

A Sermon on Giving a Dowry

Sermon by Rev. Minister Angela Smith of COPE for October 24th, 2021 (and beyond)

Dowries may seem an antiquated or old-fashioned notion. But, they historically provided for economic equality between spouses legally committing to each other by way of marriage contract. If you were to enter into any contract that was an adhesion contract, where one party had the advantage of setting the terms or walking away giving them the greater bargaining position at time of agreement, then you must agree even if with grumbling assent to the terms in order to make a deal. If one party to a marriage contract has greater resources than their partner, then that subjugates the partner unless the partner earns their own keep. Such can be determined using free-market value of Platonic services provided by one partner to the other to cover their own cost of living either in-kind or through financially contributing themselves. And, for those who are superficial and into solely transactional relationships, I suppose you could calculate the going rate for sex work too and get in-kind credit for that too. If you do so, know that it is fair for everyone to think and/or call you a prostitute if you do your part and a whore if you use sexual coercion and fail to earn your keep. Of course, you likely found a mark who would fall for it and while that disgusts me, the best I can do is offer a reasonable alternative to hopefully help everyone with remembering that critical thinking and honest reason are important parts of making good decisions that may impact lives and livelihoods.

So, in lieu of a dowry you could reasonably agree to proportional coverage of living expenses based on incomes of both parties to the marriage with the person making less contributing more in-kind so economic equality is maintained. And, regardless of your gender, if you were a millionaire and decided to marry, at time of divorce would you believe your ex-to-be should receive 50% of the wealth you earned or inherited prior to the marriage or even during where they weren't involved with your business dealings and it was all you? What if they gave you a dowry of or worth \$5 million? Do you think they should get what is left of that at time of divorce, the same amount they entered the contract with, or the full \$5 million and any interest if it was invested? If you think because the dowry was a gift from your spouse at time of marriage, and that promissory estoppel and detrimental reliance prevent a refund of it unless so stipulated in terms of a prenuptial or other legally recognized agreement regarding the dowry, then you are under no obligation to refund the dowry unless the gift was expressly conditional.

And, if going with a dowry to make sure you are financially independent and/or contributing to the household economy the value you take from it or more based on objective fair market value of in-kind contributions, then that will reasonably address the main reason people get divorced and/or the basis of most disputes resulting in separation.

If you and/or your spouse are exceedingly generous people with each other and others, then it is likely any divorce will be amicable if in fact the need arises. But, if you are being subjugated through sexual coercion and/or exploitation, know that is your choice and there are ways out that you may decide against because you think tolerating the intolerable is worth the perks. A dowry and/or prenuptial, where reasonable terms are set

for splitting responsibilities of a shared life or shared lives, is the best way to show your commitment to equality in domestic partnerships. And, where ignorance is bliss, the most narcissistic at any given moment will make everyone so miserable that the truth will likely still be hiding in plain sight until someone gets the baby a pacifier. Then, the baby believes they are in charge because the world stopped until he/she was soothed. But, everyone returned to what they were doing before rudely interrupted by someone who doesn't understand English and sucks for nourishment. Oblivion until next order is issued. Know anyone like that? They are textbook narcissists. It is to be expected with people who just got here and are naturally ignorant because everything is new to them so they require patience as they learn. But, for those who don't apply themselves and grow out of it, why anyone would enter a legal agreement with them of any kind is beyond my comprehension.

I'll stay out of your relationships as long as they are not brought to my attention in the form of a cry for help. This last sentence is about the mission. And, I'm fair with a willingness to consider all sides. I help the party I feel is most reasonable and that isn't always the party who contacted me for assistance, but is most of the time. But, I think legally binding contracts in which you could lose 50% of everything should be made totally sober and with some prenuptial or other written agreement before the wedding finalizes the marriage contract. I'm inspired by our justice system to leave those with unclean hands where I find them as well. I understand some find this upsetting. Shikata Ga Nai.

For those interested in starting #TaoFu Self-Defense Exercises, please see <https://www.cope.church/taofu.htm> and begin at any time.

There are opportunities to send messages, receive mystery bonus blessings, and more with or without donating available now on our "Pass the Basket" page at <https://www.cope.church/basket.htm> . Thank You.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32 KJV Willful blindness is an abomination.

COPE accepts Feedback, critical and complimentary. Learn more at <https://www.cope.church/feedback.htm> . For the sake of keeping myself and others humble, a sense of humor is welcome on all sides.

For More About COPE and the HEAL Mission, see:

<https://www.cope.church> and <https://www.heal-online.org>