

Sacrament of Marriage

“What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder”

“Marriage is not.....the effect of chance or the product of evolution of unconscious natural forces, it is the wise institution of the Creator to realize in mankind His design of love. As a consequence, husband and wife, through that mutual gift of themselves, which is specific and exclusive to them alone, develop that union of two persons in which they perfect one another, cooperating with God in the generation and rearing of new lives.” Pope Paul VI *Humanae Vitae*



"To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from her husband but if she does, let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband and the husband should not divorce his wife"

(1 Cor. 7:10-11).

"A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If her husband dies she is discharged from the law. Accordingly, she shall be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive."

Romans 7:2-3

Catechism 1640 Thus *the marriage bond* has been established by God himself in such a way that a marriage concluded and consummated between baptized persons can never be dissolved. This bond, which results from the free human act of the spouses and their consummation of the marriage, is a reality, henceforth irrevocable, and gives rise to a covenant guaranteed by God's fidelity. The Church does not have the power to contravene this disposition of divine wisdom.

Saint Paul tells us that this teaching is not his own but “the Lord’s” teaching that marriage is indissoluble. Some Protestant denominations believe that there is an “exception clause” meaning that a person can get a divorce, under certain conditions, and then remarry. They believe that the Gospel of Matthew contains this exception clause while agreeing that it is not mentioned in any other Gospel.

In Mark’s Gospel Jesus addressed the issue of marriage: “From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh so they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.....whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.” Mark 10:6-12

The “Exception Clause”

The Pharisees question Jesus



In Matthew’s Gospel Jesus said that Moses allowed divorce but in the beginning this was not allowed. Jesus now says that divorce will only be allowed for “unchastity.” What exactly does that word mean?

His audience, the Jews, knew exactly what Jesus meant. In Leviticus 18:6-17, it lists sexual relations that were forbidden by God and involved various types of incest. These passages in Leviticus are referred to by the word ‘porneia’ which was practiced by the pagans and was considered by the pagans as valid marriages between family members. In Leviticus 18:3-4 it reads: “You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt....as they do in the land of Canaan....you shall not walk in their statutes. You shall do my ordinances and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the Lord your God.”

Matthew 19:3-9 and the “exception clause”

“And the Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" He answered, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? They are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder. They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" He said to them, "For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, **except for unchastity** and marries another commits adultery and he who marries a divorced woman, commits adultery.”

In Greek the word translated here in Matthew 19:9 as “unchastity” or in some translations as “unfaithfulness” is *porneia*. The modern word ‘pornography’ comes from this word but what did this word mean to the audience to whom Jesus was speaking and how are we to understand it?

In Acts 15: 29 the pagans that converted to Christianity were told to:

“Abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from unchastity.” (porneia)

Sacrificing to idols and eating animals with blood still in them was forbidden in Leviticus 17 and unchastity (porneia) was forbidden in Leviticus 18.

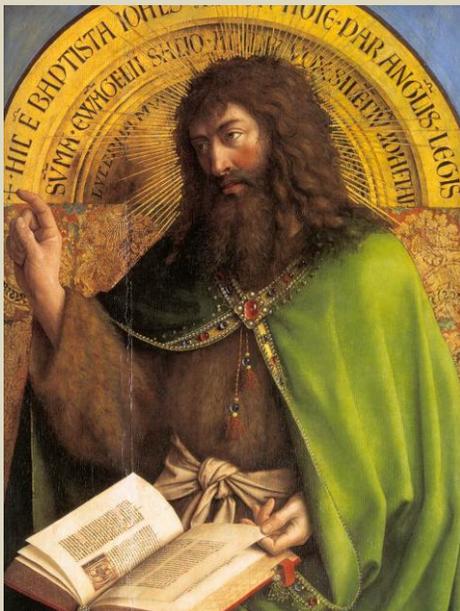
Saint Paul uses the word porneia here for an unlawful “marriage”.

1 Cor. 5:1 “It is actually reported that there is immorality (porneia) among you, and of a kind that is not found even among pagans; for a man is living with his father's wife”

“Living with his father’s wife” was incest (porneia) according to Leviticus.

Apparently the pagans in Paul’s time were not as immoral as were the pagans in the time of Moses for they would not even do what this Christian man was doing. Later Paul says in verse 5: “you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

John the Baptist



Matthew 14:1-4 tells us about Herod who was living in porneia. John the Baptist was beheaded because he told Herod “It is not lawful for you to have her.”

“For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison, for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, because John had said to him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.”

Herod was “married” to his brother’s wife which was porneia (such a marriage was considered incest) and therefore an unlawful marriage.

It's clear that the apostles did not take Jesus words to mean there was an "exception clause" such as "unfaithfulness" because immediately following His words they said "If such is the case of a man with his wife it is better not to marry." Matthew 19:10

The Catholic New American Bible has the correct translation of Matthew 19:9" "I say to you, whoever divorces his wife unless the marriage is unlawful and marries another commits adultery." Porneia does not mean that if a spouse is unfaithful the marriage can be dissolved and the parties are free to remarry as is taught in the majority Protestant denominations and by the Orthodox.

Navarre Catholic Bible Commentary on the exception clause: "It is almost certain that the phrase refers to unions accepted as marriage among some pagan peoples...when persons in this position were converted to the true faith, it was not that their union could be dissolved, it was declared that they had never in fact been joined in true marriage"

Annulment

Because of the Church's authority to "bind and loose" given to the Church in Matthew 18:18 the reasons for a marriage to be declared invalid have expanded over the centuries. Affinity, marriage between close relatives, is still a reason for a marriage to be declared invalid.

Canon Law 1092: Affinity in any degree of the direct line invalidates marriage.

To read more on valid reasons for an annulment go [HERE](#)

The Catholic Church isn't the only one that has this doctrine on marriage. The Protestant Reformed Church also believes that marriage is a lifelong bond and that, although an individual may divorce his or her spouse for continued infidelity, the marriage bond is not dissolved apart from death. Hence, neither party is permitted to remarry while the other person is still living.

To read their reasons go [HERE](#)

Same-Sex "Marriage"

According to the Public Religion Research Institute 43% of Catholics support same sex marriage.

According to the survey a majority of Catholics (56%) believe that sexual relations between two adults of the same gender is not a sin and (69%) of Catholics believe that homosexual orientation cannot be changed. To read the report go [HERE](#)

Catechism

2357 Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.

2358 The number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible. This inclination, which is objectively disordered, constitutes for most of them a trial. They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition.

2359 Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection.

Saint Paul on Homosexuality

Saint Paul



“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness suppress the truth....Claiming to be wise, they became fools; and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error.”

Romans 1:18-27

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH

There are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God's plan for marriage and family. Marriage is holy, while homosexual acts go against the natural moral law. Homosexual acts "close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.

Sacred Scripture condemns homosexual acts "as a serious depravity... (cf. *Rom* 1:24-27; *1 Cor* 6:10; *1 Tim* 1:10). This judgment of Scripture does not of course permit us to conclude that all those who suffer from this anomaly are personally responsible for it, but it does attest to the fact that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered"

Nonetheless, according to the teaching of the Church, men and women with homosexual tendencies "must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided". They are called, like other Christians, to live the virtue of chastity. The homosexual inclination is however "objectively disordered" and homosexual practices are "sins gravely contrary to chastity.

To read the Vatican's statement in full go [HERE](#)

What is the most probable cause of same sex attraction? Dr. Joseph Nicolosi has been treating those with same sex attraction for decades. He has been on Catholic Answers radio and has spoken at numerous Catholic conferences. Here is a talk from a conference on the casue of homosexuality. **Please set aside the time to watch these programs. We need to know how to defend Catholic teaching on these topics.**

Page down about half-way until you come to the title: **Introduction to the Causes and Treatment of Homosexuality**

This talk is divided into three parts lasting about fifteen minutes each.

To watch Dr. Nicolosi's talk go [HERE](#)

What will be the consequences if same-sex "marriage" becomes the law of the land?

Here is an important talk by **Dr. Jennifer Morse** on what the effects of same sex marriage will have on the family. As Catholics we need be aware of the consequences.

This talk is divided into four parts about fifteen minutes each.

Part 1 [HERE](#) Part 2 [HERE](#) Part 3 [HERE](#) Part 4 [HERE](#)

This is the only official Catholic website for those with same- sex attraction: [HERE](#)

Article on the dangers of same-sex couples adopting children go [HERE](#)

Next topic The Sacrament of Holy Orders