

Study 0075

Text: 1 Corinthians 7:10-24; Malachi 2:13-16

In our introduction on the subject of marriage in our last study, we saw that there are many forms of relationships which have over the years been referred to as marriage. We noted, however, that the origin of true marriage is God! Indeed, marriage can be said to be the second work of Creation, after Creation itself. And since marriage is the creation of God, it is to God and His word that we must turn, to know the truth about marriage. To turn to man and society for the truth about marriage is to turn to the wrong place! For this reason, we opted to use the term “Christian marriage”, as a means of distinguishing marriage ordained by God from those put together by man and society!

We saw in our last study that while other forms of marriage may be a mere ‘coming together’ of any two people, which is basically, a casual affair; Christian marriage is a ‘joining’ or ‘fusing’ together of a man and a woman in an inseparable and unbreakable union such that only death can separate them (**Romans 7:1-4**). Thus Christian marriage, or better still, marriage among Christians, is a life-time commitment between a man and his wife, and nothing should be able to separate them (not sickness, not poverty, not angels, not religious leaders, not extended family, not friends, not having no children, etc.)!

In last study’s assignment, we noted that true marriage is initiated by God, and, must be between a man and a woman, both of whom should be spiritually mature enough to be willing to detach from the influence of filial and past ungodly relationships, in order to become united with each other in purpose. Furthermore, we noted that the man and his wife must be open to one another in absolute trust, with no room for divorce in whatever shape or form. Indeed, Christian marriage is a mirror of the relationship between Christ and the Church (**Ephesians 5:22-33**). This is why Christian marriage is for the spiritually mature, who must be willing to be tolerant of one another.

In this study, you shall be looking at a case study in which you get to play the role of a marriage counsellor. The counselling will be based on group discussion and you are encouraged to draw from the Scriptures in giving counsel, as may be relevant. At the end of the counselling-related questions below, you will be expected to draw some conclusions on the matter of marriage.

CASE STUDY

Mr. and Mrs. Nwaakorobia got married 25 years ago, under the Native Law and Custom Ordinance of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, or, what we commonly know as “Traditional marriage”. They have had no children, and as a result, Mr. Nwaakorobia’s family and village elders invited him for a meeting, where he was informed that they had a young girl from his village, whom he could get married to, and whom they are sure would give him many offsprings.

Mr. Nwaakorobia was not too pleased with the arrangement, but believes that he really has no choice in the matter, since the request is coming from both his family and his village elders (the village where he has put up a country home where he spends his holidays locally). Mr. Nwaakorobia is therefore going into this new marriage arrangement, as he explained to his wife of 25 years, “bound” by his tradition. Now, Mrs. Nwaakorobia has approached you for help. With the use of relevant scripture texts, answer the questions below.

1. What would you counsel her? Please assume that neither Mr. Nwaakorobia, nor Mrs. Nwaakorobia, is a born again Christian.

2. If Mrs. Nwaakorobia were a church goer, but not born again, and Mr. Nwaakorobia is not a Christian at all, what would you say to her?

3. If both Mr. and Mrs. Nwaakorobia were believers in Christ, and in your church, what would be your counsel?

4. If Mrs. Nwaakorobia had had female children only, and Mr. Nwaakorobia and his people are using this as the basis for him marrying the younger girl, and they are not Christians, what would be your counsel?

5. If in No. 4 above, Mrs. Nwaakorobia is a born again Christian, but Mr. Nwaakorobia is not, what would be your counsel?

6. If in No. 4 above, Mr. Nwaakorobia is a church goer, but not born again, and Mrs. Nwaakorobia has recently become a born again Christian, would your counsel be different?

7. What would have changed in your counsel above, if Mr. and Mrs. Nwaakorobia were both born again Christians before the union, which took place in a church?

8. Is divorce an option in any of the scenarios above? If “Yes”, which ones?

9. Would anything have changed in your counsel if the marriage was contracted in the Courts in the first place (that is, Registry Marriage)?

10. What conclusions can we arrive at as per marriage from all the scenarios above?
