



Welcome to West Side!

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Polygamy Revisited

Article by Tim Tripp

March 20, 2022

I'll start right off by saying that I am not thinking about taking a second wife. Nor do I want to leave anyone with the impression that I might be supporting or defending the practice of polygamy. Let me be clear on that: I do not! However, I do find it curious that in a culture that is ever expanding the list of acceptable expressions of relationships and sexuality, the practice of polygamy is still considered outside of the boundaries of broadly accepted arrangements.

God's original design was obviously one man and one woman together for life (or after the fall, until one of them dies). The created order got sidelined early on when, as early as Genesis chapter four, a man named Lamech is quoted as speaking to his "wives." All throughout the Old Testament, Bible characters who play a central role in the story of the Bible seem uninhibited in having multiple wives. Abraham, Jacob, Saul and David all had multiple wives. Solomon took his place in the polygamy hall of fame by having 700 wives and 300 concubines. During that time, scarcely a word was spoken Biblically to discourage the practice.

When the exiles returned from Babylon and Persia, the practice seemed to have become less prominent. Outside of royalty and aristocracy, very few had more than one spouse. Though the practice seemed to be tamed more by economic realities than by moral evolution.

The one spouse practice continued in New Testament times. Polygamy still took place among the wealthy but the "one man with one woman" trend seemed to take more of a moral tone with Jesus re-emphasizing the created order (Matthew 19:1-6) and with the specific mention of being the "husband of one wife" in the list of qualifications of elders and deacons (1 Timothy 3:2,12). Clearly the expectation of a spiritually mature Christian man was that if married, he would be married to one woman only.

The practice of polygamy is still common among some people groups in the Middle East and in Africa yet western cultures still frown on it. It is illegal in most of the developed nations in the world. It is still forbidden in almost all expressions of Christianity. Still, it is difficult to reject the practice based solely on scripture.

It must seem silly to discuss this because it is likely that no one reading this would disagree with the premise that due to the created order, one man and one woman, the practice of polygamy should be rejected. However, there are many who are dedicated believers in Jesus who would reject polygamy based on the created order but would accept other relationship arrangements and sexual practices which also violate the created order and which the Bible clearly rejects numerous times.

As much as I want to, I don't understand how one can be rejected based on little Biblical attention but the other accepted despite an abundance of scriptural spotlight.

What I fear is that we are so concerned with being sanctioned by our culture in this that we have allowed our views on relationships and sexual expression to be molded more by the culture than by God's word. That is never where we want to be.

I want to make every viewpoint obedient to God's will. I want to be sure that my understanding of significant other relationships and sexuality are more influenced by God's word than by the culture around me. The cultural viewpoint was molded in the context of selfish indulgence. God's word was formed the context of his love for people.

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Last Week:

Sunday Class & Conversation - 104

Worship - 263

Giving - 11,033

Wednesday Evening Bible Study - 134

Prayer Requests

Ewell Jackson has been diagnosed with acute dementia, and is currently in home hospice care for heart, kidney, and diabetic concerns. Please keep Ewell and Judy in your prayers as they navigate this phase of life. Especially pray for Judy as she is not able to leave Ewell alone.

Leigh Honnell, mother of Lauren Reed, is battling pancreatic cancer. Please keep her in your prayers as she works with doctors for the best next steps in treatment.

Continue to pray for

Tami Robinson

Sofia Juarez

Pie Auction Fundraiser

Camp Caudle Chili Lunch & Pie Auction Fundraiser will take place on March 27th following morning worship, in the Family Center.

See the WS Friends & Family facebook page for more details.

Other News

Our Spring Bible class quarter is underway! Bible classes are offered for children of all ages. We are excited to announce that we have several adult classes to choose from as well.

In addition to the Parenting class in the KFC room, there is a topical study in room 3 on the Life of Joseph.

This quarter we have added another option in room 2; a study of the book by Joe Beam entitled "Seeing the Unseen".

For those who prefer a more interactive time of spiritual conversation, our Conversational Christianity class meets in the lobby with Friendship Café.

There will be an Informational meeting for Ladies' Celebrate Recovery Step Study on Monday, March 21st from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. in the Family Center dining area

We will discuss the following:

What is a step study?

What are the materials needed and the cost involved?

What type of commitment is required?

What are the desired results from completion?

Where and what time will we be meeting Monday evenings?

Contact Judy Clements by text 479-264-3642, phone call 479-880-1714, or IM

or Amy Vanderheiden at 479-890-1824

Information about a men's step study to come.

For information like this and more visit www.westsidear.org & subscribe