

Chapter 24 Marriage and Divorce

I. The Parties in Marriage

II. The Purpose of Marriage

III. The Purity of Marriage

IV. The Parting of Marriage

I. The Parties in Marriage

A. Marriage is to be between one man and one woman

B. Neither is it lawful

1. For any man to have more than one wife (at the same time)
2. Nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time

II. The Purpose of Marriage

Order!

A. The mutual help of husband and wife

B. The increase of mankind with a legitimate issue

C. A holy seed for the Church

D. Preventing of uncleanness

III. The Purity of Marriage

A. General Rule 1 (positive): All competent people

1. It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry
2. Who are able with judgment to give their consent.

B. General Rule 2 (negative): Not related people

1. Within the degrees of consanguinity (forbidden by the Word)
2. Or affinity forbidden by the Word
 - a. The man may not marry any of his wife's kindred, nearer in blood than he may of his own:
 - b. Nor the woman of her husband's kindred, nearer in blood than of her own.
3. Nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful
 - a. By any law of man
 - b. Or by consent of parties
 - c. So as those persons may live together as man and wife

C. Christian Rule: Yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord

1. Therefore such as profess the true reformed religion should not marry with
 - a. Infidels
 - b. Papists

[PCUSA revision of 24.3](#)

- c. Or other idolaters
2. Neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked by marrying with such
 - a. As are notoriously wicked in their life
 - b. Or maintain damnable heresies.

IV. The Parting of Marriage

A. Adultery or fornication committed after a contract

1. Being detected before marriage
2. Gives just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract

B. Adultery after marriage

1. It is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce
2. After the divorce, to marry another, as if the offending party were dead.

C. Many reasons might be suggested but only two are approved by God:

1. Nothing but adultery
2. Or such wilful desertion
 - a. As can no way be remedied by the Church, or civil magistrate,
3. Is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage:



[PCUSA revision of 24.5-6](#)

D. A public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed

1. And the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills, and discretion, in their own case