

Patriarchs' Journal™

Dedicated to the restoration, support and encouragement of biblical family structure.

Volume 2
Issue 10

Why Polygamy is NOT Unbiblical or Immoral

by — a Christian American Conservative

According to a Gallup poll taken in May of 2013, 83% of Americans believed polygamy was immoral while only 14% believed it was morally acceptable.

In this same survey, gay or lesbian relations shot from being 40% acceptable in 2001 to being accepted as a moral lifestyle by 59% of Americans in 2013.

This article is not about gay relations, but I list it for a reason. The reason is that the majority opinion is not always right. Man's opinions sway back and forth, but God's opinions do not.

WHAT ABOUT POLYGAMY?

Let's first get the terms correct. I had to reference polygamy for this article, because that is what most people will look for on this subject. Technically, we are talking about the practice of *polygyny*. Polygamy refers to the practice of someone having multiple spouses. *Polygyny* refers to the practice of a man having multiple wives. *Polyandry* refers to the practice of a woman having multiple husbands (this practice has been rare in the history of the world, but it has occurred and still occurs in some places). Polyandry is expressly forbidden by the biblical concept that woman was made for man, and not man for woman.

Monogamy, strictly speaking, refers to a person having only one spouse. For the purpose of this article I am referring to the heterosexual type of monogamy.

From this point forward, when I use polygamy and

polygyny interchangeably, I am referring to the polygynous type of polygamy.

One last item I want to clarify: this is not an article arguing that monogamy is wrong. I am arguing that monogamy and polygamy have been and continue to be perfectly acceptable before God. So, in essence, I am arguing against the "Monogamy Only" position. I believe that marriage biblically is between a man and a woman, but it is not restricted biblically to be between one man and one woman.

THE "MONOGAMY ONLY" POSITION ORIGINATES WITH THE GREEK AND ROMAN SOCIETIES

To be fair, society in general began to frown on the practice of polygamy since the Roman Empire dominated the world. Polygamy still existed within the empire until around the 2nd or 3rd century when Christianity became the Religion of the Roman Empire. There were many Christians who frowned on polygamy as well as many Romans, so this was something they could agree on when Rome became Christianized.

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Yet, while on its surface the Roman Empire was very monogamous (like the Greeks before them), the reality is that they were not.

Officially, men could have only one wife, and she, as well as her children, would have all of the rights and privileges that went along with that as citizens of the empire. The way men got around this, though, was through female slaves. Many men had unofficial harems through the use of female slaves and even had children by them. In some instances Roman wives did carry on affairs with their male slaves; but if they were impregnated by their male slaves, they would try to cover it up lest they be disgraced.

There are a lot of theories as to how the "Monogamy Only" position came to be in the Roman culture. One of the more popular ones is that "Monogamy Only" made inheritance issues almost completely go away, whereas other parts of the world, especially in the Middle East and elsewhere, still wrestled with

these issues. This was also a way that the Romans and Greeks could make themselves feel superior to other nations, as most other areas of the world at the time still heavily practiced polygamy.

While polygamy did continue to exist in Europe, it was usually very frowned on and hidden.

By the way, even the term "romantic" means "like the Romans," referring to monogamous-only societies. Romanticism can occur only in the context of a monogamous relationship.

HOW DID THE ROMANS HANDLE THE JEWS AND POLYGAMY?

A good summary of the Jewish history with the Romans on this subject is found in *Christian Marriage: An Historical and Doctrinal Study*:

When the Christian Church came into being, po-

Patriarchs' Journal™

Volume 2, No. 10 – February, 2014

Patriarchs' Journal is a periodical dedicated to the definition, defense, support and encouragement of the God-ordained family as an autonomous, sovereign entity that existed before civil governments and religious organizations, and is independent of their approval and direction.

Patriarchs' Journal is <i>NOT</i> about ...	Patriarchs' Journal <i>IS</i> about ...
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Child Brides	Genuine Love
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Mormonism	Providing for Women
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We seek to bring as many voices from as many backgrounds as possible to this periodical. Many are scripturally based; others find their context in the social, legal, historical and scientific arenas. Because of the diversity, you will likely not agree with everything you read. Frankly, we do not ask that of you. In fact, your editorial staff does not agree with everything placed within these columns at times. We are simply presenting things that, we trust, will be supportive and edifying in their overall scope.

We will attempt to take an honest, fresh look at the subject of the family from a Biblical perspective, and to recover truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13). Readers are encouraged to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21). This publication is not intended to provide personal or legal advice.

Minor changes to punctuation and grammar may have been made to articles for better reading.

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lygamy was still practiced by the Jews. It is true that we find no references to it in the New Testament; and from this some have inferred that it must have fallen into disuse, and that at the time of our Lord the Jewish people had become monogamous. But the conclusion appears to be unwarranted. Josephus in two places speaks of polygamy as a recognized institution: and Justin Martyr makes it a matter of reproach to Trypho that the Jewish teachers permitted a man to have several wives. Indeed, when in 212 A.D. the lex Antoniana de civitate gave the rights of Roman Citizenship to great numbers of Jews, it was found necessary to tolerate polygamy among them, even though it was against Roman law for a citizen to have more than one wife. In 285 A.D. a constitution of Diocletian and Maximilian interdicted polygamy to all subjects of the empire without exception. But with the Jews, at least, the enactment failed of its effect; and in 393 A.D. a special law was issued by Theodosius to compel the Jews to relinquish this national custom. Even so they were not induced to conform.¹

POLYGAMY DURING THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

During the 16th century some of the Reformers re-examined the issue of Polygamy. Martin Luther stated,

I confess that I cannot forbid a person to marry several wives, for it does not contradict the Scripture. If a man wishes to marry more than one wife, he should be asked whether he is satisfied in his conscience that he may do so in accordance with the Word of God. In such a case the civil authority has nothing to do in the matter.²

Later, Luther would qualify his previous statement by saying that it referred only to men whose wives were sick or lepers; but I personally believe that he had it right the first time.

Some Anabaptists actually promoted and practiced polygamy as the restoration of biblical plural marriage.

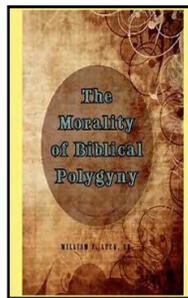
1. *Christian Marriage: An Historical and Doctrinal Study*, George Joyce (1933), Sheed and Ward, p. 560.
2. De Wette II, 459, pp. 329–330.

DOES THE BIBLE CONDEMN POLYGAMY?

The fact is, there is not one verse in the Bible that specifically condemns polygamy. The passages below are some of the most commonly used to attack polygamy as being unbiblical and a perversion of God's design for marriage.

THE TWO FLESH ANALOGY

And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He Who created 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'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined to-



The Morality of Biblical Polygyny

by — William F. Luck, Sr.

28 pages, PB. \$5

This is an amazing, courageous, contemporary work. William Luck is the son of Moody Bible Institute's Dr. G. Coleman Luck, Sr, Chairman of the Department of Theology, and a capable biblical scholar in his own right.

"God didn't ask me my opinion about the issue. He expected me to represent His. I've tried. If you can prove I'm mistaken, I'll be the first to thank you. But I'm not holding my breath in the meanwhile." — the Author, from the Introduction

"To date [over twenty years after its original publication], I find the arguments 'pro' quite superior to those 'con.'" — the Author, from the Conclusion

- The Background
- Laws That Imply the Moral Propriety of Polygyny
- Passages That Appear To Prohibit Polygyny
- The Association of Polygyny with Other Evils
- Alleged Prohibitions of Polygyny
- The Implications of "Adultery" in the "Vice Lists"
- Questions Concerning the Possibility of Moral Polygyny

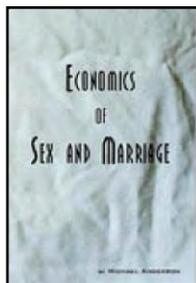
(see order form on back page)

gether, let no man separate (Matthew 19:4-6, NASB).

Jesus repeats what is said in Genesis after God created Eve and brought her to Adam. The context of Jesus' statement is His answer to the question of divorce. He is alluding to "the beginning" in the Garden of Eden, before sin. Before sin divorce was not necessary, so in the beginning divorce would never have been needed. However, is He also alluding to the fact that marriage was designed by God to be monogamous? He says nothing about that here.

Usually, those who believe that polygamy was a sin ask, "How can a man become one with each of his wives?" Over many centuries our culture has been made to think that a man can truly love only one woman; but the reality is that it is possible, and is demonstrated by some very godly men in the Bible, that a man can love more than one woman as his wife.

The one flesh analogy of Scripture refers to the oneness of relationship that a man must have with each of his wives. He must cultivate an individual relationship between himself and each of his wives, and he cannot ignore any of them.



Economics of Sex and Marriage

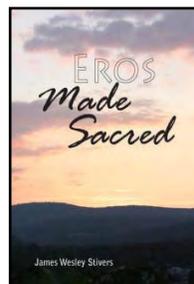
by — Michael Anderson
86 pages, PB

We can look all around us and observe many things about human behavior regarding sexuality and marriage.

Using the logical deductive approach of the Austrian economists, this book attempts to provide a unified theory explaining some of the major phenomena of human mating relationships. The seemingly "pro-polygamy" conclusions presented here are bound to make this work controversial, but this was certainly not the author's intent.

These conclusions inescapably follow when the basic principles of economics are applied to human sexual behavior.

(discontinued)



Eros Made Sacred: or

The Biblical Case Made for Polygamy

by — James Wesley Stivers
(originally published in 1991)
74 pages, PB. \$13

This book presents a clear biblical justification for polygamous marriage as sanctioned by the Holy Scriptures. The issue of polygamy is used to contrast current moral biases with those found in the Bible. First published more than 15 years ago, this thoughtful work has gone unrefuted. Provocative, instructional, challenging, edifying. The book chapters are:

- Polygamy: A Biblical Custom
- Objections Answered; In Favor of Polygamy
- The Ministry of the Patriarch
- Polygamy as a Tool of Christian Dominion
- Feminism, Monogamy and Witchcraft

(see order form on back page)

THE BISHOP MUST BE THE HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE

*An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of **one wife**, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach (I Timothy 3:2, NASB).*

Some point to the fact that the bishop had to be the husband of one wife. If a bishop must be the husband of one wife, then this must be God's correct design for marriage and anything else is a perversion of His design, including polygyny, or so they say.

There are several problems, though, with this interpretation.

The greek word *heis* translated as "one" as in "one wife" can also be translated as "first." In fact in 9 New Testament passages this word is translated as "first."

So it is possible that, when Paul says the bishop must be the husband of one wife, he is saying that the man must be the husband of his "first wife" – in other words, he has not divorced his first wife.

Even if the apostle Paul is stating that the bishop literally must be monogamous, this is applied *only* to bishops and deacons and never to Christians at large. This would be very similar to how the Old Testament has stricter marriage practices for priests as opposed to the general population.

In any event, no passage in the Bible, either Old or New Testament, condemns the practice of polygyny.

GOD TOLERATED POLYGAMY

Another argument I have read online is, “like God tolerated divorce and it was not part of his original plan, so too He tolerated polygamy but it was not part of His plan either.” There is one small problem with that statement: the Bible never compares polygamy to divorce, and it never states that polygamy was a sin.

CAN POLYGYNY BE ABUSED?

Absolutely! Whether in the past or today, polygyny can be abused, just like monogamy can be abused. Something that can be good and wholesome can be turned into something perverse. A man can abuse or neglect his wife in a monogamous relationship as easily as a man can abuse or neglect his wives in a polygynous relationship.

THE BIBLE REGULATES POLYGYNY

We will now consider several Bible passages that regulate the practice of polygyny.

Equal Care

God commands that wives are to be taken care of equally, even when their husband takes another wife, and each wife has a right to sexual activity with her husband.

If a man sells his daughter as a female slave, she is not to go free as the male slaves do. If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master who designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He does not have authority to sell her to a foreign people because of his unfairness to her. If he designates her for his son, he shall deal



Bible Polygamy

Biblepolygamy.com features the straightforward teaching ministry of Brian Kelson. Here is a sampling of many topics found:

- Why teach the truth of Polygamy?
- Why is truth suppressed?
- Polygamist men and women in the Bible
- Early church and Martin Luther
- By the power vested in me?
- Fear & Hypocrisy

When the apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians he had been painted in a negative light by those opposing him. His apostleship had been put in question, his gospel had been ridiculed and his person had been defamed.

Paul's vigorous appeal to his friends was ultimately ignored and in his last letter to Timothy we read that “all in Asia had turned away from him.” ... This very Paul warned that in the last days, sound doctrine would not be endured and Christians would ever learn but never acknowledge the truth.

Many attempts will be made to discolor the truth of polygamy, but this site appeals to all readers to examine the Word of God against popular theology.

with her according to the custom of daughters. If he takes to himself another woman, he may not reduce her food, her clothing, or her conjugal rights. If he will not do these three things for her, then she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money (Exodus 21:7-11).

Prohibition on Close Relatives

In Leviticus 18 God commanded that a man could not marry a close relative. A man could take another wife, just not one that is a close relative, like an aunt, sister, half-sister or sister of his current wife (as a rival).

You shall not marry a woman in addition to her

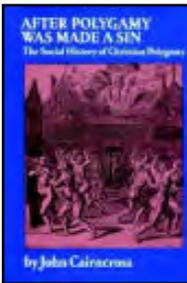
sister as a rival while she is alive, to uncover her nakedness (:18, NASB)

This verse very clearly is talking about polygyny. Moses says a man cannot take a woman's sister as a rival wife.

Requirement of Polygamy

God commanded that a man (regardless of marital status) is to marry the wife of his dead brother and raise up an heir for his brother's estate. If he did not fulfill this duty, he would be shamed before the people. There was definite possibility of polygamy occurring here.

When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. It shall be that the firstborn whom she bears shall assume the name of his dead brother, so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel (Deuteronomy 25:5-6, NASB).



After Polygamy Was Made a Sin
The Social History of Christian Polygamy
by — John Cairncross
260 pp., PB. \$30

Cairncross contends in this fascinating historical analysis that it was when the Church became centered in Rome that “polygamy” became a “sin.” Based on rigorous research he demonstrates however that there is a strong underground polygamous Christian tradition, including support from such prominent figures as Milton, Newton, Spinoza and others.

(see order form on back page)

God Gave David the Wives of Saul

*I also gave you your master's house and **your master's wives** into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these (II Samuel 12:8, NASB).*

The Examples of Godly Men

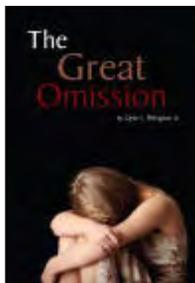
In addition to these regulations we have the examples of many Godly men in the Old Testament who had many wives. Abraham had concubines, Jacob had 4 wives, Gideon had “many wives” and David had 8 wives and 10 concubines.

The weight of Scripture, both in example and in actual regulations, is against the “Monogamy Only” advocates.

History shows us that the Jews even 300 years after Christ still heavily practiced polygamy, because the Romans would not have had to keep passing laws against something that was not practiced.

WHAT ABOUT LAWS AGAINST POLYGAMY?

Some would argue, “Well, even if the Bible allows polygamy, since we have laws against polygamy that would make it sinful to engage in polygamy.”



The Great Omission:
Christendom's Abandonment of the Biblical Family
by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.
204 pages, PB. \$15

This book presents twenty years of study, taking a candid look at the issue of multiple wives in Scripture and society. The book chapters are:

- The Problem: The Sad, Ignored Epidemic
- The Divine Provision
- The Marital Gift
- The Old Testament Scriptural Precedent
- The New Testament Scriptural Precedent
- The Religious System's Destruction of the Biblical Family
- The History of Its Practice
- The Cultural Issue
- The Benefits of Plural Marriage
- Who Is Immoral?

This book also has 14 appendices.

(see order form on back page)

The government does not determine what marriage is – God does. We have allowed the government to define marriage a long time ago, and look where it has led us. So, it is irrelevant to me that our government outlaws polygamy, because I do not recognize their authority in marriage any more than I recognize their authority to come and tell me how to raise my children.

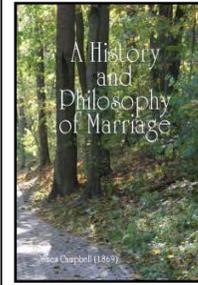
DO I PRACTICE POLYGAMY?

No I do not. The reason is not because I believe it is wrong, nor is it because the US government has declared it illegal.

Do I condemn those Christians who do practice polygamy within the guidelines of Scripture? No, I do not.

POSITIVE BENEFITS OF POLYGAMY

These are some of the positive benefits of polygynous marriages.



A History and Philosophy of Marriage:

Polygamy and Monogamy Compared

by — James Campbell
(originally published in 1869)
142 pages, PB. \$20

A reprint of Christian philanthropist James Campbell's classic work, originally published in 1869 in Boston, Massachusetts.

(see order form on back page)

1. Polygyny emphasizes the biblical teaching that woman was made for man and not that man and woman are equal in marriage. Many women, Christian and non-Christian alike, hate polygyny, because it demonstrates to the world that woman was created for man, and that marriage is *not* an "equal partnership" as is taught in many Christian circles today.

2. Polygyny has practical benefits, like when one woman is sick, the other women can help care for her and her children.

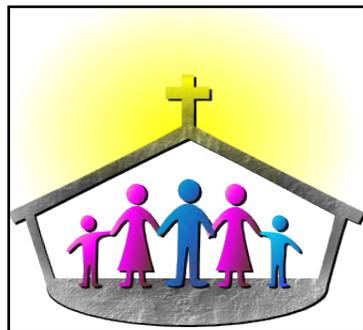
3. While I do believe that a man should support his family, this arrangement would come in handy: if the wives had part time jobs, then the other wives could watch their children. In biblical times it would not be uncommon for some wives to be working in the fields while other wives cared for their children.

4. The wives would act like sisters to one another and be able to provide emotional support to one another (an area in which many men are lacking, simply because it is not how they are wired).

5. In biblical times, with a high infant mortality rate, having multiple wives would give you a much better chance of having children, especially sons to carry on your estate.

6. Polygyny makes being a selfish wife much more difficult. You don't get to make yourself the center of your husband's universe, you have to share. In a monogamous marriage this can happen all too easily (wife as "center of universe" mentality). It also re-

(see *IMMORAL*, page 151)



Biblical Families

Biblical Families is a ministry dedicated to encouraging and strengthening Biblical marriages, including, but certainly not limited to, plural marriage. We see plural marriage as a good, and caring, option for believers – ensuring that no one need be left without a family.

www.BiblicalFamilies.org

Biblical Families places a strong emphasis on fellowship and supporting each other, as per the New Testament, and organizes national retreats and regional meetings.

Our website includes many helpful resources:

- Online Articles
- Discussion Boards
- Newsletters
- Retreat Information
- Local contacts
- Links to other helpful resources

Common Misconceptions About Plural Marriage

Part 3

Own Husband, Own Wife

Misconception:

The Bible says that every woman should have her own husband and every husband his own wife!

Yes, it does (I Corinthians 7:2). However, this passage doesn't read in the original Greek the same as in English. Information is lost in translation, as English has only one word for "own," whereas NT Greek has two. As it happens, Paul used both in this one passage. These two Greek words have very different meanings. We can examine this by finding out how they are used elsewhere. This difference clarifies the author's original intent to its original and primary audience, the church at Corinth.

The word used for "his own" is singularly possessive, in a sort of "that is mine alone" sense. Elsewhere it is used with the phrase "eat his own bread" (II Thessalonians 3:12). That "own" is, "his, and not another's."

The word translated "her own" has a notably different flavor. It is much more like, "the one to which or whom I belong." Used elsewhere, we see that Jesus "returned to His own country" (Mark 6:1), which was also "their own country" to the rest of the population.

Again, servants are told to do a good job of serving "their own masters." Each servant can have but one master (Jesus said no one can effectively serve two), but the master can have many servants for whom he or she is "their own" master or mistress.

Add all of this together, and we are forced to conclude that Paul was *not* addressing the issue of plural marriage at all, but instead what God said, "It is

not good for men / mankind to be alone." This can be termed "the family imperative," meaning that it is God's intention and expressed will for His children to spend their adult lives as married members of families, *not* as singles.

Moreover, the greater context of Paul's remarks show him acknowledging and supporting plural marriage, via the gender difference, rather than condemning it.

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own [Greek, heautou] wife ;Greek, gunē], and let every woman have her own [Greek, idios] husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and like-



Man and Woman in Biblical Law

by — Tom Shipley

268 pages, PB. \$30

The goal of this book is to lay the foundation for the establishment of a truly biblical social order, especially within the community of Bible-believing, Christ-honoring families. The subject matter is patriarchy. The biblical exposition contained herein is devoted to establishing the proposition that it is patriarchy which was and is mandated by God ever since the original creation of man and woman. The scriptural discussion on polygamy here serves as a supporting role to the fundamental proposition of God-ordained and mandated patriarchy.

(see order form on back page)

wise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn (I Corinthians 7:1-9).

The Definition and Translation of *Heatou*

Heatou (G1438), heh-ow-too, (including all other cases) from a reflexive pronoun otherwise obsolete and the genitive case (dative case or accusative case) of G846 (*autos*); pronoun (himself, herself, itself, themselves) AV, himself 110, themselves 57, yourselves 36, ourselves 20, his 19, their 15, itself 9, misc. 73.¹

1. Definition expanded from *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance: Greek Dictionary*

Heautou may also replace the possessive pronoun *autou* (G847, *autou*, genitive (possessive) of G846) in order to make the expression of possession more forceful.

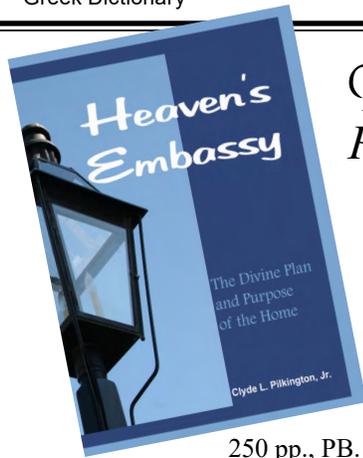
The Definition and Translation of *Idios*

Idios (G2398) {id'-ee-os} of uncertain affinity; adjective (pertaining to one's self, one's own, belonging to one's self.) AV, his own 48, their own 13, privately 8, apart 7, your own 6, his 5, own 5, not translated 1, misc. 20.²

In the New Testament the adjective (*i.e.*, *idios*), used as a possessive pronoun, has a more or less emphatic stress (*cf.* Matthew 9:1). In Matthew 22:5 the adjective is used as a possessive pronoun as it is in Matthew 25:14; the synoptic parallels to Matthew 25:14 (Mark 13:34 and Luke 19:13) have respectively *autou* and *heautou* instead.

In Paul's letters the often special stress of the adjective *idios* (as opposed to *allogrios*) sometimes has theological weight (Romans 8:32, 10:3 and 14:4 are examples). Through conjunction with *hekastos*, "wife" (and that is the case in I Corinthians 7:2), the

2. *Ibid.*



Heaven's Embassy – The Divine Plan & Purpose of the Home

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it (Psalm 127:1).

This book represents many years of work. The author believes that it is one of the most important books that he will ever be privileged to write, simply because it is about one of the most vital scriptural subjects that could ever be addressed.

The home is central to all of God's dealings with man throughout the course of time. It is His Divine "institution" and "organization" on the earth; and for the believer, it is the *Embassy of Heaven*. An embassy is "the residence or office of an ambassador." Since the believer is an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 5:14-21), his home is thus the *Divine Embassy* of heavenly ministry.

Pauline ministry is centered in the homes of believers. This is even the true sphere of the Body of Christ; for this reason our apostle speaks of "church in thy house." This book doesn't focus upon the *external* specifics of the ministry of *Heaven's Embassy* (such as *hospitality*); that will be saved for another volume. Instead, it looks at the inner-workings of the *Embassy* itself, focusing upon its very nature and *internal* purpose and function.

(see order form on back page)

THE FELLOWSHIP INN

At
Pilkington
Abbey

The Fellowship Inn is presently comprised of three houses built in 1895, located in Paint Borough adjacent to Windber, PA. These structures provide ample space for dedicated guest lodging. *The Fellowship Inn* is not a business venture, but the hospitality ministry extension of Pilkington Abbey; there are, therefore, no guest charges.

A large part of the Pilkington family passion has always been hospitality. Father has placed this in their makeup. The website www.FellowshipInn.com is an online calendar that will assist you in coming for a visit. It will allow you to see our family activities and who's scheduled to visit us. Hopefully this will make it easier for *you* to make your plans

to come, and let you know how serious we are about having you visit us.

“If you need fellowship, or sound teaching, or counseling, or you just plain need a break from life and want to come to a place of palpable peace and lovely love for a day, or a weekend, or a week, come here. It's free. Just bring yourself, as you are. Go to the website and make a reservation. Find out when we're all going to be here, and come here and taste for yourself what God has produced in the middle of nowhere.” – Martin Zender

individual relationship is underlined (I Corinthians 3:8 is an example).

For the relationship of the wife to her husband or, as the case may be, of the husband to his wife *idios* is used in: Acts 24:24; I Corinthians 7:2, 4; 14:35; Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5; I Peter 3:1,5.

Wife or Wives

In Matthew 19:8, the Greek *gunē* is translated as “wives” and in I Corinthians 7:2 it is translated as “wife.” Does that mean that *gunē* can mean either wife or wives?

What is the meaning of this passage? Is polygamy the topic?

What does it mean to “own” something? What is the difference, if any, between the Greek words *heautou* and *idios*?

A man and a woman own a house. They have, or possess, a home. Two people can own, or possess, the same thing. Two wives can *own*, or *possess*, the same husband. In a polygamous marriage each person has

their own spouse. For example: Matthew, Laura, and Betty are in a polygamous marriage. Each person has their own spouse(s). Matthew has Laura. Matthew has Betty. Laura has Matthew. Betty has Matthew.

There could be a good reason why Paul used two separate words for “own.” *Heautou* stresses the exclusivity of the possession, and *idios* the exclusivity of the relationship.

The husband may say, “That is my wife, she belongs to me and me alone.” The wife would say, “That is my husband, and I belong to him and him alone.”

The word structure, then, would very well leave extra room for polygamy. The passage is not about the number of wives a man can have, but about the having of a spouse in the first place. Paul is showing us that we can avoid fornication by marrying, “for it is better to marry than to burn” with marital desires. **H**

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IMMORAL (continued from page 147)

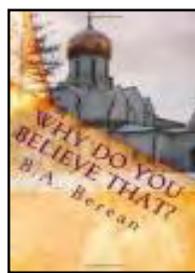
quires the man to share of himself with each of his wives. Contrary to modern belief, it is possible for a man to love more than one woman. Men are very good at compartmentalizing; this is a trait women often lack.

7. Often in biblical times polygynous women would gladly become a new wife to a well-off man for the economic security it would offer her and her future children. The old saying, “A good man is hard to find,” goes all the way back almost to the beginning of creation.

8. I mentioned earlier the idea that polygyny would offer a better chance of having more children; but even in a marriage that may have started off monogamous for many years, if the wife went past her child-bearing years without giving the man a son to carry on his name and his estate, he could then marry a younger second wife to try and conceive a son.

9. In the area of sex there are often times issues, because of periods, medical conditions, problem pregnancies or after delivery, that a woman might not be able to have sex with her husband for an extended length of time. Polygyny solves this problem.

10. What about if a man marries a woman and not long after the marriage he finds her to be most disagreeable? Even if she was not disagreeable in general, what if she was disagreeable in the bedroom and very frigid? What if she did not want to have sex as frequently as him? Biblically, he could not and should not divorce her because of these things, and



Why Do You Believe That?

by — B.A. Berean.
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This well written, easy to read book is designed to provoke the reader lovingly to examine why they believe what they believe, while at the same time encouraging and equipping readers to study the Scriptures for themselves. Hold on tight, as aim is taken at a couple of the most sacred cows in the church today: traditional marriage and monogamy. It is done in an effort to help you see that what you’ve been told the Bible “says” may not actually be what the Bible teaches. Hailed by some advocates of polygamy, plural marriage, polygyny, etc. as the best “under the radar” educational tool available to introduce the masses to Biblical marriage and the options it provides beyond those presented in religious tradition. If you are pro-polygamy, part of the biblical families movement, or simply a truth seeker, you will enjoy reading this insightful book. The Bible study helps presented within these pages are well worth the price of admission. You will want to read it again and again and share it with others.

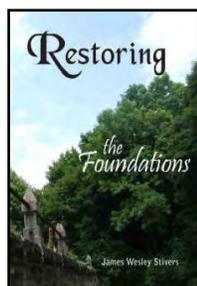
(discontinued)

he is bound to take care of her and provide marriage rights to her. Polygyny solves this issue. Now, I realize that some might argue that he is doing something wrong to make his wife disagreeable, and in truth he should try to make each marriage to each of his wives as good as it can be; but let’s face it: some people are just disagreeable – it’s who they are.

IT’S NOT FAIR!

The last complaint against Polygyny that I will tackle is, “It’s not fair! Why does a man get to have more than one wife, but a woman can have only one husband?” The simple answer is this: LIFE IS NOT “FAIR.”

God did not make an equal creation: in all of creation there is inequality.



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Can a fish say to a bird “Why can’t I fly? That’s unfair.”

Can a deer say to a bear “Why can’t I be as big and strong as you? That’s unfair.”

If cars could talk, could a minivan say to Dodge Ram with a huge Hemi engine, “Why can’t I tow what you can, why can’t I go as fast as you, why am I not as durable as you? That’s unfair.”

Some might say my analogies are flawed because they compare apples and oranges. Men and women are both human beings.

This is true that we as men and women are equal in our humanity, and we are equal in our worth to God.

However, we are not equal in how we are created and we are not equal in the roles for which we were designed – this is not only a biblical fact, it’s a biological fact.

We are all designed by our Creator for a purpose. Can a monogamous marriage also show God’s purpose for man and woman in marriage? Of course it can; but God’s purpose in marriage is not as obliviously seen in a monogamous marriage as it is in a polygynous marriage. **H**

The Musings of a Christian American Conservative

January 2014

Edited & Abridged

Deuteronomy 17:17

by — Tom Shipley

Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold (Deuteronomy 17:17).

Not only is that passage specifically for the king, it is addressed to the king **as king**, that is, in his *official, public capacity* as a ruler. It is not even addressing his personal life at all, but his duties and obligations as a public, governmental administrator of the Law of God.

The king would be the conduit for dealing with *foreign* governments and *foreign* officials (who were, of course, idol worshippers). Note well :15 where it is prohibited from appointing a foreigner as king. Polygyny is not the subject matter here *at all*, but rather excessive entanglement with heathen, idol-worshipping nations in a world where **political alliances were routinely sealed via marriages with foreign official’s daughter’s, sisters, nieces**, etc.

The prohibition against multiplying wives is addressing excessive foreign entanglement. Polygyny is not the issue, *as such*, but merely *the instrumentality of foreign alliances*. Even here there is not an absolute prohibition against it, but only a prohibition against *excess*. The reason is clear: “*that his heart turn not away*” from Yahweh, the true God.

The other two provisions also address the king in his official capacity as king: horses, referring to excessive militarization of the nation; and silver and gold, referring to excessive taxation (anything above 10% taxation constitutes theft against the citizenry).

I am of the conviction that Solomon would not have violated this law at all if all of his wives had been women of Israel. How many wives the king should have is not the subject matter, even obliquely.

The best defense against a false interpretation of a passage of Scripture is sound exposition of the true meaning. I have noticed that even many defenders of polygyny don’t quite get it right on this one. **H**



Originally from Baltimore, MD Tom now resides in Orlando, FL. He is the author of several works including, **Man and Woman in Biblical Law**. See the ad on page XXX. (See his treatment of this passage on pages 101-103, 147, 194, 200, 210.)

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