost its solid foundation, “progressively” moving forward into absurdity, only God can guide you. When culture screams “This is the way!” to whom will you listen?

The teaching points of Jesus

- God is a greater Authority than Moses.
- God created humans as male and female.
- God’s plan aims for unity and oneness.
- Men are to leave their father and mother.
- The Creator’s original plan came first, and it still stands true.
- Every culture will be weighed against God’s standards.
- Certain practices like divorce exist because of sin, not God’s design.
- The text does not say that women must leave their parents.

Conclusion

Like Jesus, keep your eyes on God’s original intent. Male and female — side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder, united in purpose. God desires for men and women to love and lead together as equal strengths. Together they are to demonstrate God’s peace, power, honor, harmony, and holiness.

Key Term

Reference Point

Jesus looked to “the beginning!”

4 Crucial Questions

1. What does this teach us about **GOD**?
2. What does this teach us about **PEOPLE**?
3. What command should I **OBEY**?
4. With whom can I **SHARE** this?