



WCF Prayer:

Chapter 24- Of Marriage and Divorce

Almighty God and Sovereign Lord,

When you fashioned the heavens and the earth, you made humanity the very crown of your creation. We marvel at your wisdom and creativity in making us male and female—one with another, yet so wonderfully distinct. We praise you for your goodness in ordaining the intimate, loving relationship of marriage.

Holy God, we acknowledge our deep need for your law, for we have often turned this glorious gift into a sphere of sin and human sorrow. Though we are tempted to think otherwise, we know your intention is for marriage to be a lifelong union between one man and one woman. We affirm that it is neither right nor lawful in your sight for any man to have more than one wife, nor any woman more than one husband, at the same time.

Lord, thank You for your Word, which teaches us that marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife. We thank you for the gift of children, the fruit of this union, and we pray that such fruitfulness would strengthen not only the human race but your Church, according to your holy will.

We praise you that all who have the capacity are free to choose whom they marry without duress. Yet, as your children, you call us to marry only "in the Lord"—joining ourselves to those who share in the grace of Jesus.

We recognize the wisdom in marrying those who profess and live by the true, reformed, biblical faith. Help us to guard our hearts against unions with those who worship other gods, those who hold a distorted view of Christ and His Church or those who live in a way contrary to your Will. We understand that to be so joined would leave us "unequally yoked," being pulled in conflicting directions of worship in life and in moral decisions.

Living God, we see your wisdom in forbidding unions between those related by blood, as defined by Your Word. We acknowledge that no human agreement or government decree can make such a relationship lawful in your eyes. Lord help us to understand your Word as it applies to our blood relatives and those related to us by marriage.

Heavenly Father, forgive us when we fall into temptation. We recognize that sexual sin during a season of engagement is a grievance that may lead to the breaking of that engagement bond. Furthermore Lord God, we acknowledge that where such sin occurs within marriage, divorce may be sought by the offended partner and that after that divorce may remarry, as if the previous spouse were dead.

Lord, you love us and provide these laws to guide us through life in this fallen world. We pray that you would help us live out our marriages as you intended. Guard us from inflicting pain upon one another so that we might be tempted to leave the marriage covenant. May we honour the significance you give to the marriage bond, never considering its dissolution except in the tragic cases of adultery or wilful desertion – and even here only after reconciliation has been considered.

Be honoured and glorified in our homes and our marriages, we pray.

Amen.