

III. The Covenant of Marriage **Part 6**

Q. Are Some
People Never
Meant to Marry?

A. Yes

Matthew 19:1-12

Eunuchs

- While sexual desires are normal, yet not all people experience them equally.
- Those who cannot control these desires should marry.
- Those who can control them may (1) marry or (2) remain single.
- The Apostle Paul said that it is easier to serve God completely as a single person.

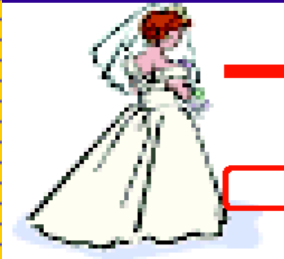
A. There is No
Such Thing!

The Marriage Covenant
has Two Parts . . .

The Covenant of Marriage

a verbal oath by itself initiates marriage = an **inchoate** marriage

betrothal vow



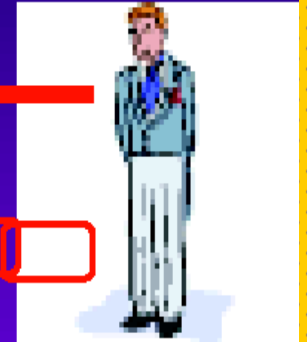
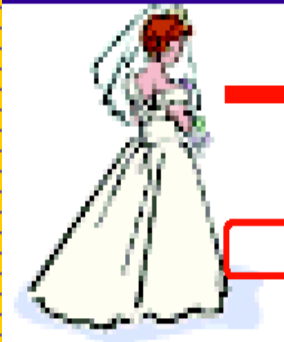
sexual union

sexual intimacy **consummates** the marriage

The Covenant of Marriage

Only a **divorce** can sever
the bond of betrothal

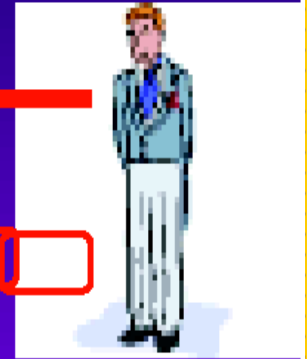
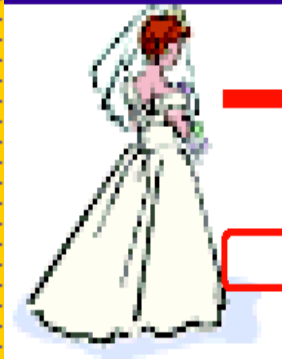
betrothal vow



sexual union

The Covenant of Marriage

betrothal vow



sexual union

Only **fornication** can sever
the bond of sexual union

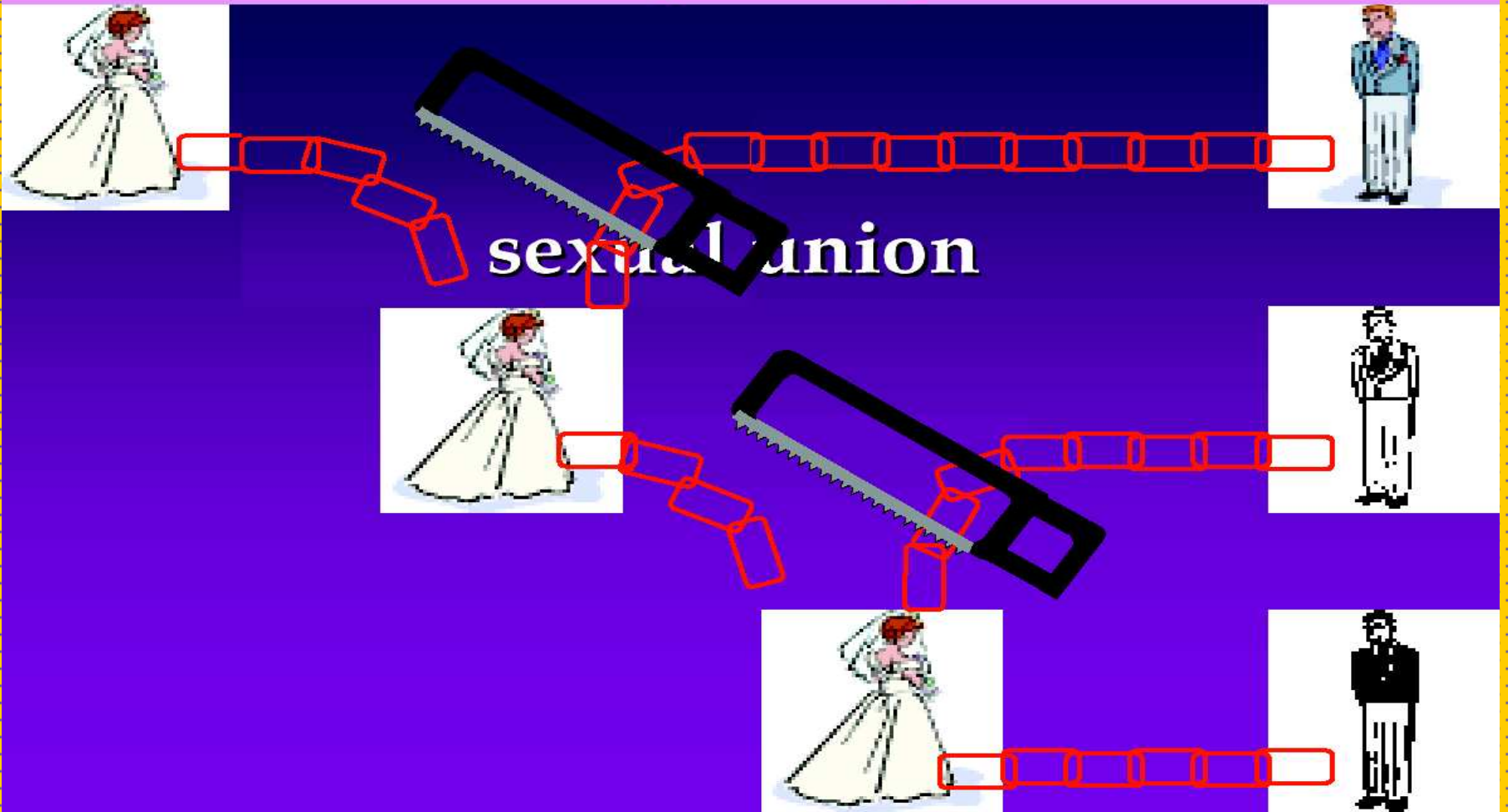
The Covenant of Marriage

**“‘I have no husband,’ she replied. Jesus said to her, ‘You are right when you say you have no husband. 18 The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.’”
(John 4:17-18)**

In other words, the first five “husbands” were illicit relationships formed by premarital sex, and, in her downward spiral, her most recent relationship was with a married man [adulterous].

The Covenant of Marriage

In such a case, each subsequent relationship constitutes a severing of the previous one.



Key Text

Exodus 22:16-17, NASB

“And if a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged, and lies with her, he must pay a dowry for her *to be* his wife. If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equal to the dowry for virgins.”

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“If a man seduces . . .”

- This was clearly not a case of rape.
 - Both parties were consenting to the illicit relationship.
 - The young woman should not have to beg the young man to “make it right”.
- God’s remedy: The young man should exercise the same zeal in offering marriage as he had in trying to seduce the young woman!

“ . . . a virgin . . . ”

- The word “virgin” here [bethulah/ בְּתוּלָה] has no reference to sexual history.
- This is not the same word that we find in Isaiah 7 [almah].
- “Virgin” here simply means ‘a woman of marriageable age.’
- Genesis 24:16 is not redundant.
- Joel 1:8 is a perfect example of this.

“Wail like a virgin girded
with sackcloth for the
bridegroom of her youth.”

Joel 1:8

“... who is not pledge to be married. . .”

- This tells us that we're dealing with pre-marital sex, not adultery.
 - Engagement in the ancient world was serious business.
 - Betrothal was equal to marriage!
- Matthew 1:19:
“And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly.”

“... he must pay a dowry [bride-price]. . .”

- Isn't this a troubling practice? Paying for a wife as though she's merchandise?
- Not at all!
- The 'bride price' was really a 'wedding present.'

- The man paid the *bride price* to her parents who added *their gift* and gave it back to the couple.
- $BP + PG = \text{Dowry}$
- Why the indirect transfer of funds?

“ . . . he must pay a dowry [bride-price]. . . ”

- Simple: To create an public record of her legal right to those assets.
- If he died, or divorced her w/o justification, the dowry went back to the bride.
- This protected the bride's future financial security.
- It was the *opposite* of our modern pre-nuptial agreement!
- Also, it was a great incentive *against* divorce!

“If her father absolutely refuses . . .”

- The young man’s repentance and offer *does not* mean that marriage should be allowed!
- It is understood that her father would be acting in her best interest.
- The YM honored God by repenting and offering to make it right.
- The YG honored God by ‘pleading the 5th’!

“Honor your father
and your mother, that
your days may be
prolonged in the land
which the Lord your
God gives you.”

Exodus 20:12

“If her father absolutely refuses . . .”

- Parents are a *covering* and are to be respected.
- In the absence of parents, church leaders may act as a covering and either allow or disallow the union.
- Why does the YW need a covering?

“Human beings have
an almost infinite
capacity for
self-deception when it
comes to matters of the
heart.”

Dr. Gordon Hugenberger

Pre-marital Sex:
A Devil's Bargain!

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- Pre-marital sex mocks the covenant of marriage by reducing God's amazing covenant-sign to a mere cheap thrill.
- Pre-marital sex is often accompanied by regret and shame on the part of one or more of the parties who realize that they have given something very precious – and only given once – to someone who really doesn't love them.

Pre-marital Sex: A Devil's Bargain!

- Pre-marital sex can destroy a relationship!
- Don't be deceived: pre-marital sex is *not* true love.
- True love is always accompanied by commitment.
- Real love is precious and costly – that's what that engagement ring is all about!
- Love doesn't seek to hurt the one it loves!

“Love is patient, love is kind, *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.”

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Pre-marital Sex: A Devil's Bargain!

- Pre-marital sex defiles the believer's body, injures his/her testimony, and disgraces his/her Lord.

“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be! Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body *with her*? For He says, “The two will become one flesh.””

“Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Some practical
questions . . .

Q. Doesn't this view
of marriage put too
much emphasis
on sex?

Q. What if you've
slept with your
boyfriend or
girlfriend and they
have no interest in
marriage?

Q. What if he or she
is not a believer?

End