

Westminster Confession of Faith: Session Twenty-Five

WCF 24 – Of Marriage and Divorce

“And He answered and said to them, ‘Have you not read that He who made them at 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 then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:4-6 NKJV).

I. Introduction

Logic of Location in WCF

Marriage a Theological Matter

II. WCF Chapter XXIII

- a. *Paragraph 1: The Parties in Marriage*
WCF Decidedly Monogamous

What About Polygamy?
First Marriage Monogamous

Polygamy Everywhere Presented in Bad Light

Jesus Confirms Monogamy (Matthew 19:1-6)

- b. *Paragraph 2: The Purposes of Marriage*
Mutual Help

Increase of Mankind with Legitimate Issue

Increase of Church with Godly Seed

Prevention of Uncleanness

- c. *Paragraph 3: Marriage in the Lord*
Qualifications of Marriage
Able to Consent

Equally Yoked

Whom Christians Should NOT Marry

- d. *Paragraph 4: Incest*
Consanguinity and Affinity (Leviticus 18:6-18)

Original Confession Added Clause: "The man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own, nor the woman of her husband's kindred nearer in blood than of her own."

- e. *Paragraph 5: Adultery*
Adultery Grounds for Dissolution (Matthew 5:31-32)

Not Mandated!

- f. *Paragraph 6: Sufficient Causes for Divorce*
Only Two Grounds for Divorce
Adultery (Matthew 5:31-32)

Willful Desertion (1 Corinthians 7:15)

III. Conclusion

Helpful Resources

Hodge, Archibald Alexander. *A Commentary on the Confession of Faith*. Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1869; pp. 409-420.

Sproul, R. C. *Truths We Confess: A Systematic Exposition of the Westminster Confession of Faith*. Revised Edition. Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2019; pp. 525-536.

Van Dixhoorn, Chad. *Confessing the Faith: A Reader's Guide to the Westminster Confession of Faith*. Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2014; pp. 323-331.