

***EROS MADE SACRED***  
***OR***  
***THE BIBLICAL CASE FOR***  
***POLYGAMY***

**(Abridged)**

***by***

***J. W. Stivers***

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## PREFACE

The task lies before me in preparing this study to give some account and explanation for an opinion on marriage which I have adopted in recent years - one which breaks away radically from what Protestants have come to accept as Christian. I speak of marriage in the form of monogamy.

I have become an opponent of enforced monogamy, but not to the destruction of marriage as an institution and ordinance of God. Unlike the erotic revolt by mainline Protestants, I do not view favorably the "alternative" lifestyles of adulterers and sodomites such practices are under God's judgment. My departure from the tradition of monogamy has been set on a different course. I have become a vigorous advocate of polygamy.

Some people reading these pages may be scandalized by my assertions. They may self-righteously deny my conclusions. But they cannot refute my arguments. One does not assault a universal and time-honored tradition without convincing and overwhelming proof. ***I have such proof.*** And this study is a brief summary of the evidence which I present to you for examination.

Notwithstanding my boldness, I still acknowledge my position as propositional. While my mind is convinced to the point of conviction, yet I am open to debate on this issue. Certainly, others are under no moral obligation to follow my course of thought. The message must be tested before it is received.

The following is part of a continuing work on the sex and marriage

customs of the Bible. My position on polygamy will be the most controversial and revolutionary part; yet will also represent the active mechanism in cleaning-up immorality - *Eros Made Sacred*. After you have caught your breath, please read this work judiciously, and then subscribe to my newsletter, *The Family Spokesman*, where I will publish serially the results of my research. Subscription information can be found at the back of this book.

J. Wesley Stivers

March, 1991

## INTRODUCTION

Before proceeding, let me offer a brief account of my conceptual growth on this subject.

Early in my Christian walk, while yet a child; I became an enthusiastic student of the Holy Scriptures. And I suppose, like most readers of the Sacred Writ, I wondered how it was that some men of the Bible had more than one wife. Questioning my mother, she satisfied my curiosity with dispensational arguments: "the men of the Old Testament lived under a carnal understanding of Divine things, so God 'winked' at their sometimes fleshly ways. But now, God expects more of us."

My next encounter with the subject of polygamy occurred while reading a book of my grandmother's, written by the esteemed author on world missions - Roland Allen. In *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (p. 67), he argues for a tolerance toward the polygamy of newly converted pagans:

*Polygamists might have been on the right side rather than on the wrong. If their wives had not been made the objects of the missionary attack; if, when they learned to believe in Christ, they had been accepted as Christians; the ideal [monogamy] would have been before them not as something inimical, to be hated and dreaded, and resisted, not as a monstrous and tyrannical imposition but as an ideal at which they might safely and wisely look.*

*But this quiet growth we have declined in order to obtain a present immediate victory. [Referring to the Anglican policy to break-up polygamous households]*

My first surprise in reading these words, as I was able to confirm later from other sources, was that there are women in the world who consider monogamy as something "to be hated and dreaded". It was many years before I was able to solve that mystery.

My greatest surprise with Allen's arguments, although clearly on the side of monogamy, is that he takes polygamy out of the realm of morals and puts it into the realm of values. By this, I mean, polygamy is merely a bad custom which growth in sanctification will eventually remedy. It is not a moral crime on the level of murder, theft or adultery. The question is not a matter of good or evil, but poor, better, and best. While Allen would no doubt be uncomfortable with such an interpretation of his statements, the deduction is unavoidable. For if polygamy were really a moral evil on the level of murder or adultery, we cannot imagine any Christian insisting on anything less than complete and immediate repentance.

Allen's position is typical of many Protestant theologians. My first serious study of the subject was R.J. Rushdoony's *Institutes of Biblical Law* (p. 362-368), a Reformed theologian. He vigorously defends monogamy against polygamy, but as a preference of values, not as a moral issue:

*It is thus apparent that the law [of Moses, JS] tolerated polygamy while establishing monogamy as the standard. The reason for this tolerance was the fact that the polygamous family was still a family, a lower form of family life, but a tolerable one. . . Biblical law thus protects the family and does not tolerate adultery, which threatens and destroys the family.*

Following this statement, Rushdoony launches out into a long denigration of polygamy using sociological arguments. Again, we see here that it is a conflict of values and not morals.

There are other Protestant theologians who can be cited, but their approach is basically the same: polygamy is to be tolerated in primitive cultures. Newly converted pagans cannot be expected to rise quickly to the enlightened status of Western Christians. Breaking up polygamous families would be cruel. Polygamy is inferior to monogamy, but still superior to adultery, and other sexual sins.

It was not until I read Martin Luther that my prejudice against polygamy was disarmed. Not only did Luther defend polygamy as a remedy for fornication, but it was preferable to divorce (see *The Babylonian Captivity*

*of the Christian Church*, and Heinrich Boehmer's *Luther in the Light of Recent Research*). Luther did not stand alone in these opinions, but was supported by Melancthon and the Lutheran clergy in general (including his Catholic adversary, Cardinal Cajetan). In the words of church historian, Roland Bainton:

***His own solution on occasion was bigamy. This he had suggested in the affair of Henry VIII on the ground that it had been practiced by the Old Testament patriarchs with divine approval and never expressly repudiated in the New Testament.***

**- The Reformation of the 16th Century (p.259)**

This we have from the man who is responsible for the Protestant Reformation!

Following this discovery, I pursued an extensive study of the Scriptures to rethink all of the references pertaining to this subject. When it was completed, I was forced to conclude that polygamy was not morally evil nor was it inferior to monogamy. Like the celibate, each one has his vocation and gift. There is a Christian calling fitted for the life of polygamy: ***the ministry of the patriarch*** (discussed later). While most men will prefer to be monogamous and some will be celibate, others, however, are called to be polygamous.

As Providence would have it, while I was struggling with the isolation these conclusions would impose upon me, I found an old book in a used bookstore which added a completely new dimension onto this subject (***The History and Philosophy of Marriage: or Polygamy and Monogamy Compared***, E. N. Jecks. Boston: James Campbell, 1869). The author demonstrates himself to be an Evangelical Christian, a theonomist and a believer in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. His thesis can be summarized thusly:

- 1) Sexual passion is a gift from God to induce procreation and create the bond of marital kinship. In itself, it is not evil but good.
- 2) Sexual passion arises from our physical, not our moral nature.
- 3) Sexual passion is a physical need, which if neglected, leads to a diseased mind and body.



- 4) Sexual passion, when fulfilled, leads to wholeness and well-being.
- 5) Sexual passion can be abused and indulged to excess, as can any other good thing that God has made.
- 6) Sexual abuse cannot be left to human reason or tradition to define, but must be defined by God's written Word.
- 7) Some people vary in sexual needs due to capacity, just as they vary in other areas of physical need.
- 8) God's Word provides for such needs.
- 9) Promiscuity and uncleanness are never godly remedies for sexual passion.
- 10) Marriage is God's remedy for sexual passion; polygamy is God's remedy for inordinate sexual passion.

The remainder of the book is spent comparing societies which have permitted polygamy as a legitimate form of marriage with societies which permit only monogamy. He identifies enforced monogamy as a pagan custom inherited from the Roman Catholic Church - which incidentally, views concupiscence as Original Sin. The Roman Church inherited monogamy from pagan Rome. And Rome, in turn, inherited the custom from decadent Greece. Monogamy is an impossible custom in any culture. Pagans, which have no scruples about lust, openly practice prostitution while legally practicing monogamy. Christian nations, viewing sex as depravity or at least unhealthy unless greatly restricted, pretend to practice monogamy, but abound in secret prostitution, vicarious concubinage, and sins of uncleanness.

Jecks declares that men, if denied the opportunity of polygamy, will turn to a perverted and decadent sex. ***He also predicted the specter of abortion and the destruction of family life in the United States if polygamy was not legalized.*** His warning was scorned, and a century later, we had the sexual revolution and the legalization of abortion.

## **POLYGAMY: A BIBLICAL CUSTOM**

Before proceeding with a point-by-point study of the merits of polygamy and of the arguments against it, we need a context for discussion. We need an authoritative tradition to use for boundaries. On this issue, we have a choice between the tradition of the Church Fathers and the tradition of the Old Testament. The New Testament seems to be silent on polygamy, while Church Tradition stands opposed to it (excepting the Persian Church tradition). While opinions of the Church Fathers will not be neglected, I will not use them as my starting point. The Old Testament constitutes over two-thirds of God's written Word. That fact demands we begin there.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, we find both monogamy and polygamy as accepted and even expected forms of marriage. Commentators, embarrassed by the polygamy in the Bible, try to mute the subject by insisting its practice

was rare and abnormal. The record does not stand up to that assumption. Polygamy was a custom practiced extensively among God's people.

An example of this fact is the near universal practice of polygamy by the Israelites during their captivity in Egypt and following the Exodus. Numbers 3:40-43 provides us with a census of the firstborn in Israel. The number given is 22,273 firstborn sons. We may safely conclude there were at least 22,273 families in Israel, since a family cannot have more than one firstborn son. There were, no doubt, families which had no sons.

That has no bearing upon this remarkable fact:

**22,273 families are responsible for a total count of over 600,000 fighting men (Numbers 1:46). If you take 600,000 and divide it by 22,000, you get 27. The average Israelite household with sons had 28 of them!**

The patriarch Jacob required four wives to get twelve sons. Is it too much to suppose that the typical Israelite needed twice as many wives to get 28 Sons? What about the daughters? If there was a daughter for every son, then there were 56 children per Israelite household, on the average scale. There is no way to know how many wives the average Israelite may have had, but it is impossible that the average woman could have had 56 children. *Israelite society was a polygamous society.*

Nevertheless, quibbling over numbers would be beside the point. For if polygamy is immoral at all, it is immoral always. And if it happened only once in Scripture, with God's approval, then we are dealing with an ethical system utterly foreign to modern moralism. Moral absolutes cannot have exceptions, else they are not absolute.

We are left with relativism. Thus, if we make a dogma that moral marriages are, without exception, "one man with one woman for one lifetime", it must exclude the Old Testament as a basis for that dogma. For such a moral law does not exist there.

That God accepted polygamy can be demonstrated by His approval and exaltation of the men who practiced it. Abraham was "father of the faithful" and Jacob "the prince of God". David was a man "after God's own heart" and Solomon the wisest man of all time.

Christians deny the world's claim that we can separate a man's greatness from his moral conduct. Immoral men are not great men. Yet, Christians use such a standard in judging the Patriarchs. They overlook Abraham's concubines (a practice considered very wicked), and still call him great (Genesis 25:6, KJV). Is this not a double-standard?

But even the morality of it is not our concern here at this juncture. I merely wish to remind ourselves that polygamy was an integral aspect of Hebrew culture - Biblical culture. Consider how at variance our Protestant culture is with that ancient one. Today, polygamy by Christian leaders would create a scandal. In Bible times, it was expected as a normal display of God's favor. Fundamentalists boast that they do not need the sex manuals of the *Playboy* generation. "We have our own book on sex in the *Song of Solomon*." Yet, ironically, it is a book written by a man who had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Additionally, the text itself depicts polygamy as a normal expression of sexual love (6:8-9). I think King Solomon has Hugh Hefner beaten.

## **OBJECTIONS ANSWERED**

### **#1 - The Creation Ordinance**

It has long been argued that polygamy is unlawful according to God's creative purpose. God permitted it subsequent to the Fall of Man in the Garden of Eden, but under the restoration of the creation in Christ, there is

no longer any excuse for it. The argument says that polygamy for Christians is a step backward into carnality and the "old nature". Monogamy is more spiritual (and for some, celibacy is more spiritual than monogamy). This exaltation of monogamy over polygamy, as I see it, is based upon a false view of lust. Lust is seen as evil; so the desire for polygamy is seen as excessive lust. Such an assumption ignores the procreative purpose of sex, which we shall speak to later.

The creative purpose of God for marriage is stated in Genesis 2:24, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh."

The logic says that since God gave Adam one wife, then His *intent* was that man should have only one. A faithful Christianity will seek to know God's intent and to obey the "spirit" of the law and not just its letter. God intended monogamy at the beginning. Christ reaffirmed it. And Christian ethics must follow. So it is assumed.

This objection, which is the most formidable one to polygamy, can be answered by three arguments:

First, it cannot be demonstrated from the text that its purpose is to teach monogamy. A false hermeneutic is being used here. The very next verse (25) says the man and woman were naked. Are we to assume it is teaching us the moral superiority of nudity? Is it too difficult to imagine that clothing would not have been invented were it not for the Fall? What about polygamy?

I do not believe we can find here any more of a moral law against polygamy than we can a moral law against wearing clothes. Clothing is used for purposes other than covering genitals. Our first parents would have observed, no doubt, the heavy fur coverings of other mammals (some mammals also are polygamous). They would have discovered the usefulness of coverings to protect themselves from the dew of the morning and to reduce the abrasion of manual labor. Digging and planting would have required shoes of some kind. Climbing trees would have been simplified by at least a loin cloth. Eve would have appreciated its ornamental value and Adam its usefulness in conveying distinctions of vocation and status. Nakedness is normal. So is wearing clothes.

In a pre-Fall world, polygamy may have been chosen, on occasion, as a personal preference. Polygamy is normal. So is monogamy.

The Creation Ordinance does teach monogamy, but only as an inference. Monogamy is normal. Using this Scripture to prohibit polygamy, however, is an unwarranted extrapolation, just as is the prohibition of clothes because Adam and Eve were naked.

Second, the primary teaching of this passage, as it is also used by our Lord (Mark 10:6-9), is the bisexuality of mankind. Just like the other mammals, man is male and female. Man is not unisex. He cannot be fruitful and multiply in a homosexual or androgynous manner. Mankind finds its social and sexual fulfillment in a sexual counterpart. What we see here is the foundation for marriage in general. The Creator intended procreation, and the coming together of the two sexes in a permanent union was necessary.

Third, polygamy was not a consequence of the Fall, but would have arisen in a perfect world anyway. God instructed the animals He created to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:22). This expression means to "have lots of sex and offspring". God gave the same command to the human species, except He added the aspect of *dominion* to man's task. That is why the sexual union of animals may not be permanent, but it is for man. Marriage establishes a government.

Man faced the responsibility to engage in sexual intercourse and to "multiply". What are the demographic consequences of this fertility? In a perfect world, mankind would double every biological generation, at least. What would happen if we conservatively estimate a biological generation at twenty years?

If we accept the biological fact that females mature faster than males by two or three years, and mature psychologically by four or five. If we accept the premise that the average male does not have the economic independence necessary to support a family until he reaches his Biblical age of majority (20 years - Numbers 1:3; Leviticus 27:3), we can easily provide a 5-10 year age gap (or more) between males and females at marriage (in Bible days the spread was much greater). If males and females married at their earliest possible ages of maturity - 20 for the male and 13 for the female (or any age as long as there is an average spread of 7.5 years) - then there would be a male/female ratio of 1 to almost 1.4 among marriageable persons. That is an excess of females over males by 30%. We may conclude that in a perfect society, the ages of maturation and the pressures of population growth would require that *a third of the households be bigamous*. This estimate also assumes an equal birth rate for both sexes.

The above assumptions are not far-fetched. Biological differences between the sexes have not been affected by the Fall of Man. Rather, they have been intensified (Genesis 3:16-20). Theologian Meredith G. Kline describes the pre-Fall world:

*The Bible does not require us, therefore, to think of the character and working of man's natural environment before the Fall as radically different than is presently the case.*

*God gives his angels charge over the one who stands in his favor lest he should dash his foot against a stone (Ps.91:12). Blessing consists not in the absence of the potentially harmful stone, but in the presence of God's providential care over the foot. Adam's world before the Fall was not a world without stones, thorns, dark watery depths, or death. But it was a world where the angels of God were given a charge over man to protect his every step and to prosper all the labor of his hand.*

- As quoted by Gary North in

*Is The World Running Down? (p.124)*

The above scenario is the only one which can explain the polygamy of the Israelites in captivity. There were no conquests and the taking of war brides. The infanticide of Israelite males, commanded by Pharaoh, was unsuccessful (Exodus 1). *Men exchanged daughters*. Young men spent their early manhood in a celibate condition, learning self-control and laboring in their dominion task.

Later, having accumulated necessary capital to support a family and provide a dowry, they married. They married many wives - but not all at once. A slow process of family growth through polygamy is possible for the man; for he has a much longer reproductive life than the woman.

Polygamy is not possible in a static society or one of declining population. Outside the cataclysms of war, which greatly reduces the male population and creates an occasion for polygamy, polygamy requires an expanding economic base and a growing population. In other words, conditions approximating the pre-Fall world are ideal for the custom of polygamy.



With such arguments, I cannot see how the Creation Ordinance, even in a perfect world, could be used to prohibit polygamy.

## **#2 - The Sin of Lamech (Genesis 4)**

Lamech was a seventh generation Cainite who killed a man and apparently took his wife. This is the first recorded instance of polygamy in the Scriptures.

From this episode, it has been argued that polygamy was the invention of a wicked race. And it is true that the wickedness of man has greatly increased the need for polygamy. War, sickness, and calamity take a far heavier toll on the male sex than on the female.

But we cannot argue from this instance that polygamy is evil. Murder is evil and that is what is taught in the text. Again it is bad hermeneutics to say that because Lamech was a bad man, then polygamy is also bad.

Lamech's sons were also distinguished as inventors of tents, animal husbandmen, musicians and makers of musical instruments, and workers in metallurgy. Must we abandon these practices simply because they are the inventions of an evil race? I think not.

## **#3 - Domestic Discord**

It has been argued that polygamy is evil in its influence upon spouses and children. The domestic discomforts suffered by the Patriarchs are presented as the fault of polygamy. Upon closer examination, however, such is not the case (see the book of Genesis for these accounts).

Much has been made of the rivalry between Leah and Rachel, sisters who were both married to Jacob. Whose fault was it? Rachel's barrenness was the source of bitterness. And her barrenness was a sovereign act of God. God favored Leah because Jacob could not find the grace within himself to love Leah as he did Rachel. Jacob's favoritism for Rachel and her son Joseph was the source of discord.

It is never mentioned in the text that a rivalry existed among the rest of Jacob's wives: Leah's handmaid Zilpah and Rachel's handmaid Bilhah. Nor was there a rivalry among the sons of the respective wives. They all got along with Leah and her sons. Rachel and Jacob's weakness for her and Joseph - this was the thorn of contention. Jacob's intemperate and discriminate love was at fault.

Excepting Rachel, Jacob's wives illustrate what researchers typically find among women of polygamous households: they establish sisterhoods. Polygamous women are gifted with the social skills at working together. Their division of domestic labor provides them with sufficient leisure time for personal pursuits. I find it curious that women in monogamous cultures crop their hair short, while polygamous women grow their hair long, and spend much time on it. The monogamous woman's "harried" lifestyle (even with all the technological wizardry), still leaves her hair a nuisance. So she cuts it off.

Abraham's and Sarah's bitter experience with Hagar and her son Ishmael is well known. But again, there is no hint in Scripture that bigamy itself was at fault. Hagar's insubordination and contempt for Sarah, to the point of persecution, is what made the relationship unworkable (Proverbs 30:23).

We can explain David's misfortunes to his murder of Uriah and his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba, not his polygamy. Indeed, up to that unfortunate incident, we find all light. Following, "the sword shall not depart out of thy house" became a reality (2 Samuel 12:7-12). David's crimes are not unique to polygamous cultures.

Solomon's apostasy toward the end of his life was not the result of having many wives, but for having *foreign wives*. These were women who brought with them their pagan beliefs and practices (1 Kings 11:1-8).

While we can demonstrate other explanations for the domestic discord in households which happened to be polygamous, it should be added that there is ample proof of discord among monogamous households in the Bible, as well. The rivalry of Cain and Abel, and Esau and Jacob come immediately to mind. All of these were children of monogamists. Domestic discord is a consequence of sin and is remedied by God's grace, not by some unique form of marriage.

#### #4 - Old Testament Laws

***And you shall not take to wife a sister of your wife, to distress her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time.***

##### **- Leviticus 18:18**

The above passage is relied upon heavily by some commentators in prohibiting polygamy. This is because a case can be made for a translation rendered thus: "you shall not take one wife to another". Others see it as a prohibition of sister bigamy only.

Neither interpretation seems possible. In all the Prophets, it is never singled out for rebuke. We cannot imagine that bigamy never occurred. If it was a violation of Mosaic Law, its extensive practice surely would have been noted. It is never mentioned.

Consider for a moment that Leviticus 18:18 is followed in the next verse (19) by a condemnation of a different sort of sexual sin: intercourse with a menstruating woman. This is a form of fornication possible with ones own wife! Yet in the Prophet Ezekiel's covenant lawsuit, he condemns Israel for this sin and never mentions bigamy (or sister bigamy for that matter - Ezekiel 18:5-9). Does it not seem incongruous that Ezekiel would indict Israel for a secret sin, when a public one (bigamy) was being practiced before his very eyes? Indeed, the Aramaic text for Ezekiel 22:10 reads: ***"in you have they uncovered the nakedness of their fathers' concubines; in you have they lain with menstuous women."*** Here, the integrity of plural marriage is defended by the Prophet!

The above passage was not meant to prohibit bigamy or sister bigamy. The qualifying clause is "to distress her" - referring to the first wife. It is speaking against the man who marries a second wife to ***displace*** the first wife (Proverbs 30:23). We have Old Testament examples of this: Abraham and Hagar; Jacob and Rachel; Elkanah and Hanna. In each case, it was the intention of the man to show favorites or for the second wife to be preeminent. God sees this as persecution and judges it with barrenness (e.g. 1 Samuel 1).

The case of Elkanah and Hannah is useful in illustrating this point. Hannah was undoubtedly the second wife; for had she been the first, Elkanah would not have married another, in spite of her barrenness. He told her she was worth ten sons to him. Elkanah married Hannah, not for children, but for love. However, it was not a marriage his first wife approved, because it involved an alienation of his affections. Consequently, the LORD made Hannah barren.

What is prohibited here is not polygamy, *but polygamy without the counsel and consent of the first wife*. This principle is reinforced by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:4. In marriage, the man surrenders sovereignty over his sexuality and shares it jointly with his wife. Therefore, for him to belligerently engage in polygamy, it is a trespass against his wife's claims upon the marriage and the covenant he made with her before God (see Malachi 2:14-16, although referring to divorce, does have bearing upon this point).

## **#5 - The New Testament Prohibits Polygamy**

It is true that there are no New Testament examples of polygamy. Nor is polygamy openly taught. However, while it is not visible, one errs to say the New Testament prohibits it. The New Testament openly and vigorously condemns adultery, divorce, and fornication; but in the long chronicles of human depravity, *not one mention is made of polygamy* (e.g. Romans 1).

In every detail, the New Testament is entirely consistent with the Old Testament. Three references, however, have been construed by commentators to condemn polygamy.

The **first** is Matthew 19:9 - "But I say to you, whoever leaves his wife without a charge of adultery and marries another commits adultery; and he who marries a woman thus separated commits adultery."

It is really not appropriate to use this passage to prohibit polygamy. For the previous verse (8) tells us that the topic of discussion is divorce. Divorce is not polygamy. Nevertheless, commentators have used the language to

teach against polygamy, because they suppose a man marrying a second time was considered an adulterer by our Lord. This hermeneutic is used by some religious groups to condemn as bigamy the marriages of widowers.

The obvious answer is that in this text, the man must *leave* his first wife to marry the second. That is what happens in divorce, but not polygamy. In polygamy the one flesh - *cleaving* - relationship is preserved with all the wives. Divorce requires the breaking of one relationship in order to establish a new one. It is that practice which is condemned by our Lord.

The **second** New Testament passage used against polygamy is 1 Corinthians 7:2 (with repetitions in Ephesians 5:22, 24; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1, 5). It reads,

**"Nevertheless, because of the danger of immorality, let every man hold to his own wife, and let every woman hold to her own husband."**

Commentators reason from this passage, that a woman cannot have her "own" husband in a polygamous marriage. She shares her husband with other women. Thus, these Scriptures are used to support monogamy.

On its face, such reasoning seems a bit stretched. If the Apostle favored monogamy, why did he not come out and say so? He did not, and for a very good reason. It is because closer examination of these passages reveals the opposite to be true: *Paul and Peter went out of their way not to implicate polygamy*. Observe the Greek used here. In every case in which the man is the subject, the word is *heauton*. When the woman is the subject, *ideos* is used (see *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* - Nelson, p. 455).

The above reference is rendered thus by *The Expositor's Greek Testament* (Vol. 2, Eerdmans, p. 822):

**"Let each (*man*) have his own (*heauton*) wife, and each (*woman*) her proper (*ideos*) husband."**

The word "own" for the man does not mean the same thing as "own" for the woman. Two different terms are used. Without going into a long word study, it is sufficient to point out that Biblical doctrine *does indeed* teach that a wife belongs to her husband exclusively in a sexual sense. But such is not the case with the husband. He does not necessarily belong exclusively to his wife.

To support this assertion, note that Titus 2:5 speaks of wives being "obedient to their own (*idios*) husbands". This is the same word used in 1 Corinthians 7:2. It is also used in Titus 2:9, *four verses later*, where Paul says "Exhort servants to be obedient to their own (*idios*) masters". We know that a master owns his servants exclusively, but servants share their master with other servants. Additionally, 1 Peter 3:1, 5 says that the Old Testament women had their "own" husbands. The next verse (6) refers to Sarah, who we know shared her husband with other women. From this evidence, we may safely conclude that the Apostles did not intend to enforce monogamy in these passages.

To the contrary, such carefulness in the use of words can only be explained by an effort to accommodate polygamy. Husbands do not share their wives with other men. But women may share their husbands with other wives.

The **last** passage used to prohibit polygamy is 1 Timothy 3:2, 12 (also Titus 1:6), which reads:

**"He who becomes an elder must be blameless, the husband of one wife ... Let the deacons be appointed from those who have not been polygamous. . ."**

*(Ancient Eastern Text)*

I must admit my curiosity as to why this Scripture has been used as a standard argument against polygamy. On its face, it is clear evidence that polygamy was being practiced by New Testament Christians, although as extra-biblical sources tell us, it was practiced by the Jewish and Persian Christians, not the Greek and Roman ones. Greek and Roman law legitimized monogamy, not polygamy.

This Scripture is really a *restriction*, not a prohibition. Church officers were not allowed to be polygamous; laymen were. Commentators sometimes concede that point, but quickly add that this Scripture sets polygamy in a bad light in terms of its moral status. They lump polygamy with the other vices which disqualify men from the ministry: drunkenness, pride, greed, and so on. If these vices are bad for laymen, so is polygamy.

In reply, it should be pointed out that not all qualifications for deacon and elder are moral. The elder must be "apt at teaching" and "given to

hospitality." These are not strictly moral. That a layman is not a scholar or an eloquent speaker does not disqualify him as a good Christian. If he is too poor to invite guests into his home, that is no reflection upon his status as a believer. So, we cannot necessarily make polygamy a moral issue here.

If polygamy be not immoral, then why were church officers prohibited from practicing it? There is a very good reason: ***nepotism***. Nepotism is the granting of public favors by a government official to his blood relatives. This practice has been considered a misuse of a ***public trust*** in all societies influenced by the Bible. Unlike pagan cultures, the Bible presents public officers as ministers to the good of all. Their positions are not meant for personal gain. In the context of polygamy, a man who used his power as a public servant to establish a harem and a dynasty would create an enormous concentration of power into the hands of a single, dominating family. The opportunity of aristocratic tyranny is awesome.

That is why the Old Testament forbade kings large harems (a law Solomon did violate), private armies, direct taxation, and so on. Obviously, these privileges pervert the civil power and create despotism (Deuteronomy 17:17; 1 Kings 12:1-5; 1 Samuel 8).

***Since under the New Covenant the church is the training ground for civil magistrates and public dominion, its officers are not allowed to concentrate power in themselves by keeping a disproportionate share of the church monies or possessing an exceptionally large family through polygamy.***

A public trust is a stewardship responsibility, and it is also a unique concentration of collective power. That power can be easily abused so must be guarded by careful restrictions. The prohibition of polygamy is one of them. Upon this principle, we may safely assert that polygamy is a right left only to the layman and private citizen. It is off-limits to the public officer, enfranchised individual, or any other person enjoying corporate privileges.

## #6 - Polygamy Violates God's Types

Some commentators, finding precious little evidence against polygamy, fall back upon *symbolic theology*. Specifically they argue that polygamy violates the Son/Bride imagery of Christ and the Church. Since a man represents Christ, and his wife the Church, he can have only one wife. Christ, his example, has one wife - one Church (Ephesians 5:21-33).

Further, it is argued that man, being made in God's image, should seek to continually reflect that image in his life. Since God is depicted as monogamous, so should man be.

To answer such arguments, it should be said first that symbolic theology is descriptive theology, not dogma. There is much value in it *pedagogically* - that is, it teaches doctrine so as to make its applications understandable. Like mathematics, it uses symbols to make the laws of reality - abstractions - visual to the mind. Mathematics does not invent physical laws; it describes them. Likewise symbolic theology does not create morals and dogma, it explains them. Therefore, it requires a revelation to work from; it cannot act as one in itself.

Second, without the boundaries of the doctrinal and preceptive statements in Scripture, symbolic theology can be used to prove anything. *It becomes a theological form of quantum physics*. I can use Biblical symbolism to prove polygamy.

For instance, in Ezekiel 23, *God is depicted as a bigamist, even a sister bigamist*. In Ezekiel's allegory, Yahweh is depicted as being married to two sisters, Ahlibah and Ahlah (Samaria and Jerusalem). We know God is not a man that He would have sex and wives (as the Mormon heretics would say). Yet, we cannot imagine God depicting Himself in the Sacred Writ as a murderer or a thief, or other wicked person. (Jesus said He would come "as a thief in the night", not that He *was* a thief in the night.)

If a bigamist (or sister bigamist) is so evil, how is it that God could present Himself as one? Surely, a different allegory would have sufficed. The reason He could use such symbolism is because polygamy is not evil. Indeed, were symbolism all we had to go on, we could prove the validity of sister bigamy from this Divine example alone.



"So, God is a polygamist in the Old Testament. But the New Testament is the purer revelation. Christ is a monogamist there." Oh, really? If we follow the notion that the Church is the Bride, we must qualify it and say there are seven Brides; for there are seven churches (Revelation 1-3). Christ is also a polygamist!

My point is this: *it is not appropriate to use symbolic theology to settle this issue*, or any other moral issue, for that matter.

Finally, polygamy is not inconsistent with symbolic theology. The Trinitarian imagery of the Bible has precedence over the Son/Bride imagery anyway. The ontological Trinity is the very foundation of reality. Man, and collective man (the family), reflects that image first. A man belongs to a family before he takes a bride to form a new one. Trinitarian symbolism comes first in the Scriptures.

Polygamy does not violate Trinitarian symbolism. The offices of father (ruler), son (successor), and Holy Spirit (helper) are still reflected in the polygamous household. While there can be only one father/husband, there can be many sons (heirs) and many helpers (tutors/mothers). The Bible teaches one Spirit, yet also a seven-fold Spirit (Ephesians 2:18; Revelation 5:6). Likewise in the polygamous family, there is one marriage covenant, but more than one woman who jointly fill the office of wife/mother (see my books on relational theology, *Restoring the Foundations* and *The Mother Heart of God*).

## **#7 - Polygamy is Evidence of Wicked Lust**

This objection to polygamy results from a Gnostic view of lust which pervades Classical Christianity. The following reply is an adaptation from an article I published in *The Family Spokesman*, December, 1988. It answers the question adequately. I should add one supporting statement: Marriage is God's remedy for lust (1 Corinthians 7:2, 5, 9) and polygamy is God's remedy for great lust (2 Samuel 12:8). Celibacy and abstinence are never presented as long term remedies for lust. Such practices feed it to the point of uncleanness.

## THE LUST OF THE FLESH

*"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."*

**- Matthew 5:28**

Just about every commentator I have ever read has misinterpreted and misapplied the above Scripture. And again, part of the confusion is based upon the translation. In the Creek and Hebrew languages, there are no separate words to distinguish a married woman from an unmarried woman (unless it is the word *virgin*, or the word *widow*). In all cases the Creek word is *gune* which is translated "woman" or "wife". There is no way for the translator to know which way to translate it except by looking at the context. Sometimes, the context is not clear, so the translation is arbitrary. But in the above instance, the context is quite clear:

**Jesus is talking about lusting after married women, because according to Hebrew ethics, a man cannot commit adultery except with a married woman.**

Sexual relations with an unmarried woman is the sin of fornication, not the sin of adultery. It is entirely proper and necessary for a man to lust after his wife. It is entirely proper for a young man to lust for the woman he intends to marry. That may sound crude, but it is an obvious fact that the desire for sexual relations is the normal motive for men to marry. Were it not for sex, most men would not marry. And this is the reason why it is difficult to get men to marry today: the availability of sex outside of marriage is abundant. Why bother with marriage?

Christians try to spiritualize the conjugal act because they view the word *lust* as a dirty, four-letter word. Biblically, that is a false perspective. The word "lust" comes from the Greek *epithumiô*, meaning "strong feeling". It is translated as lust in many places, in others as "desire" (1 Timothy 3:1), "yearn" (Matthew 13:17), and "covet" (Romans 7:7). A simple word study reveals that "lust" is a neutral word in the Biblical context. One may "lust" or "strongly desire" good things or bad things.

What Jesus was saying in the above passage is that a man should not desire a woman he cannot lawfully have. Jesus, as always, was simply reaffirming the Law and the Tenth Commandment in particular: ***Thou shalt not covet . . . thy neighbor's wife.*** To interpret it any differently is to impose a false standard of morality upon Christians.

That an unmarried couple desire to have sexual relations with each other, and that they intend to marry for that reason is a perfectly Biblical motive. The Apostle Paul affirms its validity in 1 Corinthians 7:1-2. Those who view it as a concession (v.9) by Paul, overlook the fact that he refers to sexual desire as a gift from God (v.7), just as he does the desire for celibacy. To view marriage as morally inferior to celibacy is to misread Scripture, and to misread it radically. Just as the absence of sexual desire is the proper motive for celibacy, so is the presence of sexual desire the proper motive for marriage. ***And just as the presence of sexual desire is an improper motive for celibacy (asceticism), so also is the absence of sexual desires an inadequate motive for marriage.*** This is what Paul was teaching.

This cuts to the heart of the issue in what is wrong with much Christian theology. It reeks of Gnostic heresy.

[I use the term ***Gnostic*** as a general term to include all theological compromises with Platonic, Manichean, and all pagan philosophy with similar teachings.]

Christians have fallen for a false dualism in the Bible (e.g. law v. grace, spirit v. flesh, faith v. works, and so on). There are no absolute dualisms in the Bible. God is not at war with Himself. The same God who gave the Law, also gives the grace to keep the Law and to be forgiven when we fail. The same God who created spirit, also created flesh - and redeemed both. The same God who requires faith, also requires works. To pit the Scriptures against each other is not a Christian practice but a Gnostic one.

Yet for many Christians, it would be better to translate Galatians 5: 19-21 in this fashion:

***"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: sleeping, eating, having sex, making nice things, going fishing, of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."***

***(New Fangled Gnostic Version)***

How many people feel guilty for being human! "Yeah, but Brother Jim, we're not saying that sleeping is wrong, only too much sleeping is wrong." You can replace the word "sleeping" in that previous statement with anything else humans do and you get a picture of where evangelical morality is at.

All right. How much sleep is too much? Eight hours? How about ten? What if I've worked hard today? Do I get an extra hour? Or does that make me a sinful sluggard?

How much sex is too much sex? Who decides that? If I want it every night, and my wife doesn't, does that make me a lecher? Where are the rules?

"You should be out witnessing, instead of sporting your wife, Brother Jim." "Why did you buy that pizza? You could have had lentils instead and sent the money to missions." The list could go on and on.

Believe me, I was a legalist at one time. Legalism was a good value system for me. It taught me self-discipline. But there is a difference between values and morals. Morals have to do with sin and salvation. Values have to do with rewards and success formulas. It took me a long time to learn that difference.

One person decides to marry; another chooses celibacy. Yet another chooses polygamy. They are all holy and spiritual. Evangelicals, like Catholics, have created their own yardstick of spirituality - and it makes God sick. They indulge different vices. An Evangelical may never think of looking at a *Playboy* centerfold, yet not hesitate at eating like a horse. There is no problem with picking and choosing - having preferences is how we create our unique value systems. The problem appears when we try to force everyone else into our value system. Human values, however meritorious, are not universally binding as are the moral laws of the Bible.

The New Testament provides moral categories, like the ones in Galatians 5:19-25. But it does not provide the *content* to those moral categories. Uncleaness is a sin; but what is uncleaness? What is idolatry? What are love, joy and peace? The New Testament is sketchy at best on moral questions. The New Testament writers *assume* their readers know what they are talking about. How do the readers know? The Old Testament. The Torah tells us what uncleaness is. It defines idolatry. It gives flesh-and-blood examples of the spiritual virtues.

There are only two sources to supply the moral and metaphysical content to New Testament terms:

- 1) Either the Law, Precept, and Precedent of the Hebrew Scriptures;
- or 2) Human reason based upon a mixture of philosophy and Christian traditions.

That is why Church tradition and Canon Law are not reliable guides after about 190 AD: Christian theology became infected with the Gnostic heresy; and it has never been the same since. Our attitude toward Jesus' words quoted at the beginning of this article is one example among many.

***Lusts of the flesh are desires to do the works of the flesh.*** In the Biblical context, my desire to relieve my bladder is not a "work of the flesh". The works of the flesh are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, strife, jealousies, wrath, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings murders, drunkenness, reveling, and so on (Galatians 5:19-21). In other words, the works of the flesh are transgressions of the Law - the Torah. Obviously, Paul is not referring to the biological and psychological needs of our humanity. "The flesh" is a disposition to do evil with our bodies. "The spirit" is a disposition to do well with our bodies.

The dualism of ***flesh v. spirit*** in Paul's theology has nothing to do with an ontological dichotomy of two opposing substances, personalities, or natures in our being. It is an ethical dichotomy. Paul's statement, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8), makes no sense whatever if he is literally referring to our physical bodies as the source of evil. If that were the case, even Jesus did not please God because He too was in the flesh. You can see why many Gnostics denied the Incarnation - in their soteriology, Jesus could not have been our Savior if He were in the flesh; the flesh was innately evil.

Paul's subsequent statement (V. 9) would have been illogical also ("But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit"), if he meant literal flesh and blood. Were the Roman believers now phantoms since becoming Christians? The bottom line is that the Bible's use of the terms "flesh", "the lust of the flesh", and "the works of the flesh", are all theological expressions to describe a moral condition: obedience or disobedience to God's Law. Paul says, "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7). "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am fleshly, sold under sin." (Romans 7:15). Need I go on?

## **#8 - Polygamy is Oppressive to Women**

This is a subjective assertion; for it is no where intimated in the Bible that polygamy is oppressive to women. *No where*. Some women may find polygamy oppressive, and their feelings should be respected. Others do not find it oppressive. What shall we do with those women who find polygamy to be good for them? Are we going to cast them off as immoral or inferior to the monogamous women?

Women are commanded in 1 Peter 3:6 to emulate Sarah, a great woman of God. Are we audacious enough to insist otherwise? She was the matron in a polygamous household. Was she an inferior wife because of that fact?

Everywhere in Scripture, the hope of a home and a family with children is presented as the greatest joy and achievement for all women who have not lost their "natural affection". Polygamy guarantees these to the woman who wants them, while monogamy does not. Monogamy finds that there are more women who want marriage than men. Thus, it teaches women to repress their desires and turn them elsewhere. Is this not oppressive to women? *Polygamy guarantees a woman the right to be a woman.*

## **#9 - Polygamy Leads to Male Domination**

Christianity is a male-dominated religion. This is God's world, but men have been given the headship of all earthly authority. "Thy desire shall be toward thine husband" was God's command to the first woman.

The notion of a functional equality between the sexes is a feminist myth. Either the man or the woman must be in charge. If a family operates as a democracy, how can you get a majority vote between two people who disagree? Someone must be in charge. The Bible posits that responsibility in

the man. Polygamy does not threaten that, while monogamy does. As we shall show later, monogamy leads to a female-dominated society.

## **#10 - Demographic Realities**

"Since the birth ratio between the sexes is 50/50, for some men to have more than one wife would require that some men have none. God's will manifested in demographics supports monogamy."

This argument assumes that love and marriage can be decided by mathematical calculations. Here, we have morality according to statistics, a practice Christians criticize humanists for.

The sex of a child is completely a sovereign act of God. Our statistics are based upon censuses taken in America and Europe. We do not know if a fifty/fifty ratio occurs in all cultures in all generations. And we do not know if God changes the ratio at different times in history. The bottom line is that this argument proves too much. The fact is there are far more marriageable men in America than marriageable women - in a monogamous society. Since there are not enough women to go around, are we to conclude that God's will is polyandry or homosexuality? We cannot defend monogamy on the grounds of statistics. Anything can be supported by statistics. Such a personal matter as marriage can be judged by the immediate environment and needs of the persons involved in a far better manner than some altruistic and abstract concept of justice.

## **#11 - The Doctrine of *Henosis* Supports Monogamy**

This is a spin-off argument from the Creation Ordinance. This objection says that the "one flesh" experience can only occur monogamously. A "one flesh" experience is not possible with multiple partners.

Paul contradicts this notion in 1 Corinthians 6:16, where he explains that a one-time liaison with a prostitute establishes a "one flesh" relationship. Some interpreters treat the *henosis* like some magical event. It really is not.

Although full of symbolic mystery, *henosis* is the giving and receiving of seed. It is, on the creaturely level, a sacramental act of giving the members of the man to the woman.

Clearly, this doctrine in no way is diminished by polygamy.

## **#12 - Church Tradition Opposes Polygamy**

The opposition of the early Church to polygamy can be explained by the early infection of the Gnostic heresy. The same Church Councils which condemned polygamy, also condemned marriage altogether for priests. Church Tradition, while not to be dismissed lightly, nevertheless, was errant at times.

In the words of Martin Luther,

*Suppose that the dear fathers' opinion and teaching about a bigamist was such [as described above: WS] - what does it matter to us? It does not obligate us to hold and to teach that view. We must find our salvation on the words and works of man as little as we build our houses of hay and straw.*

**- Luther's Works, vol. 41, p.161**

[Luther's many favorable references to bigamy should be tempered by the knowledge that he defined "bigamy" as any second marriage, whether simultaneous or successive. It was not until later in life that he adopted a friendly view toward the polygamy we are discussing here and as evidenced by the reference quoted above. I say this for the benefit of scholars who may be confused when they verify my sources.]

Tertullian's rejection of polygamy was based solely upon his rejection of the Cultural Mandate (*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, and p.53). He is typical of that era among the "orthodox."

Monogamy was the rule among Western Christians because Roman civil law was monogamous - the law of pagan Rome. Among the "barbaric" Christians of northern Europe, polygamy was permitted during the early



years, even up to the reign of Charlemagne, the Frankish king who had four wives. The Popes appear to have made frequent exceptions to the rule of monogamy.

Christians in the East, beyond the Byzantine frontiers (often called the "Nestorian Church", which was the largest body of Christians for a millennium, spreading into China and India) has always permitted polygamy, even to this day (see the works of Aramaic scholar, George Lamsa, Harper & Row).

Among Protestants, few seem to realize that, at one time, a man could be a polygamist and a good Lutheran at the same time. In fact, polygamy was one of the rights fought for by the German Lutherans during the Thirty Years War. After the Peace of Westphalia in 1650, the Frankish *Kreistag* at Nuremburg permitted bigamy perpetually (see Kostlin's, *Martin Luther*, ii, 475 sqq. as quoted in *The History of Human Marriage* by Edward Westermarck, Allerton Book Co., N.Y., 1922, vol. 3, p. 51).

Why these abortive attempts at polygamy? It probably has much to do with the tenacious hold Roman civil law has upon our legal traditions.

### **#13 - Polygamy is absent in the New Testament**

Considering that the New Testament is little more than a fourth of the entire Bible, it should not surprise us that it should omit discussion on many subjects important in the Old Testament. Since the New Testament is primarily concerned with the revelation of Jesus Christ and matters pertaining to personal salvation, we must not expect a new discussion on a topic we consider important, when it is adequately dealt with in the Old Testament. The orthodox maxim still applies in favor of the unity of Scripture: *everything in the Old Testament still stands unless amended by the New Testament.*

However, it is not true to say that the New Testament is silent on polygamy. While we cannot point to any specific incident, we know it was practiced among the laymen; else the restriction upon church officers discussed earlier would have been redundant. Also, while there is no plain

doctrinal statement openly advocating polygamy (there is no doctrine proving the existence of God, either), there is ample support to be found in the New Testament. We shall address that subject later.

#### **#14 - The Civil Authorities Forbid Polygamy**

Since it is against the law in the United States to be polygamous, a case has been made that it would be wrong for Christians to attempt it. We are commanded in the Scriptures to be obedient "to the higher powers".

In our promiscuous and adulterous generation, this hardly seems to be an argument. Polygamy laws are no longer enforced, except in cases of fraud or public danger from fanatics. Polygamy is a significant and viable custom in the United States, although practiced unobtrusively (see *Harem, the World Behind the Veil*, by Alev Croutier, Abbeville Press, 1989.)

The 19th century statutes against polygamy have lost virtually all support in the judiciary during the last fifty years (*Mormon Polygamy, A History*, Richard Van Wagoner, Signature Books, 1989, p. 211-212). And our racial and constitutional heritage is not antagonistic: *"Bigamy was not a crime at common law, but was considered as an offense of ecclesiastical cognizance exclusively and not punishable by an ordinary common-law tribunal. (Corpus Juris Secundum, Vol. 10, §2, p. 36O).*

Enforced monogamy violates the heritage of Christian Anglo-Saxons (*Book of Dooms*, Alfred the Great, 900 AD). Any return to that heritage will restore the legitimacy of polygamy as a social custom. Considering that laws against fornication and adultery will not be enforced in the United States, it is a moot issue to argue against polygamy because it is against statutory law.

#### **#15 - Polygamy will Offend the Weaker Brother**

*But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak.*

- 1 Corinthians 8:9

Paul taught that vegetarianism was preferable to emboldening a young Christian to eat meat offered to idols. While the above Scripture is an eternal principle of love, its applications cannot be expected to be permanent; else we all would be vegetarians to this day. What has made the difference? Over the process of time, the Christian world has been enlightened.

Paul was not teaching a permanent bondage to the weakest link in the Church. Rather, he admonished the strong not to enjoy liberties without first offering patient instruction to the doubtful. In regards to polygamy, no Christian should pursue it without proper explanation. This booklet is an attempt to be accountable to the larger Body of Christ.

However, as we shall show later, it is not polygamy which is the stumbling block. Rather, it is monogamy. Enforced monogamy is a positive evil, which only polygamy can remedy.

## IN FAVOR OF POLYGAMY

*Jesus said to him, Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to it, Love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang the law and the prophets.*

- Matthew 22:37-40

If the above declaration by our Lord is the guiding rule for our Christian life, then a case can be made for ***the moral superiority of polygamy over monogamy***. The Creation Ordinance tells us that the God-ward aspect of our sexuality is primarily to procreate. Children are the Lord's heritage and He seeks a godly offspring in the earth. Therefore, one can argue that it is morally derelict for a Christian man to refuse the opportunity to be polygamous. Polygamy is superior to monogamy in fulfilling the Creation Ordinance in that more women would be married, and thus more children would be born. In terms of God's procreative intent for the human species, polygamy is truer than is monogamy.

Secondly, the man-ward purpose for sex is better fulfilled by polygamy than it is by monogamy. That secondary purpose is the sacramental union of the sexes or ***henosis*** - one flesh. In this regard, polygamy is still morally superior to monogamy; for with polygamy, more women enjoy fulfillment in the one flesh experience, and also have a headship (1 Corinthians 11).

Finally, in regards to self-love, there are two aspects to polygamy which makes a better man. First, the variety and frequency of sexual fulfillment allows the biological functions of his masculinity to have free course. This eliminates frustrated desire, temptation for perversion, and heightens morale. Second, the task of loving and nurturing more than one woman teaches him sacrifice and discipline to a degree unknown among monogamists. Polygamy produces greater men - not always righteous men, but certainly men who are more masculine.

The above arguments in favor of polygamy are based upon an important fact: ***there are always more women available for marriage than men.*** In spite of the proximity of numerical equality at birth, the social reality has always been - for several reasons - there are more marriageable women than men. War, disease, irresponsibility, homosexuality, vocation, selfishness - these are some of the reasons which produce the gap. Whatever the reason, the gap is there, and has always been there: greater in monogamous societies, lesser in polygamous ones.

Some may doubt it possible for a man to love more than one woman. Perhaps for the majority of men, that is true. But there has always been a class of men - for whatever their reasons -willing to pay the price to be polygamous. And for them, loving more than one woman is no more difficult than loving more than one child. Women may not understand that capacity of such men, since it's contrary to their nature. She is created to love one man as her husband. With the help of an analogy, she knows it is possible to love each of her children, though they are many. And they rarely doubt her love. So it is with her polygamous husband.

A Biblical example of this love is that of Abraham and Sarah. Most commentators look upon their polygamous experiments as signs of weakness. The opposite is true. It witnessed to the strength of their love and commitment that other women could not break it. Sarah so completely trusted Abraham's love that she was not afraid to give another woman into his arms. Abraham so loved and admired Sarah, that no relationship could diminish his ardor for her. Their purposes for polygamy were noble and holy: an heir and godly offspring. Christians should take note. They are the best qualified for this custom.

Pressing on now to the positive Scriptures supporting polygamy, we begin with Biblical law.

### **#1 - Exodus 21:7-11 Maidservants**

It is axiomatic in law that customs are not codified into statute or supported by judicial notice unless their practice is widespread and socially approved. Otherwise, they become the objects of persecution and repression. The regulation of polygamy is prominent in Biblical law; thus, we may interpret that fact as indicative of its pervasiveness as a social custom.

Immediately following the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20, we find the regulation of Private Altars, the Year of Release, and Concubinage, respectively. We do not doubt that the building of altars in Israel was of utmost importance. Likewise, the emancipation of servants during the sabbatical year was meant to be universal. Can we imagine that the regulation of concubinage would have so quickly followed in the Mosaic Code when it was, if we believe most commentators, merely a novelty of the very rich? I think the opposite is true. Concubinage and polygamy were so basic to the life of the Hebrews that their operation could not have been left unguided by Divine precept. Hence, we have the above passage.

Basically, concubinage was marriage without dowry, the dowry being paid to the father as the purchase price, instead of to the girl. Concubinage was not slavery: for slavery as we have known it in America did not exist in Biblical law among the Hebrews. When a man purchased his bride, it was not her person he bought, but it was her seed.

As a side observation, the average American wife is a concubine; for she usually enters marriage without a dowry. She is legally dowered by the state into her husband's estate, but that is almost always encumbered by debt - a form of servitude (Proverbs 22:7). Also, the state takes prior claim to that estate through probate, taxes, and legal fees collected by attorneys, who are officers of the court. There is generally very little wealth, if any, left for the wife.

In Biblical times the woman was first adopted as the man's sister (thus made heir to the family estate by taking the family name) and dowered (given at least six month's wages as security money should there be a divorce or death). Normally, the woman could not inherit land, but she could inherit houses in the city and movable wealth, which could be in the form of jewels, livestock, and the like.

Here in Exodus 21, we find the status of the concubine discussed. A female was purchased as a maidservant (Israel had what we call "indentured servitude"). Sometime during the six years of her service, it was expected that the master would marry her or marry her to his son. ***If he did not do this, he was said to have "dealt deceitfully with her."*** The destiny of a maidservant was to become her master's bride - either as a mistress or concubine. She was not released in the seventh year as was her male counterpart. Marriage was meant to be permanent in Israel. However, if he deceived her by not marrying her, then she was released.

The bearing this custom has on polygamy is that verse 10 implies the man, as the custom was, would have more than one maidservant (concubine). Here, we have a clear reference to the institutionalizing of polygamy in Mosaic Law.

## **#2 - The Law on Seduction: Exodus 22: 16-17**

This passage teaches that a woman's seducer must marry her unless her father objects. No exception is made for married men. It was not adultery; for a virgin was not a married woman. Here is an instance of fornication where polygamy is mandatory as a remedy. Of course, fornication is grounds for divorce for the first wife. But if she was content to still dwell with her penitent husband, he had no choice in the matter. Now, he had two wives to support. This law eliminates the possibility for the institutionalizing of prostitution in a society; for it does not allow transient relationships.

If men know they are required to marry every woman they seduce, then the costs of seduction will be too high for it to occur often. Likewise, the market for new prostitutes would be slim; as fewer girls would be introduced to pre-marital sex, and thus a life of immorality.

## **#3 - The Law of the Levirate: Deuteronomy 25:5-10**

The law of the levirate was the custom of a brother marrying his deceased brother's widow. The declared motive for this practice was to raise up an heir to the brother's estate. But it was also to protect the integrity of the family unit. The widow was viewed as a sister and a permanent member of the family.

Although there was no civil penalty attached for refusing to fulfill this fraternal obligation, yet it was considered a dereliction of duty. Again, we find no exceptions made for brothers who were already married. In this case polygamy would be a moral requirement.

#### **#4 - The Laws of Inheritance: Deuteronomy 21:15-17**

Biblical law legitimizes the offspring of a polygamous marriage - that is, all the children are heirs. Until recent years, Western law has viewed the offspring of the first wife as the only legitimate heirs. The others were considered bastards. This view, of course, violates God's Word. This Scripture is also significant in that it assumes polygamy will be practiced.

#### **#5 - The Law of the War Bride: Deuteronomy 21:12**

Like other Biblical laws, a man's marital state is not a factor in choosing another bride. Here, a man finds a beautiful woman among the war captives. He is at complete liberty to take the woman, whether he is married or not. Polygamy in this instance has evangelistic value; for the woman is caused to go through a symbolic act of circumcision - the initiatory rite of the Old Testament Church.

(An example of this law in practice is found in Numbers 31, a holy war to take booty and women.)

It is worth adding that had this Biblical law been accepted. in this country during the Vietnam War, much of the misery of abandoned women and children could have been avoided. Many servicemen left behind Vietnamese sweethearts, knowing that they would have had to make a choice between them and their American families. This is a blot upon our nation and a telling example of the evils of enforced monogamy. Monogamy cannot deal with the realities of war and the vulnerabilities it creates in the human heart. Many a child has been denied his rightful heritage because of the demands of monogamy.



## #6 - The Lord's Heritage: Psalms 127

The 128th Psalm is a happy depiction of the monogamous household (v.3). For those contented with it, monogamy can be a beautiful and tranquil experience. We do not seek in this study to diminish the blessing of such a marriage.

The previous psalm, Psalm 127, depicts the blessing of the polygamous household. I say that it is a polygamous household, simply because of the number of children involved. It is impossible for one woman to bear so many. A "quiver full" of children is far more than most of our pro-baby advocates realize (e.g. *A Full Quiver* by Rick & Jan Hess, 1990). We may pass it off as metaphor, but anyone living in Bible times would know how many arrows fill a quiver.

This is not a hunter's quiver. And since Israelites did not rely upon horses in their army, it is not a charioteer's quiver, either (Deuteronomy 17:16; 2 Samuel 8:4-5). ***It is an archer's quiver.*** The reference is to the military (i.e. "mighty man", "speak with their enemies"). Israel's army was an army of infantrymen. And the archaeological figures I have seen show the archer's quiver as a cylindrical basket spanning the entire back but cupping into the space between the shoulder blades (*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Volume 2, Abingdon Press, p. 71). It could hold scores of arrows, perhaps over a hundred. (If I was a warrior, I would cram as much ammo in there as I could!)

No one woman could have so many children. Nor is this text referring to grandchildren; for it speaks of them as "children of the youth." This is obviously a polygamous household, a household with institutional clout in society. It is a family strong enough to contend with its enemies, without the aid of allies - "at the gate," the place of judgment, rule and government.

## #7 - A Case of Polygamy in the New Testament

We are skipping better than twenty personal histories in the Old Testament which clearly involve polygamy. To cite them seems unnecessary. Most commentators will concede polygamy as an Old

Testament custom. They do so while insisting that the New Testament is a radical departure from Biblical norms.

Why are there not New Testament cases of polygamy? The answer is twofold. First, the chronological span of the Old Testament is at least 4000 years and filling three-quarters of the Bible. The New Testament, on the other hand, covers a period of merely 60 years and the last fourth of the Bible. There simply was not enough time to teach the doctrines of salvation and to rehash the teachings of the Old Testament, also.

Second, the characters of the New Testament are a captive people, subject to the rule of Rome. Certain customs were repressed because they were inconsistent with Roman law. Rome permitted promiscuity of all kinds and promoted temple prostitution. But it did not allow polygamy. Consequently, it should not surprise us that some aspects of the Mosaic Law had withered away.

Having said that, we should note that polygamy was not entirely eliminated among the Jews of Palestine. Jews still practiced it extensively beyond the eastern frontiers in Parthia. Some of these Jews were no doubt present and converted to Christianity in Acts 2, when they miraculously heard the Gospel in their own language.

Yet, there is evidence of a more specific example of polygamy in the New Testament. It appears that our Lord grew up in a polygamous household. Although Jesus had brothers and sisters (probably step-brothers and step-sisters), we find his mother as his lonely follower among his family. This was because He would have been her only son, while the others would have been children of Joseph through other wives. George Lamsa, the Aramaic, scholar provides convincing evidence for this theory in his commentary *Gospel Light*, (Harper & Row, p. 5-7):

*The reference to Mary [in the genealogy of Matthew 1: WS] is to show that Jesus was born of her and not of the other wives of Joseph. Whenever a reference is made to a particular son, the name of the mother is mentioned throughout the Scriptures. Whenever a king's name is mentioned his mother's name is also mentioned to distinguish her from the other wives of the king. If Joseph had no other wives except Mary, the word awled would have been used in the case of Joseph as in other instances. The sixteenth verse would then read "Joseph begat Jesus", but as Mary's name is mentioned*

*the word **etteled** is substituted for the word **awled** to indicate that Mary was the mother of Jesus. Even today in many eastern countries where polygamy is still practiced, whenever a son is mentioned, reference is made to his mother as the one who gave birth to him.*

Lamsa' s argument lacks reference to the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, which can explain, in part, why the Biblical text always associates Jesus with Mary. Nevertheless, the Bible often speaks with double meaning. In this case, the average reader of the Aramaic text would have naturally picked-up the nuance: Christ was born of a virgin and his step-father, Joseph, was a polygamist.

## **#8 - The Widows: 1 Timothy 5:14**

The Apostle Paul makes plain in this passage his will that any widow under sixty years of age should remarry. Contrary to the notions of modern socialists, the institutional church was never meant to be the primary dispenser of charity. The Apostles always insisted upon familial remedies. If you were a man who could not make a living, you indentured yourself as a servant. If you were a woman, you married someone who could take care of you. Charity was meant to be a personal act.

In this instance, the Apostle speaks to the widows, the most worthy of charitable assistance. He did not advocate nunneries or houses for unwed mothers. He demanded marriage. And like other Biblical laws, no consideration or exception is made for situations involving married men. What would happen should a church find itself with widows but no single men? Obedience to this command would require polygamy.

We have here a New Testament application of the levirate law. Christian men are to treat Christian women as sisters. If they are widowed, then they and their orphans should be adopted and incorporated into a family. If they are lawfully divorced, they are covenantally widowed and should be treated the same, as say the Early Fathers. This is the work of "pure religion" (James 1:27). Polygamy encourages this practice; monogamy discourages it.

## #9 - Polygamy: Christ's Promise (Mark 10:29-31)

*Jesus answered and said, Truly I say to you, There is no man who leaves houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of my gospel, Who shall not receive now, in this time a hundredfold, houses and brothers and sisters and maidservants and children and fields and other worldly things, and in the world to come life everlasting.*

- from the Aramaic text

Here, the Greek texts imply polygamy, and that implication led to controversy in the early church of the West. But the Aramaic rendering leaves no doubt: Christ promised "maidservants" to replace the forsaking of wives for the Gospel's sake -a hundredfold "in this time". You will recall that maidservants are concubines.

The Aramaic text is the preferred text in translating the Gospels; for Jesus taught in Aramaic and that was the language of his Apostles and of the disciple Mark, who's Gospel we quoted from above. Greek was unknown and too difficult to learn by the peoples of the East, except for the educated few, such as Saul of Tarsus. So the Greek texts are less reliable here.

Now, most commentators seek to avoid the obvious conclusion by spiritualizing the text and saying that Christians share these things communally. Thus, we have many fathers (elders), mothers (older women), brothers, and sisters in the Church, the household of faith (1 Timothy 5:1-2). We share our houses and properties as if they were not our own (Acts 2:44-45). And since the New Testament sanctions a benevolent form of slavery, the maidservants would be spiritually shared as well, since some Christians would have them (1 Timothy 6:1-3; Philemon).

There is some merit to this interpretation, I suppose, for those spokesmen of the faith who travel, and cannot have a home and family of their own. They must share in the bounty of God's people wherever they go in the Lord's work.

To take such a principle, however, and apply it to all Christians everywhere at all times - it would be nothing short of communism and the denial of property rights. To apply it to sexual relations would amount to advocating free love and wife swapping. This, of course, is unbiblical.

Therefore, we can say there is a symbolic aspect to this promise, but it is secondary to the real one. There is such a thing as private property - houses and lands. These are protected by the Eighth and Tenth Commandments. There is such a thing as family: brothers and sisters, and mothers and fathers. These are protected by the Fifth Commandment. There is such a thing as children that are your own - begotten - another relationship protected by the Fifth Commandment. And there is still such a thing as sex and wives and concubines. These are protected by the Seventh Commandment. We are not angels, yet. We are still of the earth. Consequently, all of this talk of "spiritualizing" the text wrests its meaning to our own destruction. Christ promised all of these "worldly things" in this life to His faithful followers, and in the life to come - "eternal life."

I think we find here a plain statement in favor of polygamy if I ever saw one - and that from the lips of our Lord. The monogamists have a lot of explaining to do.

#### **#10 - Polygamy in Prophecy: Isaiah 4**

*And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach. In that day shall the glory and honor of the LORD shine forth, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for the remnant of Israel.*

The above passage from Isaiah the Prophet is a source of no small discomfort to Bible scholars. Most theologians acknowledge that chapters 2 through 4 clearly refer to the Messianic kingdom. But they have supreme difficulty, ethically, accepting 4:1 as an annunciatory event of Christ's reign. So, they attach it to the judgment of Zion described in the previous chapter and say that there is a dual fulfillment - one, back in the days of Isaiah which includes the polygamy of 4:1, and another, during the Millennium which excludes it. This sleight of hand is arbitrary and solves nothing. Exegetically, it does not fit. If the entire three chapters refer to the Messianic kingdom (they are threaded together by the expression "In that day"), how can an unrelated and one-time event be sandwiched in between?

One famous commentator, sensing the exegetical quagmire, has conceded that the offer of polygamy occurs at the beginning of the Messianic reign, but that there is no evidence that the men will accept it!

Frankly, this is an example of commentary by party line. Everybody says polygamy is immoral, and thus, it is impossible to conceive the notion that Christ would use an immoral practice to establish His kingdom.

But Christ also reigned in the Old Testament as YAHWEH. Paul says that it was Christ who gave the Law and who provided the supernatural government of Israel (1 Corinthians 10). Jesus ruled Israel from the Ark of the Covenant. In the Messianic kingdom, He rules from a corporal body in Heaven. If Christ permitted polygamy during His reign in Israel - the Old Testament Church - why would He not permit it in the New Israel - the New Testament Church? If polygamy is evil and will not be tolerated during the Messianic reign, why was it not considered evil, and thus punished during the Old Testament?

The only plausible explanation offered by theologians - and this is the linchpin holding the monogamous case together - is that the saints of the Old Testament had a primitive ethical system, and that maturity through the centuries has occurred culminating in the Church. God had to allow Israel certain vices, else they would have revolted against God's Law. [They did anyway!]

There is not a shred of evidence supporting this theory. None. Such an evolutionary view of Biblical ethics presumes a God of moral weakness. It assumes the Gnostic heresy of two revelations: one for the carnal masses and a secret one for the illumined. But the Biblical text does not support this view. Adultery and murder were evil then, and now. The killing of animals for food was accepted then, and now. Do our moralists advocate vegetarianism? Is incest now good because it is forbidden in the Old Testament, but not mentioned in the New?

The notion that God connived at sin by permitting Israelite polygamy is preposterous. A sovereign God had a *carte blanche* with the newly liberated Israelites. He could have imposed any social system He wanted. And He did. On the issue of polygamy, the Mosaic law is more lenient than the law codes of the Canaanites. Canaanites regarded monogamy, temple prostitution, sodomy, and other disgusting practices to be better and more just to the sexual needs of men and women than polygamy. Biblical law chose an

opposite course by prohibiting prostitution and permitting polygamy.

In these chapters, Isaiah describes a feminist society which self-destructs. Judgment is followed by polygamy, which is, in turn, the mechanism God uses to usher in the Messianic kingdom. Polygamy restores family life, the rule of the father, and the political foundations of society.

## THE MINISTRY OF THE PATRIARCH

*And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*

- Malachi 4:6

The word "patriarch" literally means "father ruler." When I refer to the "ministry of the patriarch," I mean a society in which the fathers rule society in and through their homes. It is a family-based society and the rulers of the families are the fathers.

I discuss this ministry at length in my book *Restoring the Foundations*, so it is not my purpose to do so here. What I shall offer is a Biblical example of this ministry and how polygamy is integral to it.

In 1 Chronicles we find an enlightening reference to "the sons of Issachar":

*And the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do*

stood with David during the crisis of the monarchy (12:32).

Who were these men?

Issachar was one of the tribes of Israel and descended from the ninth son of Jacob by Leah. The account of his birth is interesting. His name means "he will bring reward". Genesis 30:18 tells us that Issachar's birth was God's reward for polygamy (Leah had given Jacob her maidservant.) Consequently, she was blessed with fertility.



Genesis 49:14-15 says of Issachar, that he was a man of extraordinary masculinity - a man's man of labor, service, and dominion. Issachar was the one to call for the hard jobs. He was a man of the earth, a farmer. His dwelling place was a center for commerce. He was a mighty man by the highways - the nation's Minuteman.

Issachar was a tribe of low visibility. It supplied no kings or prophets, and only one judge (Judges 10:1). Yet, we find it was the bell-weather tribe. Issachar could get along without Israel, but Israel could not get along without Issachar. It always stood on the right side in the day of decision and crisis (Deuteronomy 27:12; Judges 5:15; 1 Chronicles 12:32).

Issachar was also a tribe of family men. They were dwellers of tents - that is, their families came along with them in their journeys of business and labor (Deuteronomy 33:18-19). ***They were also a tribe of polygamists,*** and for that reason, they were able to man the largest military force of all the tribes (1 Chronicles 7:4). Clearly in Issachar and his descendants, we see the patriarchal ministry. Perhaps the Judahs produced the Davids, but the Issachars made them king.

Polygamy was the enabling principle. It was the source of Issachar's greatness. The patriarchal calling is not possible without it. Only with polygamy is a man trained to exercise dominion ***through his household.*** With monogamy, a man's household is not large enough to require more than a token of his attention. He can job out his responsibilities to hirelings. In polygamy, the man's career *is* his family, and his contribution to society is through his family.

Only in polygamy is a man trained in the kind of rule required by a family-based society. In Proverbs 31, we find the virtuous woman enabling her husband to become a leader where "Her husband is known in cities, when he sits among the elders of the land" (v.23). Yet even this diligent and virtuous woman could not do it alone. She relies upon her maidservants (v. 15). Clearly, a tiny, monogamous family is not what is in mind here, but a family estate inhabited by a polygamous household. This woman excels all the other wives in her managerial and nurturing ministry (v. 29).

If we ever hope to restore a truly Biblical society, then we must restore the family to its central place. To restore the family, we must revive the patriarchy. And polygamy is the only means to do so.



## POLYGAMY AS A TOOL OF CHRISTIAN DOMINION

In my book *Restoring the Foundations*, I made a special effort to argue the superiority of a family-based society. No century in recorded history has so consciously rejected the family and clung to institutional remedies for the ills of human existence as has this century. This century has also been the bloodiest in world history. It does not take a great mind to conclude that we are in serious trouble. The world is awash with ideologues and perfectionists - all ready to use the arm of the state to solve your problems. God save us from the saviors!

While many "pro-family" groups have tried to preserve the family in the face of its many enemies, none of them have described what a family-based society looks like. They seem content to turn the clock back a couple of generations to a healthier time. However, you cannot defend what you cannot define, and in my opinion, these pro-family groups differ little in their proposed remedies than the conservative humanists.

The conjugal or nuclear family is not what I am talking about when I refer to a family-based society. The nuclear family is too small to create an institutional impact. Consequently, it is the extended family group, which may include from three to five generations, to which I refer as the basic building block of society. The Puritans recognized the inadequacy of the nuclear family and resorted to the colonization of New England by congregations - groups of families and individuals constituting a church big enough to form townships. These were self-sufficient and self-contained political, military and economic units - true building blocks.

That experiment failed, however, because it lacked a strong enough bond to hold people together over the generations. In the long-run, creedal unity did not produce a new race of people. *Race* is a physical reality which utilizes the bonds of kinship to glue society together. Creeds can create a unity of the mind, but not of the heart. Thus, the legacy of New England has been rationalism and the rootless American.

In Biblical times, we find the Israelites settling the land of Canaan by dividing it into family estates. These estates were large enough to justify a family village and a self-appointed judge. Hence, we find here not only a doctrinal unity in theology and law (given by Moses), but also a social system which operated within the structure of kinship.

The Old Testament does not have an equivalent word to describe the conjugal family. The "family" was understood as an extended kinship group (including servants and their families) residing on the same section of land and governed by the principal male heir. Toward an understanding and restoration of this Biblical concept of society has been foremost in my research. And I speak to it here.

Few people perceive the profound economic and cultural benefits which come from the polygamous marriage. Serial polygamy is what built this nation. Monogamous women spent themselves on the frontier and died young. Their children survived and their husbands remarried, sometimes two or three times. Pioneer living is hardest on women and the success of Mormon polygamy in mitigating that strain cannot be overlooked.

At present, institutions serve as surrogate spouses or parents to shore-up the shortcomings of monogamy. Maintaining the current standard of living in the United States, the most affluent of nations, is impossible without a two-income household. Mom has joined Dad in the workforce. The appropriate question arises: what becomes of the children? They are what enable a family to cross the generations.

If the children are very young, they are placed into day-care centers, where studies show a child has a far greater chance of physical, mental, or sexual abuse than at home (*Enemies of Eros*, Maggie Gallagher, Bonus Books, Chicago, p. 239). In fact, outside of the care of their biological parents, *the chances are forty times greater!*

If the children are older, they are enrolled in a public, parochial, or private school. In each case, a surrogate exists to train and nurture the child in the absence of the parent. Not unlike ancient Greece which started its decline when it turned the rearing of children to the slaves, America's children are either nurtured by older peers or adults (school teachers) who find it impossible to have an emotional tie to them.

The failure of the school systems to produce excellence and godly character, whether public or private, is becoming increasingly obvious. As a

result, the home school movement has suddenly taken wings. But there are trade-offs which must occur for the family committed to teaching their children at home. I heard one home education leader cite the turn-over rate at 50% every year. Even for the faithful, there are great sacrifices. Mothers find they cannot work that job and teach at the same time, so the family experiences a precipitous decline in the standard of living. If this were only a loss of luxuries, all would still be well. But in too many cases, such a decision means the loss of the family's ability to save money and accumulate capital - the tools necessary for the family to grow into the next generation and fulfill the Dominion Mandate (Genesis 1:28).

I speak to the situation of home school families because they are the vanguard of the pro-family movement. If they are falling short, it is much worse in the rest of society.

The polygamous household overcomes these obstacles in one stroke. A division of adult labor is naturally created to maintain an adequate income as well as adequate care for the children. While one wife is teaching and caring for the children, the other may be employed or busy in a cottage industry. Perhaps they both can work part-time and share the burden of the family chores.

The father finds he no longer needs excessive hours to make ends meet. He is allowed more time with his family and the opportunity to cultivate a relationship with God that would make him a leader.

We find this obvious benefit manifested in the virtuous woman described in Proverbs 31. She provides enough leisure time for her husband to qualify himself as a leader, both in his home and in his community. There is much more to the duties of a man than to earn a living or to be a good companion to the woman. If the Biblical pattern be followed, much of what the government does today was done by the fathers in Israel. Fathers created the governmental structure of Biblical society. They provided the spiritual and military covering. They were the welfare system, the ministers of justice, and so on.

However, in our day, we have chosen institutional remedies for needs once met by the family. Today, we pay to have judges and attorneys to administer justice. We establish bureaucracies to provide the military, financial, and welfare structures to protect us from mishaps and dangers. We buy insurance to recover losses when our institutions fail. But all of these

constitute a society run by hirelings and not shepherds (John 10:12-13). These are poor substitutes for the family, at least if we believe the Bible. ***Fathers are shepherds.*** The secular contracts between men have replaced the sacred bond between kin as the tools of dominion in our society. And they are very cold and clumsy.

Institutionalism naturally degrades into socialism and then communism. A contract society is always a litigious one which requires the constant policing of the state to maintain order. Biblically speaking, it is the Moloch society, where men turn their responsibilities and risks over to "the gods" (professionals), culminating in the god-king and his priests (bureaucrats) (see 1 Samuel 8). A free society cannot exist without the structure of the extended family.

Obviously, monogamous man is not capable of providing that structure. Perhaps, if he is a professional, his income is high enough to care for his family and give him opportunity for community leadership. Ironically, as a professional, he is probably a part of the bureaucratic order himself, and if he does become a leader, he and his wife must rely upon others to provide the bulk of their children's care and training. The result is an aristocracy, and the more affluent parts of New England are a good example of what I am talking about.

Polygamy is the only way the working man can fight back the rise of tyranny in our day. For the little people, only polygamy can secure the home front - economically, spiritually, and culturally. Only polygamy can free-up time for the men to confront the enemies of Christ which are enslaving us all.

During the 1970s and 1980s, we saw a groundswell of political and social involvement by fundamentalist Christians. Most of those activists were women (e.g. Eagle Forum). The men were too busy trying to make a living to involve themselves in political issues. The women did it. That effort was unbiblical and ultimately has failed. Such is the curse of monogamy. Had we been a polygamous society, we would have had self-sufficient households where the women managed the home and men managed society. The men would have fought the political battles - ***and we would have won.***

We need more men, an army of men to do battle with the tyrants of our generation. The common man is outgunned in every category by the

institutional giants who rule us. He has fought back with unions, PACs, para-church ministries, private schools, and so on. And we cannot discount the good that has been done. But these tools of dominion have not turned back the tide, precisely because they are, by their very nature, bureaucratic, institutional, and susceptible to the very corruptions we are fighting to correct. The boy David cannot fight the giant with Saul's armor. The shepherd is not a professional soldier, and if he tries to be one, Goliath will surely slay him.

The family man must use the resource of his own family. Polygamy, by its very nature as an extended marriage, creates an extended family -a networking large enough and strong enough to be a formidable opponent. It gives a family an institutional stature in society.

The hope for our freedom from Antichrist does not depend upon our ability to destroy the power centers of our evil civilization. Leave that to God. Rather, our hope rests upon our ability to create new power centers and a new civilization. That civilization begins at home.

## FEMINISM, WITCHCRAFT & MONOGAMY

Feminism, monogamy, and witchcraft form an unholy trinity working the destruction of Christian civilization. This is an astonishing assertion and one which will not sit well with most people. Most people will view witchcraft as a plausible rival of the Christian faith. Some will view militant feminism with distrust. But to associate monogamy with the two seems preposterous. To prove the linkage, let us begin with some basic definitions of these terms.

**"Feminism:** originated by the French playwright Alexander Dumas in his essay on the rights of women, *L'Homme-Femme* (1872), has often been used in reference to movements to secure equality for women; the term in current usage for such movements is 'women's liberation'." (*Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia*, Vol. 25, p. 209)

**Witchcraft:** "The practices of witches; sorcery; power more than natural; enchantment". (*New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary*)

**Monogamy:** "The practice or principle of marrying only once". (*Ibid*)

Romantic feminism, which lies at the foundation of the women's liberation movement, believes in the ethical and spiritual superiority of women over men. An example of this attitude was Margaret Sanger, founder of the birth control movement (see Peter Gardella's *Innocent Ecstasy*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1985). The notion of feminine superiority was necessary to justify women's suffrage and the notion of "liberation" from the tyranny of men.

The average feminist believes in the functional equality of the sexes. She believes the average woman can do whatever the average man can do, and sometimes better. Perhaps the woman must rely more upon the aid of technology (such as contraceptives) or her intuitive instincts - but in the end, men and women are the same.

Therefore, "liberation" means a release from traditional roles of wife, mother, and mistress. Not only do these women want to do what men do in politics, business, and education; they also want to be soldiers, priests, and judges. They want traditional families obliterated and the rearing of children given to the state (see literature published by the National Organization for



Women). They want marriage to be equally divided like a business partnership. In the words of one spokesman:

***For the sake of those who wish to live in equal partnership, we have to abolish and reform the institution of legal marriage.***

- Gloria Steinem

Feminists believe they are more developed emotionally than men, and thus are better equipped to reduce conflict. The male's territorial ambitions, pride and sexual aggressions lead to war: the ultimate evil. The woman is said to be kinder, gentler, and consequently, better motivated to compromise, reform society, and mete-out equitable justice. Enlightened womanhood is viewed as the redemptive force in the world. She must be liberated from the home and be allowed to tame the public sphere.

Feminists also believe they are more sensitive spiritually and less intellectually wooden than men. They are more prone to mystic experiences and contact with the supernatural. Since traditional Christianity lacks this feminine touch, feminists yearn for the return of a mythical matriarchal age antedating Christianity. They reject the patriarchal core of the Bible and its masculine deity. The drift is strong toward a neutered Scripture.

Over the last several years, we see this theme receiving serious attention. Books like ***When God Was A Woman*** by Merlin Stone are on the cutting-edge of feminism's war with Christianity. As a book review described it:

***Here, archaeologically documented, is the fascinating story of the religion of the "Goddess". Known by many names - Astarte, Isis, Ishtar, among others - She and matriarchy reigned supreme in the Near and Middle East.***

***In addition to being worshipped for fertility, the Goddess was revered as the wise creator and the one source of universal order. Under her, women's roles differed markedly from those in patriarchal Judeo-Christian cultures. Women bought and sold property, traded in the market-place and the inheritance of title and property was passed from mother to daughter.***

***How and when did the change in our perception of God (and woman) occur? By documenting the wholesale rewriting of myth and religious dogmas, the author reveals a very ancient conspiracy:***

*the patriarchal re-imagining of the Goddess into a wanton, depraved figure. The author demonstrates that this is the portrait that laid the foundation for one of culture's greatest shams - the legend of Adam and fallen Eve.*

**- Barnes & Noble Bookstore Catalogue**

*The Humanist Magazine* has propagandized along similar lines, and boasts, "Feminism is humanism on its most advanced level."

Feminist ideology has largely triumphed in American society. What was lost in the failed "Equal Rights Amendment" has been gained using the Fabian process: piecemeal victories in the courts by using the "equal protection" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Turning now to witchcraft, it is not difficult to show the ideological affinity between it and feminism. Witchcraft is not Satanism and the worship of the Christian devil. Witchcraft (or Wicca) is the old paganism of goddess worship - a natural religion centered on the mystery, sexuality, and psychic abilities of the female. Modern witchcraft, blended with science, is much more sophisticated than ancient or medieval witchcraft. It talks of astral planes, holistic healing, and lesbian sex instead of necromancy, magic potions, and orgiastic sabbats. The New Age Movement, with its channeling, herbal medicine, and tantric sex is the vanguard of this synthesis between feminism and witchcraft.

The practice of abortion and belief in reincarnation are two examples demonstrating the pervasiveness of witchcraft in our society. Witches were the original abortionists, ending pregnancies for distraught women through drugs and magic spells. Reincarnation is at the core of Wicca's system of justice: undischarged Karma, the burden of spiritual debit and credit carried over from incarnation to incarnation until it is finally resolved (see ***What Witches Do*** by Stewart Farrar, Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, New York, 1971). Reincarnation is prominent in the New Age Movement (witness Shirley McClain) and legal abortions are in the millions. Abortion, as a form of birth control, is one of the pillars of feminism. Reincarnation witnesses to the genderlessness of mankind's soulish essence, which is his real essence (one may alternate between male and female in successive incarnations according to Wiccan dogma).

The doctrine of reincarnation, as it is taught by such pagan religions, is an affront to the Christian doctrine of Atonement. Christianity teaches the all-sufficiency of Christ's sacrificial death.

Abortion, of course, is a violation of Christian morality. Not only is abortion condemned in the Scriptures, but also in the earliest writings of the Church (*Didache, Barnabas, Clement, Ignatius, etc.*)

Temple prostitution was an integral aspect of ancient, goddess worship. It was also central to the matriarchal order. The temples held the monopoly on sex, and men paid handsomely to get it. Revenues generated from this commerce bank-rolled matriarchal supremacy.

Additionally, temple prostitution served as a form of public welfare. Girls from poor families and orphans given or sold to the temple got an equal shake. (Primitive, pagan societies which were poor and lacked this kind of institutional structure, killed their girls at birth). Boys could become sodomites, or could be sacrificed to Moloch (lit. "king"). They fought in gladiator games (and died) or were killed in war.

This is the old Baal religion denounced in the Bible. Ashtoreth, with Baal (her male consort), were the generic names for each local pantheon of deities. Baalism occurred in the advanced pagan cultures - Egypt, Canaan, Babylon, Greece, Rome, etc.

The monogamy of ancient times was created in order to insure a static and equalitarian society. The established political order had a vested interest in preventing the emergence of power blocks. And the control of population growth was integral to the stability of their civilizations (witness the near panic of the Egyptians at the explosion of Hebrew fertility in Exodus 1. In Egypt and Israel we have a classic confrontation of monogamous and polygamous cultures.)

Monogamy could only be sustained by public prostitution. Men who could not afford private courtesans, availed themselves of the temple prostitutes.

There, they could expend their vital energies, which monogamy did not accommodate. These "priestesses" would frequently conceive and bear children, which were used in human sacrifice, if they were male. Females were sometimes saved for future prostitution. Human sacrifice was added as

a means to relieve the burdens of procreation for the temple. And in hard times, they were eaten in a cannibalistic (Cahna-baal) Eucharist.

Wherever there has been prostitution, witchcraft has flourished - if for no other reason than for the fact that prostitutes have turned to witchcraft to prevent or terminate pregnancies. We find the same phenomenon in monogamous cultures. Pregnancies are dreaded. Monogamous wives fear of losing their husbands if they do not maintain their youthful beauty and vigor, which pregnancies rarely exempt as a price. Children also take a toll on the affluence of a family, the time a woman can spend with her husband, and the general success with housework. Hence, contraception, aberrant sex, and abortion go hand-in-hand with monogamy. Polygamy greatly lessens these stresses and consequences.

Some social observers may vainly imagine that for some men to be polygamous (polygynous), some women (prostitutes) must be polyandrous (George Gilder, *Men and Marriage*, Pelican Publishing, 1987). Polygamy is seen as the disease instead of the cure. It is blamed for homosexuality and prostitution.

But who is to say which came first - the chicken or the egg? Whether men abandoned social responsibility and became sodomites and philanderers and thus created a surplus of marriageable women? Or whether polygamy created a shortage of women and forced the surplus of men into the arms of the harlot and sodomite? Which do you see more of these days? More men who want marriage or more women? More polygamists or more prostitutes (professional and amateur)?

I doubt whether that question is statistically answerable. But it can be answered Biblically. The Bible gives the reason for homosexuality in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, chapter 1:

***Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.***

***For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use [of their sexual orifice: WS] into that which is against nature [procreation]:***

***And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use [procreative use] of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.***

The Greek word for "nature" is "budding forth" and refers to fertility. The Word of God here teaches the rise of homosexuality as God's judgment for atheism. The women, monogamous women, lose faith in God's sovereignty over their conception and seek to control it or restrain it themselves. Contraception neuters the woman. A male having sex with an androgynous female finds it a small step, psychologically, to having sex with an effeminate male. ***Feminism produces homosexuality.***

Monogamy decouples sex from propagation of the human species and reduces it to the feminine motive for intimacy. I am not saying that intimacy is bad, but that intimacy is the way women experience sex. Men experience it differently: as a tool of dominion. God made man to procreate, and all things being equal, he will be polygamous. He cannot experience sex as intimacy. His relational arrow points upward to God, and God's calling upon his sexuality - not to the woman. No woman in herself can fulfill her husband. She is only a part, although an indispensable part, of her husband's life. If she does not allow him to procreate, to build a household and an estate, sex with her loses its sanctity. Reduced to a mere exercise in sensual gratification, her idolatrous demand for intimacy turns him into a hedonistic monster or a tortured drone.

Monogamy inevitably cultivates the hedonistic motive in men - the motive which sustains prostitution. For if men were interested in women primarily as the mothers of their children, then there would be no demand for prostitutes. Men go to prostitutes for fun sex, not fruitful sex.

We cannot blame polygamy for creating a shortage of women available for marriage. Rather, a shortage of men interested in marriage requires the monogamous woman to compete with the prostitute for the affections of the male. Monogamy creates a demand and a supply for a kind of sex which avoids the messy consequences of procreation. Sex without procreation inevitably leads to sex without relationship, the kind offered by the prostitute and homosexual. For the man who now seeks the prostitute for sex without the burden of children, may next seek the sodomite for sex without the burden of women. The inconvenience of the woman's menstrual cycle, her fickle emotions, and her dependency on the male are all avoided by the

homosexual. It should not surprise us that ancient philosophers were often bisexual, and considered homosexuality to be the more rational and "purer" form of sex.

Polygamy reduces the supply of women available for prostitution, whether professional or amateur. A married woman, if she does compete with other women, competes as mother, not as prostitute.

The notion that the civilizing of the male occurs by submitting his sexuality to the maternal sexual patterns of the female is skewed. For there is always a class of men whose virility demand large families. Most women are not prepared emotionally or physically to bear enough children to span the years of their husband's fertility - about forty good years. To require monogamy of such men only weakens them. The Creation Mandate tells him "to be fruitful and multiply." It is written in his very being. Restraining a man's virility is perverse. He is a man, not an angel. If he cannot lawfully have polygamy, then he will seek the whore.

Therefore, we are back to the assertion that monogamy and prostitution go hand-in-hand. There has never been a monogamous society in the history of mankind which has not been forced to wink at unchastity. In a polygamous society, there is no excuse for it, and can be rightly punished severely. Monogamous societies must be lenient toward the harlot. In so doing, it creates a cultural force in favor of witchcraft.

This is not all; for there are other polluted streams which flow from the fount of monogamy.

Feminism demands equality, and where does it learn the notion of equality, but from monogamy. In monogamy there is an equalitarian demand for a numerical equality of the sexes. One woman equals one man in marriage. Social morés may separate the notions of economical (or functional) equality from equality in being (ontological or essence) for a while. That is, men and women may be considered the same in the sense of being human, but with different roles. The Ante-Bellum tradition has succeeded at this separation to a fault. However heroically defended, these secondary defenses are challenged and broken. Society adopts a companionate view of marriage. Women begin to view their husbands as chums and not as lords. And then, the distinction of roles becomes blurred. The confusion of roles never occurs in a polygamous household; for the numerical inequality of the sexes makes the man special and the natural

source for leadership and arbitration. Thus, his priestly and governmental headship is enhanced.

This aspect of the man's headship in the home and society is a key element in maintaining a Christian civilization. For a man to exercise dominion at any given place, he must first be present. A woman without a man as her head - either father or husband - is in a state of anarchy. It is as evil for a woman to lack that headship as it is for a man to lack the headship of Christ, or for Christ to lack the headship of God (1 Corinthians 11:3).

The Scriptures do not teach in vain that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (1 Samuel 15:23). The revolt against male authority (or its evasion) is the central pillar of feminism and witchcraft. Monogamy wars against that authority by creating a growing class of women who are unattached to families. They are women who lack either a father or husband in charge of their domestic lives. They become independent and begin to work, like the steady force of gravity, into the spheres once controlled by men.

Historically, such women have been the harlots. Prostitutes have opportunities unique to their profession which bring power. Not only in terms of wealth, but more importantly in terms of intrigue, blackmail, and privileged information, prostitution gives them leverage which the confession box is only a poor competitor. Men are often compromised by their philandering, especially in a monogamous culture. They will pay well or provide special favors to protect their vices.

We can see why Biblical law did not allow widows to remain unmarried. The temptation to harlotry was a grave danger.

We find an example of this degrading process (of monogamy to feminism to witchcraft) in the decline of ancient Israel's southern kingdom: Judah. By the time of King Hezekiah, the geographical expansion had long since passed. Monogamy was nearly universal among the Jews. The concentration of power into the royal dynasty had become nearly complete - culturally, economically, and politically. The royal princes had practiced polygamy, following the pattern of Solomon's pompous display in violation of Deuteronomy 17:17. This denied polygamy to the common man who was forced into monogamy because he was priced out of the market. Coupled with zero population growth, Israelite society lacked a growing pool of marriageable women available for polygamy. Historians have noted that

static civilizations are always decadent ones. And we know Judah had become decadent because aberrant sexual practices were becoming a problem: adultery, sex with menstruating women, prostitution, and various sins of uncleanness. These are forms of cheap and easy sex.

On the other end of the scale, it was becoming increasingly difficult to marry-off the royal daughters as fewer men had the capital to pay the dowries. Thus, there emerged the phenomenon of what Isaiah called "the daughters of Zion" - something similar to what college-educated women careerists are experiencing today. Most women want to marry someone higher on the social scale. Who do you marry when you are on top looking down?

Following Hezekiah's benevolent reign, Judah became a militantly feminist society (Isaiah 3:12, 16-17). And his successor, Manasseh, led the nation in an orgy of idolatry and witchcraft (2 Kings 21:1-18; 2 Chronicles 33:1-20). We can mark Judah's decline by the social conditions which made polygamy impossible.

An example from secular history would be that of ancient Greece. I quote at length from W. E. Lecky's *The History of European Morals, from Augustine to Charlemagne*, (1869):

*It is one of the most remarkable, and, to some writers, one of the most perplexing facts in the moral history of Greece, that, in the former and ruder period, women had undoubtedly the highest place, and their type exhibited the highest perfection [the polygamous period: W.S.]. Moral ideas, in a thousand forms, have been sublimated, enlarged, and changed by advancing civilisation; but it may be fearlessly asserted, that the types of female excellence which are contained in the Greek poems, while they are among the earliest, are also among the most perfect, in the literature of mankind.*

*In the historical [or monogamous] age of Greece, the legal position of women had, in some measure, slightly improved; but their moral condition had undergone a marked deterioration. The fore-most and most dazzling type of Ionic womanhood was the courtesan; and among the males, at least, the empire of passion was almost unrestricted*

*The peculiarity of Greek sensuality is that it grew up, for the most part, uncensored, and, indeed, even encouraged, under the eyes of*



*some of the most illustrious of moralists* [for example: Socrates, a homosexual and Plato his successor].

*In the Greek civilization, legislators and moralists recognised two distinct orders of womanhood, - the wife, whose first duty was fidelity to her husband, and the hetaera, the mistress, who subsisted by her fugitive attachments. The wives lived in almost absolute seclusion. They were usually married when very young. The more wealthy seldom went abroad, and never, except when accompanied by a female slave; never attended the public spectacles; received no male visitors, except in the presence of their husbands; and had not even a seat at their own tables when male guests were there.*

*The voluptuous worship of Aphrodite gave a kind of religious sanction to their profession [of the hetaera or courtesan]. Courtesans were the priestesses in their temples. The courtesan was the queen of beauty. She was the model of the statues of Aphrodite, that commanded the admiration of Greece. . . The courtesan was the one free woman of Athens; and she often availed herself of her freedom to acquire a degree of knowledge which enabled her to add to her other charms an intense intellectual fascination.*

This candid account we have from a vigorous defender of monogamy! Polygamy degraded into monogamy, and monogamy degraded into promiscuity.

Our own nation's experience has been similar. Prior to the Civil War, excessive numbers of women were not a problem. The rigors of the frontier meant they died young and their widowers remarried. Following the Civil War, however, the wilderness became less a reality in the lives of most Americans. The country was settled as far west as Kansas. All that remained was the Great Plains, and that has never factored much in population anyway.

Over 600,000 men died in the fighting of the Civil War. This represented a loss of the most marriageable men in a nation of 26 million whites. Immediately, the nation faced a severe man shortage. Had this been a polygamous society, it would not have been a problem. But American evangelicals insisted upon monogamy and a class of women was created which had no male headship. During the later part of the 19th century, we find feminism taking wings. But in our stoic tradition, the vanguard was not

the prostitute. It was the school teacher. Public education mushroomed during the period as young spinsters struggled to make a respectable living. Their higher education plus independent livelihood made them excellent spokesmen for feminism, socialism, and other radical ideologies which enveloped the nation just prior to the 20th Century.

The majority of women, however, worked low-paying jobs in the factories. They became the oppressed for whom the feminists would speak, and would later become a voting block for women's liberation. In the mean time, their cheap labor created the corporate empires which in the 20th Century have nearly wiped-out the family farmer and small-town businessman.

Enforced monogamy is not a Biblical teaching, but a doctrine at the heart of Wiccan religion. Witchcraft teaches the doctrine of equal polarities. The universe consists in, and operates through, inseparable opposites. Indeed, this is the governing principle of all pagan religions. From the Baal and Ashtoreth religions of the ancient Middle East, to the Greek and Roman pantheons of gods and goddesses - the universe is comprised of an ultimate dualism working its way down to a multitude of particular dualisms. The Chinese have known it as Yin and Yang. Among the Zoroastrians, it was light and darkness. The ancient philosophers talked of universals and particulars or cosmos and chaos.

Modern man thinks of form and energy. And Hegel saw it as thesis versus antithesis resulting in a synthesis, which then becomes a new thesis. Medieval Christianity had its God and Satan. The list goes on and on, but the theme is the same.

Witchcraft views women's liberation as merely a restoration of the feminine principle and a balancing-out of the cosmos. It does not believe in male or female dominance, but total equality. In the rites of Wicca, it is important that the coven be led by a priestess and her male consort as the goddess and god. Every act must be counter-weighted by members of the opposite sex. By this process is the cosmic order maintained in the rituals.

Biblical Christianity is the only religion which breaks away from this sexual and dualistic view of paganism. With its doctrine of the Trinity, or three-ism, the possibility of dualism as a faith and social philosophy is shattered. Likewise, we can see why monogamy is so important to pagan man and why polygamy is inimical to it. Monogamy maintains the cosmic

dualism in the pagan home and its family shrine. Monogamy, with one man and one woman (and one boy and one girl for static perpetuation of godhood) represents the image of the dualistic godhead.

The polygamous household, on the other hand, reflects a different godhead: the Holy Trinity of Father (ruler), Son (heir/successor) and Holy Spirit (mother/helper). For this reason, pagan man has always been hostile to polygamy, as he has population growth. His view of the universe is dualistic and fluid, and of course, friendly to promiscuity. It needs the god-state to bring order.

Modern Christianity betrays its pagan infection with its enforced monogamy and its bondage to goddess worship (i.e. the Virgin Mary, a transvestite Christ, and the Church as a Bride). Mankind inevitably and irresistibly mirrors its view of God and the cosmos. Who is really the Christian's God?

The Christian's God will produce a family-based society of diversity, liberty, and respect for private property. It will be patriarchal with an emphasis on traditional roles for men and women. Ethics are not situational, but based on an authoritative source.

The Holy Spirit is the Father's helper. It is feminine in the ancient Hebrew language and is divisible into the Seven Spirits of Revelation, which divide in order to multiply the Son. Thus, polygamy is at the core of an authentic, Trinitarian Christianity (see *The Mother Heart of God*, by this author)

This is not what we are seeing from modern Christianity. We see "experience" exalted over the Bible in ethical decisions. Traditional roles are often switched. And as a society based upon private contracts, we see an increasing presence of the state to reduce the litigious anarchy in the courts.

Monogamy, feminism, and witchcraft are ideologically homogenous. For that reason, they must be recognized for what they really are: allies in a war against Biblical Christianity. Polygamy is the weapon which strikes at the Achilles heel of Satan's kingdom. May Christians have the grace to see their opportunity.



## CONCLUSION

***Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.***

- Jesus (Matthew 10:34, 36)

Polygamy is a divisive issue. Truth is acceptable to most people until it makes intensely personal claims upon their lives. Then, it imposes on their comfort zones, and they bite back bitterly.

Let us suppose for a moment that everything I have said turns out to be false. Let us suppose that I have completely misread the teachings of the Bible. What if I am completely wrong about polygamy? What if I missed something, and there is some esoteric interpretation vindicating monogamy? Where does that leave us?

Well, it leaves us with the morality of Abraham and the family structure of Jacob. It leaves us in the company of Martin Luther and Charlemagne. It still leaves us with a moral standard superior to the present reign of sodomy, adultery, and promiscuity. Even if my arguments are wrong, we still come out ahead. At least, polygamy can be viewed as a half-way house back to moral purity.

Time will tell whether the arguments stated herein will work any constructive change among our people. But let us be candid: many women will vigorously oppose polygamy, even to their own hurt. Isaiah 4:1 says that women will not bargain for it unless they have been overcome by

disaster or have lost the protection of the political order. This is unfortunate, for polygamy can, over time, cause us to avoid that fateful day.

I expect this book is too little, too late. Our people, even the Christians, are too steeped in witchcraft to avoid destruction. Life will go on, however, for the Remnant. The Remnant will be polygamous. And it will survive. The Remnant is who I speak to in this book. I hope you are one of them.

## **APPENDIX A**

**See the next page for a handy  
summary of this book to copy  
and hand-out to people.**

# **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE & PLURAL MARRIAGE**

*Whoso findeth a wife (woman) findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.*

- Proverbs 18:22

## **Why plural marriage?**

**Because it is in the Bible. Because it is a part of God's safety net. Because God likes large families. Because it reduces the temptations of promiscuity, prostitution, and other social vices. Because it guarantees a woman a headship and protects her from satanic attack.**

## **What is plural marriage?**

**It is the custom of men taking more than one wife. Anyone who has read the Bible through realizes that plural marriage was an established custom among God's people in the Old Testament, a period spanning four thousand years of human history. It was never repudiated or denounced in the New Testament, a period of one hundred years, nor was it repudiated in the Early Church until the 4th Century, when the Church was corrupted by pagan philosophical influences.**

**Paganism has always been hostile to the family, especially large, independent families which compete with the state. Every subsequent attempt at the reformation of the Church (whether Celtic, Protestant, or American) has witnessed a call for the restoration of this custom. Great Christians have accepted its inclusion as a social custom - among them being St. Patrick, Martin Luther, and the Puritan leader, John Milton. According to Bible prophecy, it must be restored before the Millennium can begin (Isaiah 4).**



## OBJECTIONS

*God made only one wife for Adam, not more. Taking more than one wife violates God's original plan.*

**Response:** God also made Adam naked. Does that mean God does not want Christians wearing clothes? That was His original plan, wasn't it? We read too much into the meaning of this Biblical text if we say it prohibits plural marriage. It is teaching us that humankind is two sexes - male and female - and that the coming together of the two sexes are necessary for procreation. That happens in plural marriage, as well as monogamy.

*Men who had more than one wife had unhappy families.*

**Response:** Men in the Bible who had just one wife also had unhappy families. Their problems were the result of sin and selfishness in other areas, not the result of plural marriage. For instance, King David had a happy family until he committed adultery with another man's wife. His adultery was followed by murder. Until that time, David had many wives and a blessed family. After his sin, his family was cursed. The Bible never criticizes David for having wives, only for his adultery.

*The Bible says that the woman must have her own husband. How can she have her own husband while sharing him with another woman?*

**Response:** The same way a servant shares his "Own" master with other servants. The Greek word translated in reference to wives is the same one used in reference to servants (compare 1 Corinthians 7:2 with Titus 2:5 and 2:9). When referring to the man, it is a different word. For the husband, it denotes assignment; it denotes belonging for the wife.

*Men who want more than one wife are in bondage to wicked lust. How can you suggest that men should be lustful?*

**Response:** The Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 7 that lust is a proper motive for marriage. He obliquely describes it as a gift from God (v.7). The word "lust" means "strong desire" and is not considered evil

unless it leads to sin in thought, word, or deed. We can lust for good things; Jesus did (Luke 22:15, see the Greek). Lust can be only one among many motives for plural marriage. A man may desire a large family; he may enjoy the companionship of certain women; or he may be called upon to take care of a widow (the levirate) which involves marrying her (divorced women would be considered covenantally widows). These are only a few of the possibilities. Men who want sexual gratification do not seek for it in plural marriage. It is too burdensome. Harlots - amateur and professional - provide gratification without the responsibility. Harlotry cheapens sex. Plural marriage cherishes it.

*Plural marriage is oppressive to women and leads to male domination. It is sexist and barbaric.*

**Response:** Only a humanist would think this way. There are a lot of humanists in the churches. God has clearly set forth the man as the head of the home. That is why women cannot have many husbands, because it inverts God's order of authority and accountability (1 Corinthians 11:3). The woman is man's helper. There is nothing wrong with having more than one helper. It is true that sinful men have abused plural marriage. A woman would not want to marry a sinful man. An abusive husband will be abusive to one wife or many. The value of plural marriage can be seen in the respect of testing the worth of a man as a husband. A young woman marrying a man who is already married, especially when he has children, gives her the advantage of evaluating his performance as a husband and father. The Scriptures teach that a man cannot take another wife without the approval of his first wife (1 Cor. 7:4). If he has been a poor husband, she will not readily give her consent. So for those who follow Biblical standards, there is a check-and-balance in the relationship which provides safety for all concerned. If we follow Biblical truth, it is not possible for plural marriage to be a cursing, but rather, a blessing.

*Plural marriage breaks the one flesh relationship between a man and wife.*

**Response:** People have misconceptions about the one flesh relationship, or the *henosis*, as it is called in the Greek. *Henosis* does not refer to the emotional attachment between a man and his wife. Men and women experience the sexual act differently. Women experience it as intimacy; men experience it as an achievement. *Henosis* refers to the union

created by the transmission of the man's seed. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 6:18 that a one-time sexual encounter with a prostitute creates the one-flesh bond. Plural marriage creates more bonding, not less bonding. It is divorce which causes the breaking of the henosis.

*Jesus has one bride, the Church. Men should follow His example.*

**Response:** It is a weak objection to use Biblical symbolism. Used in this way, there are just as many verses which can be used to show that Jesus has many brides, many churches. Biblical symbolism can be used to explain doctrine, but never establish doctrine. People who grasp for straws when objecting to plural marriage need to face up to their own fears and insecurities. It reflects a personal problem with sex or a troubled marriage, rather than a commitment to Biblical truth.

*The Bible tells us that ministers should have only one wife. Should that not tell us that God views monogamy as morally superior to polygamy?*

**Response:** The verses which support that viewpoint are found in 1 Timothy 3:2, 12 and Titus 1:6. But that viewpoint is a deduction from the text, not something which is actually stated. These texts set forth a restriction on plural marriage, not a prohibition. In fact, it implies that polygamy was expected to be practiced among the laymen. Probably the primary reason polygamy was prohibited to ministers is the same reason excessive polygamy was prohibited to Israelite kings: to prevent *nepotism*. It was designed to prevent the centralization of temporal power into the hands of a self-appointed aristocracy, not to suggest that polygamy was, in itself, degrading, immoral, or carnal.

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