

THE 3-D MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE SACRED & SECULAR MARRIAGE!



It is said that:

“Marriage is an agreement wherein a man loses his bachelor degree and a woman gains her masters”, which will be translated by: “TEARS: The hydraulic force by which masculine will power is defeated by feminine water-power”, and where, in the dictionaries, alphabetically “Divorce comes before Marriage”.

“It is better to love and lust, than to have our apparatus rust” (Kurt Vonnegut)

The whole concept of what we call *“marriage till death do us part”, or “Call no man happy until he is dead”,* and that man is superior to a woman, is no more than a man-made concoction and interpretation more than you and I can understand, conceive and perceive: *“...and (Husband) shall cheer up his wife which he has taken” (Deut 24:5), “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord ... Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it ... So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loves his wife loves himself” (Eph 5:21-22+25+28).*

However, humans took God’s decrees and instituted utopian rules and regulations favoring the male over the female. I hasten to say that you may think I am crazy, so be it; I would like to assure you that I am more today than yesterday believer in God and his precepts, but it will not change the biblical facts, which are beyond our capacity to explain let alone coordinate. What you will read in this article is not my postulation or theory, but realities beyond any reality and questions that you might have not thought of. After researching marriage through the O.T. and N.T. passages as well as the religious and secular books and documentaries, here are fragments of what I found for you to be the judge:

The definition of marriage forwarded in consensus in religious and secular encyclopedias revolves around marriage, reserved and designed for a dichotomous identity and purpose of a biological sociable human, different from animal kingdom, as being a type and form of **sex** and **sexual relation** (cf. Gen 1:28) in a heterosexual copulations and relationship, nothing sacred about it except when mandated through religio-socio-magical notions, ideologies, practices and traditions; it reflects the conjugal communion and nuptial duties as well as the duality of gender-linked and divider identity and biological reproduction. The Creator created them male and female, and made their offspring in their image and likeness (Gen 5:2-3+2:18), and although Adam was created differently from Eve, he baptized and endowed them in spite of the gender equality with preset nuances, personalities, characteristic inclinations, strengths and weaknesses, expectations, social roles, functions not forgetting duties and responsibilities (Gen 1:27). This broad definition is shared by many psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, marriages counselors and therapists, as well as clergy.

In turn, we human baptize our language with some kind of functional gender equality as male female in referring to electrical “plug & socket”, pink as feminine while blue as masculine, including but not limited to the Triune God: Father and Son are described with masculine terms while many times over refer to the Holy Spirit in feminine terms, most probably constituting the basis for Islam to forward a gender equality of a trinity formed of Father, Son and Mary.

Many argue that God gave many of his commands and guidelines about marriage before the fall of Adam and Eve, and they referred to that period as the “time of innocence, happiness and bliss” when Adam and Eve did not know good from evil such as: “whatever God has joined together no one can disjoin except death”, “the man leaves his mother and father and cleave to his wife: and they

shall be two in one flesh” (Mar 10:6-9), “two better than one”, “your desires are for your husband”, “the man is the head of the woman”, etc.

If that is the case, I have these disturbing, puzzling and unsettling questions that I wish to have an answer, if any one would help:

- 1- How could there be an original sin starting from after Adam joined Eve in the fall, when few prior transgressions took place, such as the deist Eve retired God and did not heed his command to be submissive to her husband, and she allowed herself to be tempted when her husband was not around, and where Adam ended up being submissive to her as an accomplice? During the supposedly time of Adam and Eve’s **innocence** and living in the **Garden of Eden**, where they were reportedly to be *soul mates, husband and wife, one household*, and after eating of the **Tree of Knowledge** of good and evil, resulting in the original **sin** and the **expulsion**, and their house of cards and humanity became divided and crashed. Why did not God expel Eve after she fell and before tempting Adam? Does not all that demonstrate that both had self-knowledge and a strong willed conscience? Adam in his self-knowledge named the thousands of beast and fowls but could not realize his nakedness until after the fall!!! (Gen 2:19+3:10).
- 2- According to the biblical texts, God created only one man and made from him only one woman; he called the man Adam (*Hebrew ish=man or from Hebrew root for alive*) and the woman Eve (*Hebrew ishshah= alternatively woman/wife or from a man*). But in Gen 5:2, without discrepancy in gender to underline their unity and species he called them both: Adam or mankind. The only historically recorded incident where a man gave birth is when God fashioned from Adam’s rib a better genetically looking clone but with different biological features. God was able to create Eve from dust like with Adam, but he wanted to emphasize **the one becomes two, the two merge and become one in marriage, and the infused one should stay ever one**. (Mar 10 :6-9)
- 3- God created only one pair: Adam and Eve, and he forbade incest, exogamy and consanguinity (Lev 20:17, Deut 27:20-23, Exo 20:14), but we repeatedly and ironically intone that we are the sons and daughters of this first couple, which makes us offspring of incestuous intercourses and relationships. Since God is omnipotent, couldn’t he create another couple, so that Adam and Eve’s sons and daughters can intermarry instead of marrying their own brothers and sisters to start the human race? How could God allow his friend Abraham to marry his half sister Sara? Or Lot’s two daughters to lay with him and get pregnant and God called all of them righteous? Etc. (Gen 17:15-16, 19:30-38, 20:11-12, 22:17).
- 4- God said one man and one woman for a monogamous union, no divorces: how come he allowed or at least tolerated Abraham, Esau, Jacob, Moses, David and Solomon among others to have multiple wives and concubines? (Deut 24:1-5, Mar 10:2-12).

In spite of all the above and trusting that God’s wisdom, even in these superficially controversial issues, is greater than ours; we should focus, for our study of marriage institution, on the elaborate making of Eve so Adam can have a companion, a soulmate, a partner, a helper (Gen 2:18), and finally somebody to reciprocate falling in love with and to be comforted by. I believe God through his word instituted marriage for many fundamental reasons with sex as a tool for pleasure also and not just an end for procreation; but as humans, we do not differentiate between what God intended and what we want from marriage.

It is a fact that marriage, spiritually and humanly, was instituted to contain secular, intellectual and spiritual aspects: bonds and properties, rights and privileges, duties and responsibilities, all to include Spiritual concoction and transcendence, Material possessions and benefits, and Intellectual compatibility and cooperation. It is a fact that marriage in Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and others is a civil and social contract, while Christianity added to it the spiritual dimensions and magnitude by elevating it to the ranks of the paramount doctrinal sacraments of the Church. Whether civil or religious marriage, many governments will only recognize marriages if performed in civil courts rather than through religious authorities.

The Christians are the Church, the Church is the bride of Christ; and Christ is holy; consequently, marriage becomes also holy and sacred. On the other hand, while the other faiths leave room to some extent for bigamy and polygamy, together with some kind of concubinage and slave ownership, allowance for divorce and remarriage, Christ brought this institution back to the original design and stage: **One** Adam and **One** Eve, and enforced the original decree: “*whatever God has joined together no one can disjoin except death*”, from which the slogan “*till death do us part*” was coined, used and popularized, followed by: “*I pronounce you husband and wife, and you can kiss the bride*”, and by extension: kiss your old life goodbye, relinquish your will, for now the newly weds have new added duties, responsibilities and limits to endure, summed up by variation of their reciprocated solemn vows and “I do”:

“I give my body to you in loyal matrimony ... or ...I give you my body and with my body I worship you ... or ... I receive you as mine, so that you become my wife and I your husband (woman says her version) ... or ... I take you to be my wedded husband (wife) ... to have and to hold, from this day forward ... for better for worse ... for richer for poorer ... in sickness and in health ... till death do us part”.

The man came up with the idea of exchanging rings as a symbol of the reunion and spiritual unification bond of the couple, and supported the practice with all kinds of man-made religio-magical reasons and significance. Some say the ring is round, then there is no beginning and no end; wearing it signifies that one agree unconditionally to the indissolubility of marriage (Gen 2:18-23); while others with the same connotation but add to it the aspects of the aura of a trinity, spiritually translated as the triune of the equal indivisible circular personae, representing the couple plus God, and secularly through the consummation of that marriage: living together, having sexual relations, and joint ownership with survivorship rights of offspring and material properties and inheritance.

Since the first marriage officiated by God for Adam and Eve: "Eat and drink, live wildly and be merry today as tomorrow may never come" mentality never prevailed. It is so awfully easy to get divorced or secure annulment of consummated marriages, even in the strictest Jewish and Catholic religious courts, citing psychological reasons, especially in the USA and Europe.

When marriages fall apart, one word comes to mind: "Dowry" before and/or after marriage, which was instituted as a religio-magical precept to sustain women and children in case of husband's death; its implication and application varied to the extent that fathers of the brides benefited from the marriages of their daughters, as certain women were sold for the right nuptial price or for tribal alliances or for adequate services as in the case of Jacob (Gen 29:18, 30:20, 34:12, Exo 22:17, 1Sam 18:25). It was extended to give women some kind of financial security and make it harder for the man to dispose of his wife. This phenomenon, although not in vogue now a day, is replaced by pre-nuptial agreements, law suits and scandals. Many a marriage is based on: *"let's try it, the worst that can happen we'll divorce"*.

Many will say: what do you do when one is hitched to the wrong marriage partner? How can anyone live with abusive, aggressive, intrusive, domineering, warmongering, not to forget wild, pervert even criminal bitch or son of a bitch, in another word male or female "bully"? The easy answer is there is no answer, but you made your bed, learn how to rest in it no matter how heavy your cross is as the other alternative is not divorce, annulment, entering into extramarital affaires, finding another partner, beating or killing your spouse, because these solutions are no more than scapegoats and prelude to other tragedies. I will disappoint you if I am painting a desert mirage in the middle of marriage oasis, but people all over the world live in and around deserts, where they learned how to survive, to adapt, and to endure, as the maxim says:

"What can't be cured must be endured"

If I can re-write and add to Meredith Brooks' song "Bitch", one might grasp a better depiction of our understanding of today's marriage misconceptions and fruits, and asserting our deplorable state of affaires, attitudes and aptitudes towards that institution:

Original verses

I'm a bitch, I'm a lover
I'm a child, I'm a mother
I'm a sinner, I'm a saint
I do not feel ashamed

My addition:

The man's refrain

I'm a bully, I'm a lover
I'm a child, I'm a father
I'm a sinner, I'm a saint
I do not feel ashamed

The Chorus Kid:

I'm a bastard, I'm a child
I'm a mistake, so I'm wild
I'm a heavy load, I'm a mutineer,
In vice I'm a pioneer;
I feel neglected and unloved,
I feel chained and cuffed,
My parents playing their game
And I do not feel ashamed.

Although I have no intention to impose my findings but just to share them after this lengthy, slapdashed, slipshod and chaotic introduction, and if I am seeking concurrence in the need to be debunked with facts or be proven to be true with facts, I dare to say that there is no satisfying definition for love and marriage, as I have never read a complete precise description of them. How can anyone describe these two larger than life items? All I know that love is life, with its ups and downs, closeness and alienation, success and failure, equanimity and trepidations, and the beauty of self-giving with no measures in order to treasure love's pleasures, while marriage is love's throne and crown. The marriage institution is seeing its demise and downfall now a day, and love in tandem, because we bared them of the godly and societal elements and precepts needed to sustain and push

them forward. From the beginning, man created his own set of rules for this institution in giving it latitudinal and longitudinal dimensions and allowances, while ridiculing and disobeying the godly.

We brushed God aside, we retired him, we castrated his precepts, and we intensified and glorified our animalic instincts, impulses and functions to include among others promiscuity, licentiousness, lasciviousness, debauchery, slothfulness, filthiness, drunkenness, idleness, self-indulgence, homosexuality, whoremongering, including but not limited to zoosexuality and all crimes against nature, together with divorce and remarriage as remedies to our social ills and emotional capricious demands: *“For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural 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”* (Rom 1:26).

While God's precepts proved to be the best of the best for a healthy marriage, we do not want to hear about what God decreed, but we still want the best marriage can give within the guidelines of God, but with that we continually cling to: *“Man purposes and proposes, but God in his wisdom continually disposes”*; if you disagree, ask all those who are entangled in bad marriages, experiencing nasty divorces and whacky relationship, and listen to their complaints and aches. We have developed a social and psychopathic mindset concerning marriage summed up within these lines: *“if it feels good, do it”* but *“extramarital activities, divorce, abandonment and indifference should happen to other people not me”*. When we experience marriage trouble, we nonchalantly quote God's words without any intention to apply them to ourselves. We have denigrated and vilified the marriage institution, advocated and encouraged the brokenness of families, pulled down sex to criminal filth and lust, glorified self-indulgence, instituted welfare laws to gratify “babies having babies” out of wedlock, and we have called the whole mishmash progress, emancipation, choice, and life style.

They say man uses love to have sex while woman uses sex to get love, which translates in both making love without serious intent or common goal, no more than philanderers, fickle and flirting casual lovers with high expectation and ulterior motives. The transcendental reality reveals that even if they make it to the altar, interpersonal difficulties even physical illnesses sit in coupled closely with psychological distress and hostility, the end result is generally separation, divorce or even violent death. We refer to marriage as a “golden cage”, but a cage is a cage, imprisonment and confinement regardless of its bars are made of gold, silver or dross. When we dare defying God and Society's laws whether in living in debauchery and wickedness or in battering or killing our spouses, we move from the “golden cage” to more solid iron cage of misery even behind bars. Ring in Arabic is called “*Khatem*”, but it is ironic that in few Arab countries they refer to the wedding band as “*Mahbas*” from the root word “*Habasa*” (imprison), as if to cement the idea for the couple to be “**sentenced for life**”. In contrast, marriage should be “*home sweet home*” and far of any bondage except the sweet bondage of love, devotion and exchanged pleasures and treasures.

“... It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife has not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband has not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud you not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontincy” (1Cor 7:1-5). It is an excellent formula for the prevalence of sexual relations throughout the life cycle and an incentive not to defile.

God says: *“... Your desires are for your husband (and by inference for your wife)”* (Gen 3:16), and for those with wandering eyes *“... Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh”* (Gal 5:16) and: *“... Do not covet your neighbor's wife (and by inference “husband”)*” (Exo 20:17) *“If mine heart have been deceived by a woman (a man), or if I have laid wait at my neighbor's door”* (Job 31:9).

Since lust is a self-indulgence centered in the hearts through the eyes, not out of necessity, we do idolize today more than any time in our history the maxim: *“A broad or lover goes, there comes another yearning”* and *“change is good”*, as we are in constant look for the bliss of concubinage, polygamy, polygyny and polyandry, and legalizing all kinds of orgies and sexual perversions. The words of God teach much about lust: *“So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: they walked in their own counsels”* (Psa 81:13). Doesn't the statement of Rita Rudner, the funny comedian, seem ironic and befitting of our state of affaire: *“Men who have pierced ears are better prepared for marriage. They've experienced pain and bought jewelry”*.

God and society condemn possessive acquisitive love as well as infatuation as they call for all-contemplative, all-encompassing, all-liberating, benevolent, chivalric, sacrificial and redeeming love relationship, rooted in devotion, respect and sense of belonging. Can marriage survive the prevailing tolerance and non-judgmental attitudes vis-à-vis adultery, covetousness, lust, rape, sodomy, incest, fornication, lasciviousness, homosexual tendencies, perversion, sensuality, voluptuousness, pornographic mediums, voyeurism, orgies, swinging, swapping, harem, attraction, distraction, and finally the defilement of the marriage bed and sanctity? *“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears”* (2Tim 4:3), *“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death”* (Jam

1:14-15), and "...we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, reveling, banqueting, and abominable idolatries ... Dearly beloved: abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul ..." (1 Pe 2:11+4:3), "**For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world**" (1Jo 2:16)

God decreed abstinence before marriage, but society seems to advocate "sowing wild, soulish and royal oaths" tolerance to sexual experience and co-habitation norms before marriage pretending that it would help in finding our perfect soulmate: Mr. or Miss Right. The fact of the matter, this tolerance and broadmindedness made us easily damaged and proved to be a detriment for the marriage institution resulting in more scars, misconceptions, storms, duplicity, divorces, syphilis, herpes, Aids, HIV, and all kinds of STDs, including but not limited to disfigured babies, sick babies, burden babies, unwanted babies, etc. With this forbearance, we ended up bringing our old and worn-out bags to the marriage with false expectations, like those who watch pornographic movies they expect their partners to be sexual androids to perform as well if not even better.

Aren't we confusing pure and innocent love with sullied and momentary lust? Aren't we misreading the writing on the wall by the hand of God? Aren't we writing our marriage' eulogies and epitaphs, even before to consummate marriage, instead of writing our unique love stories? Are we putting into marriage what we expect to reap from it? Aren't we mixing the true "Love Making" accompanied by reciprocated intimate devotion with the "Animal Sex" for self-indulgence, self-pleasure and self-relief? In God, society, the civilized and the uncivilized world's norms and understanding: when you care about a specific person, having the best of intentions and desires to have him/her as life partners, and to feel him/her and his/her closeness, to share with him/her your joys, sorrows, cares and aches, while having no selfish motives, then sex will constitute one of the rituals of that desire, love and even lust, then it falls within the: "well deserved love making", which leaves the act of sex for reproduction only with the treasures of the Godly pleasures and society blessings.

A positive targeted crazy lust, passion and fascination are necessary glue for the true love that keeps you mesmerized and entices you to marriage as well as to maintain that marriage, because it will strengthen the bonds between the two partners, keep the flame ever lit, thus nurturing emotional stability, marital civility and sexual fidelity.

The real Godly institution of marriage "till death do us part" in sickness in health, richer poorer, tempted or coaxed, is predicated on decency, morality and virtue, as it has been proven that there is nothing wrong with marriage itself, but with us, judging from the majority of those who got divorced ended up remarrying. When someone is asked about his/her successful marriages, which is no more than a misnomer, all we really mean and refer to is the conquests of sexual escapades, serenades and promenades, which are no more than legitimized and validated marriages through a piece of paper called marriage license. **It is a culmination and realization to the notion that man and woman are religiously, socially and psychologically incomplete until they not just get married but find their "better half" that will complete, honor, attend and love them graciously, willingly and even unconditionally.**

For anyone to get much in return in happiness, devotion, intimacy and sanity, he should be prepared to sacrifice his individual priorities and to give unselfishly and generously, as Jesus said: "*as much as you sow, hundredfold you will reap*" whether good or bad, as well as marriage resembles Jesus miracle of the "*loaves and fishes*", it requires faith to grow, prosper and multiply: "*Take you wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that you may be increased there, and not diminished*" (Jer 29:6), accordingly, children are conceived, raised, loved, and provided for as a fruit of that binding and abounding love. Speaking of children, the Bible says: "*Withhold not correction from the child: for if you beat him with the rod, he shall not die. You shall beat him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from hell. The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to him/herself brings his mother to shame*" (Prov 23:13-14, 29:15), which I believe should apply more appropriately to parents these days; in this sense, I believe that a brat is competing with another brat while a thief is only afraid of another thief, as there is honor among thieves. In the last 50 years, undisciplined disgruntled corrupt and disoriented generation from broken and dysfunctional homes is roaming our streets disseminating mortifying social ills and issues. That reminds me of the refrain:

For every evil under the sun,
There is a remedy or there is none.
If there is one, try to find it,
If there is none, never mind it

My humble understanding of marriage is with **gender equality Sex**, both partners **look in the same direction** with practically the same goals, aspirations and shared expectations, but with the icebreaker **Sexual Relation**, both partners write their autobiographies *ibidem*, get introvertly and extrovertly, sexually and sensually inspired and excited **looking at each other**, while idolizing, impressing, impacting, intimating, infecting, imparting, and improvising. They exercise and experience their shared love within and without their inalienable marital rights and privileges, while inspiriting, invigorating, and intertwining with each other. When they ignite, insulate, insure, instill, invade and invest in each other's happiness, then they become inebriated and intoxicated with love, devotion and togetherness, where their hearts will readily interact, idealize and impassion their instincts and

desires, which were inane, idle and inert, then their minds will join in a cognition of that immanent illative imparadising act and indescribable inamorata injected feelings, emitting increate climactic orgasmic intercourses and intimacy. Then, and only then, they deserve to be inducted in the universally acclaimed Hall of Fame of the Marriage Institution. (The repeated use of words with “I” is intentional, the English self-identification “I” for “me, myself and I” as well as to initiate and instigate).

Finally, while marriage’s decrees are somehow utopian in nature and in practice, nevertheless, they are achievable and feasible when a couple focuses on the same goals and speaks the same marriage language. Marriage is a long haul redeeming bliss, challenge, struggle and endeavor till death do us part. Let anyone who is not up to it refrain from approaching its altar, because the unwilling to commit will create havoc, misery and doom first to self and by extension to their partners, families, friends and most importantly their kids: “*Husbands (wives), love your wives (husbands), and be not bitter against them*” (Col 3:19). It does not matter if you believe in God or the devil, you are not worthy, religiously, secularly or emotionally, of its high calling nor prepared to assume its responsibilities and honor its precepts.

I have written a poem some time ago that might shed some light on the subject at hand:

LOVE & LUST...

Lust is often called love,
Pairing beast with turtle dove,
Love is heaven, lust is hell,
In between the minds swell,
Love is redeemed in its quest,
Lust daydreams of devil’s twist,
Love is life’s real honored fame,
Lust oft ends in guilt and shame,
Love is cuddling gentle heart,
Lust is grief and sin imparts,
Love is both health and wealth,
Lust is sign of ills and stealth,
Love is brighter than the sun,
Lust steals always love’s fun,
Love is sign of being close,
Lust is seeing thorns in rose,
Love own soldiers do bear arms,
Lust peons distort the charm,
Love and lust are not a game,
Nor their faces are the same,
Stick to love, you’ll fly high,
Lust aftertaste’s bitter and dry.

And finally this prayer:

*“Lord, help us to remember when we first met
and the strong love that grew between us,
and to work that love into practical things so nothing can divide us.
We ask for words, both kind and loving,
and hearts always ready
to ask forgiveness as well as to forgive.
Dear Lord, we put our marriage into your hands. Amen”* (From Catholic marriage vows)