

Chapter 20 – Marriage and Divorce

I-Study

In this chapter you learned about marriage and divorce. Marriage is not only a personal relationship; it is a contract. Marriage changes a couple's legal status and gives them new rights and obligations as a married couple. The primary obligation of marriage is the duty of the spouses to be faithful to each other. Types of marriage include common-law marriage, ceremonial marriage, proxy marriage, and covenant marriage. Prohibited marriages include bigamy and polygamy, and marriage between relatives. A legal marriage requires a marriage license, a waiting period, a blood test, and a minimum age of 18 in most states.

A marriage comes to an end in one of three ways: the death of a spouse, annulment, or divorce. An annulment is a declaration by the court that the marriage was never valid. A divorce is a declaration by the court that a valid marriage has come to an end. Common grounds for divorce include adultery, cruelty, desertion, alcohol or drug addition, and nonsupport. Almost all states have a no-fault divorce law. The parties in a divorce must come to a legal settlement regarding the issues of alimony, child custody and support, and distribution of property.

I-Quiz

1. A declaration by the court that a marriage was never effective is called
 - A. a divorce.
 - B. an annulment.
 - C. a dissolution.
2. The illegal act of having two spouses at the same time is called
 - A. polygamy.
 - B. bigamy.
 - C. monogamy.
3. Money paid for support by one person by the former spouse in a divorce is
 - A. alimony
 - B. community property.
 - C. custody.
4. What is it called when one spouse leaves with no intention of returning?
 - A. Legal separation
 - B. Nonsupport
 - C. Desertion

Answer Key

1. B
2. B
3. A
4. C