

The Assault on God's Teaching

Changes in Denominational Standards

1896 - "No divorce, except for adultery, shall be regarded by the Church as lawful; and no Minister shall solemnize marriage in any case where there is a divorced wife or husband living; but this rule shall not be applied to the innocent party to a divorce for the cause of adultery, nor to divorced parties seeking to be reunited in marriage." (The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church)

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1914 - "The Ministers of our Church shall be prohibited from solemnizing the rites of matrimony between divorced persons, except in case of innocent parties who have been divorced for the one scriptural cause." (The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South)

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1940 - "No Minister shall solemnize the marriage of a divorced person whose wife or husband is living and unmarried; but this rule shall not apply (1) to the innocent person when it is clearly established by competent testimony that the true cause for divorce was adultery or other vicious conditions which through mental or physical cruelty or physical peril invalidated the marriage vow, nor (2) to the divorced persons seeking to be reunited in marriage." (The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church)

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1960 - "In view of the seriousness with which the Scriptures and the Church regard divorce, a minister may solemnize the marriage of a divorced person only when he has satisfied himself by careful counseling that (a) the divorced person is sufficiently aware of the factors leading to the failure of the previous marriage, (b) the divorced person is sincerely seeking to make the proposed marriage truly Christian, and (c) sufficient time has elapsed for adequate preparation and counseling." (The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church)

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1984 - "Where marriage partners, even after thoughtful consideration and counsel, are estranged beyond reconciliation, we recognize divorce as regrettable, but recognize the right of the divorced persons to remarry. We express our deep concern for the care and nurture of the children of divorced and/or remarried persons. We encourage that either or both of the divorced parents be considered for custody of the minor children of the marriage. We encourage an active, accepting, and enabling commitment of the church and our society to minister to the members of divorced families." (Discipline of the United Methodist Church)

What Is Marriage?

- **A decision to commit one's life to one another (Gen. 2:24)**
- **Obeying civil law (Rom. 13:1-2)**
- **Becoming one flesh (Gen. 2:24-25)**
- **Forms a covenant (Mal. 2:13-15)**
 - **Made up of: an agreement, vow, seal of ratification**

Who Has The Right To Marry?

- **Those who:**
 - **Never married (1 Cor. 7:2)**
 - **Lost a mate in death (Rom. 7:1-4)**
 - **Have had a unfaithful mate (Matt. 19:9)**