

# The Harvester



*Preparing Souls  
To Serve The Lord!*



Volume 39

July 2019

Number 12

## Are We Happily (Scripturally and Spiritually) Married?

Brian R. Kenyon

On the sixth day of creation, the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable [help meet, KJV; helper suitable, NAS; helper fit, ESV] to him” (Gen. 2:18). Deity then proceeded to create “every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name” (Gen. 2:19). There may be several reasons why God wanted Adam to name the animals, but one reason certainly stands out. When Adam finished naming all the animals, “for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him” (Gen. 2:20). In naming the animals, Adam undoubtedly saw each animal paired with its opposite gender. For Adam, though, there was no such match. So for the first time, Adam realized, “It is not good that man should be alone.”

After God created the woman, He brought her to Adam (Gen. 2:21-22). No introduction was necessary. When Adam saw her, he immediately recognized, “This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh” (Gen. 2:23). The woman was of the same nature as the man, and she supplied all that he lacked.

The man saw the beauty in God’s special design of her for him! With this special creation of woman, a special relationship was also created, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). Thus, marriage is an inherent part of humanity, but has also served from the beginning to teach us about the relationship of Christ and His church (Eph. 5:31-33).

### Are You Happily and Scripturally Married Physically?

It has been correctly observed by many that “as the home goes, so goes the church and society.” Today’s culture is an undeniable exhibit of the negative effects of the deterioration of the home. Probably from the 1960s with the “sexual revolution,” the home has steadily deteriorated as views of who can have sex with whom have become more loose. God created humans with the desire for a sexual relationship, and He also created the only earthly relationship in which that is to take place, marriage (cf. Gen. 2:24; 1 Cor. 7:3-5). Any sexual relations outside of a God-ordained marriage is sin (cf. Gen. 20:1-7; 39:7-9; 1 Jn. 3:4; 5:17).

Also adding to the problem of culture’s perception of who can have sex with whom is that prejudices have viewed certain marriage relationships as wrong when God has not, yet the faulty comparison is made with relationships that are inherently sinful.

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For example, particularly in the 1960s, those of darker skin color began to openly “date” and have relationships with those of lighter skin color, which, given this country’s Antebellum history, was definitely taboo. However, it seems the majority, even among church members, did not examine the Scriptures to see if such skin color “mixing” was authorized by God, but rather allowed biased culture to formulate their views against it. Yes, there may be social difficulties with such marriages, but the same type of potential difficulties exist among people with the same skin color! Then, as time progressed, multi-partner relationships were more accepted and now homosexual relationships are purported to be normal. Proponents of all these deviations compare these relationships to the skin color “mixing” of earlier decades, as if to say, “Since you were wrong about blacks and whites marrying, you are also wrong about two women or two men marrying each other!” As Biblically informed people know, however, because people wrongly judged those of different skin color marrying does not mean the Scriptures approve “same-sex marriage” (cf. Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Jude 7).

To be Scripturally married, therefore, one must be married to another of the opposite gender, no matter their skin color, who is qualified by God to be married; that is, one who has never been married; one whose spouse has died (Rom. 7:1-3); or the innocent of fornication spouse in a Scriptural divorce (Mt. 19:9). To be happily married, each spouse must love God more than anything and love each other

more than any other person except Jesus Christ! Then, fulfilling the roles God has set forth for husbands and wives will be more enthusiastically engaged and easier to comply (cf. Jn. 14:15; 1 Jn. 5:3). When both spouses truly love God, they will be New Testament Christians, which will yield happiness now and in eternity! Are you happily married physically?

## Are You Happily and Scripturally Married Spiritually?

While it is true that God created marriage, He does not require all people to marry (cf. 1 Cor. 7:7; 9:5). In fact, some should not marry (cf. Jer. 16:1-3; Mt. 19:9-12). Thus, the more important question is: Are you happily and Scripturally married to Christ spiritually? The sexual relationship has nothing to do with this marriage! Spiritually, God wants everyone married to Jesus. Like God declared before making woman, “It is not good that man should be alone,” so, spiritually speaking, “It is not good for mankind to be without Christ!” The “single-life” apart from Jesus means: (1) no forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38); (2) no fellowship with God (Rom. 5:10; 8:7; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:21); (3) no avenue of prayer (1 Pet. 3:12 cf. Jn.9:31); and (4) no hope of eternal life (Eph. 2:11-12). We spiritually marry Jesus by obeying His will (Acts 2:38, 40-41, 47; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1 Tim. 3:15).

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**Special Contributions:** Amazon Smile, Atlantic Christian Fund, Mauldin Living Trust.

\*Our final deposit for the month is usually made on the last Wednesday of the month. All contributions received after that time are reported on the next month’s financial statement.

## The Harvester

Published Monthly  
Florida School of Preaching  
1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803  
(863) 683-4043

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Spiritually, God wants His people to remain faithfully married to Jesus. Paul expressed concern for the Corinthians' spiritual unchastity (2 Cor. 11:2-3). Like in a physical marriage, there are ways to stay faithful to our marriage to the Lord and ways to become unfaithful. We stay faithful to Jesus in at least two key ways. First, as in physical marriages with spouses, we must be on the same page mentally. Spiritually, this means we must be of the same mind as Christ (Phil. 2:5). Focus really matters! Paul confirmed:

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Col. 3:1-2 cf. Mt. 6:33)

Second, as in physical marriages with spouses, we must spend time with each other. This is important spiritually as well in being married to Christ. We must spend time with Him (Acts 4:13). A "long distance relationship" with Christ will not work! We must spend time with Him in God's word (1 Tim. 4:13, 15; 2 Tim. 2:15 cf. Ps. 1:2), in prayer (1 Tim. 2:1-4 cf. Acts 2:42), in assembling with fellow Christians for study and worship (Heb. 10:24-25 cf. 1 Cor. 11:23-29), and in being the salt and the light of the world (Mt. 5:13-16).

There are also things we must avoid, which will surely ruin our spiritual marriage to Christ. First, as with physical marriages to our spouses, "dating" someone else brings ruin to marriages. "Dating" false doctrine will just as surely wreck our marriage to Christ. Paul constantly warned the Colossians:


Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ... <sup>18</sup>Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind ... <sup>20</sup>Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations ... <sup>22</sup>according to the commandments and doctrines of men? (Col. 2:8, 18, 20-22)

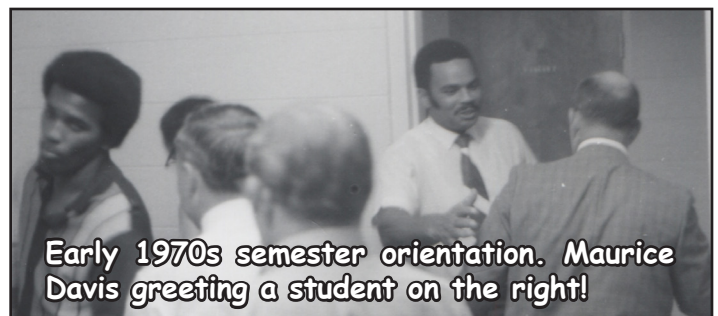
Like today, even in the Lord's church, some in the first century thought that mixing various religious practices made them more spiritual. However, anything mixed with the Gospel, no matter how spiritual it may seem, perverts the true Gospel into something unable to save (cf. Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Jn. 9-11). May we never bring unscriptural elements into our spiritual marriage to Christ!

Second, as with physical marriages between a man and his bride, a wife choosing to wear another man's name for which she should have no affectionate tie, will destroy a marriage. Spiritually, why would a spouse of Christ even think it would be okay to be spiritually involved in or identified with denominationalism? Believe it or not, there are "members" of the body who "worship" with the local church, then go across the street to teach Bible class in a denomination (or vice versa)! Can you imagine a physical marriage like that: sleeping with the spouse at night, then spending the day with and wearing another person's name? What person respecting God's will would want to be in such a marriage? How does Jesus feel when His spouse would rather wear another name than Christian (cf. Jn. 13:21)?

Third, as with physical marriages to our spouses, we must not show more interest in someone else. Can you imagine, even without officially "dating," a spouse willfully spending more time and energy with someone else? Christ wants and deserves our constant attention! When we seek other things more fervently and with greater interest than "the kingdom of God and His righteousness," He is disappointed. Our marriage to Him will be jeopardized proportionate to our continuing in such a state (Mt. 6:33 cf. Col. 3:5). Let us keep completely focused on "Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2).

## Conclusion

While the comparison between physical marriage and spiritual marriage to Christ is not perfect in every way, the above observations are strikingly similar. While one of the first highlights of a physical marriage is the honeymoon, the final highlight of the spiritual marriage to Christ is the "ultimate honeymoon," an eternity with God to all the faithful when this life is over! That descending city about which John wrote will be "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2, 9-10). Are we happily married to Jesus? 



Early 1970s semester orientation. Maurice Davis greeting a student on the right!

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Monday	__ 8:30-12:00	Revelation (259)	Bauer	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	First and Second Corinthians (135)	Richardson	3
Tuesday	__ 8:30-12:00	Preacher and His Work (107)	Wheeler	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	Computers and Churches (290)	Wheeler	3
Wednesday	__ 8:30-12:00	English I: Grammar (124)	Patterson	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	Holy Spirit (250)	Kenyon	3
Thursday	__ 8:30-12:00	Logic (270)	Beals	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	Romans (261)	Brownlow-Dindy	3
Friday	__ 8:30-12:00	Church History (242)	Daugherty	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	Genesis (264)	Kemp	3
<b>Extension Classes</b>				
Thursday	__ 6:00-8:30	Denominational Dogmas I (131) (Tenth Street church of Christ, Apopka)	Kenyon	2.5
Thursday	__ 6:00-8:30	Isaiah (281) (Orange Street church of Christ, Auburndale)	Bauer	2.5
Monday	__ 7:00-9:30	Denominational Dogmas II (232) (Wesconnett church of Christ, Jacksonville)	Kenyon	2.5