

Marriage and Divorce

A Question of Our Union with God

*For God So Loved the World that he gave his only son that whosoever believeth in him should
have ever lasting life....*

*To Live With God
A Never-ending relationship
A Union that will not falter
To be presented to him, without spot, without blemish
To set any other goal for ourselves is, in itself, Adultery
Against God
Against Jesus
Against the Trinity
Against the very purpose that God himself created us*

Intro

This booklet is meant to help people understand God's place in Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage. The entire question is clouded by the fact that God puts emphasis on who is at fault. But, before you can understand 'who is at fault' it is important to understand the following:

- Why does God care who is at fault in a divorce?
- Why does anyone need to carry the burden of being at fault?
- What is the full concept behind the word adultery?
- What does God want from you after a divorce?
- Are you willing to put God's desires over your own?
- Why are you interested? To follow God's Will – To follow Your Own Desires?
- Do you understand the 'true' definition/meaning of adultery?
- Are God's views of divorce related to the relationship He wants with us?

The last question is the most important. If your answer is 'no,' then there is no reason to read further. You already have your answer – to do whatever you wish.

However, if you are in a position to put your trust and faith in God, then this booklet will be a source of freedom, understanding, peace, and even healing.

I did not write this booklet to give people a 'get out of jail free card' and give them the impression that God condones, or does not condone, acts within a relationship. Instead, I wrote this booklet to help people understand God's will for their lives.

In fact – to answer this question abruptly, or without due diligence – is to hand you freedom with one hand, and *permit you to create Adultery against God with the other.*

Are you married? Do not seek a divorce.

Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife. But if you do marry, you have not sinned;
and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned.

1 Corinthians 7:27:28

At first, I did not want to put this verse at the beginning of the booklet. It was written to Christians. Not the wounded. Not those trapped in a marriage with a non Christian. However, it became necessary to answer the question whether God condoned divorce as this book entered the editing stage.

This journey is so much more than asking God to condone a divorce or remarriage. To understand the questions and answers, it is important to understand that God has one rule for Christians married to Non Christians, and one for Christians married to Christians.

As you learn the answers to these questions, you will have an eye opening, gut wrenching look at what God considers a Christian and whom he is calling to be his bride.

The Simple Question

I could answer the question of marriage, divorce, and remarriage with a simple verse. But, to do so would be, in itself, a misrepresentation of the answer. Also, it would leave many people still wounded and hurting.

When I was divorced, I had several questions, many were the result of my lack of understanding and interpretation of the bible:

- Am I defiled before God?
- Have I committed the unforgivable sin?
- Am I destined to remain alone the rest of my life?
- Why do I hurt so much?
- Why does the bible seem so unfair?
- Why is the church punishing me? I did nothing wrong.
- Why does God allow women to be put through this social and economic misery?
- Are my children now 'unholy'?
- Is my marriage over in God's eyes?
- Can I ever be remarried?
- Was I ever married in God's eyes?
- Must I remain Celibate?
- What is wrong with me?
- Why won't anyone love me?
- If I remarry, will we sin every time we are intimate?

It was a long time before I recognized the fundamental problem with these questions. I was asking questions because I wanted God to focus on my pain and happiness. I wanted him to justify my pain. I wanted him to tell me that I wasn't out of his grace. More importantly, I wanted him to let me find the happiness that I dreamed of as a girl.

What I didn't want was him to explain to me the reason why he is against divorce and how it ruptures the relationship we have with God. I also didn't want God to tell me that my first duty was to repair my relationship with him, and take it to a personal, daily, level – before I moved forward in another relationship. I didn't want God's answer. I wanted the things I was raised to desire.

You are not different from me. We were raised with the same ideals. For many young girls, Disney created our image of marriage.

Snow White is a perfect example. The mousy, too young, codependent who lived with seven grumpy men. She tolerated everything with a smile, until they left. Then she sat in the woods wishing that someone would come and rescue her.

Sleeping Beauty is another example of young girls being taught that you have no life until a man comes along and saves you. We were never taught to respect a good man. He must be a prince. He must have lots of money.

Cinderella is the most classic example. Of course the prince would never fall for the 'good' in

Cinderella's heart. She must be turned into the perfect trophy bride. In fact, the prince didn't really care what Cinderella's personality was like. Cinderella didn't care what he was like. The most striking part of this story was that the prince didn't want a wife at all. It didn't matter to the women. They were intent on beguiling and cajoling him into marriage – at all cost?

This image was strengthened by television sitcoms where 'good women' vacuumed the floors wearing skirts and high heels, left the important tasks of parenting until 'your father gets home', and never once asked for anything or complained to their husbands. These women were praised for their virtue in their day. The boldest women on television were the girls from the show Happy Days. If the women of television were given psychological tests, many of them would fail miserably. Yet, these women were held up as the 'norm' when we grew up.

Answer these questions either as a group, or privately. There are no wrong answers, just answer truthfully. No one will judge your answers.

What is Marriage?

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How did Television and Movies (old/new) shape your dreams and expectations of marriage?

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What do you want from a Marriage?

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How has reality changed your view of Marriage?

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After the Ball

Young girls never realized what happened after the ball until it was too late. I am not a councilor, but I have supported dozens of women over the last decade. I've walked with them through their troubles, and heard some terrible 'wedding night stories.' My first husband was told that he should hit me on our wedding night so I learned that he was boss before I 'got any ideas in my head.' When I first started talking to other women, I was shocked to hear how many of them (across several continents and denominations) shared the same story.

My grandmother gave me some sage advice. 'Take a look at how a man treats you now, then expect only one tenth of that after he marries you. When the honeymoon ends, the labor begins.' And, she wasn't too far off the

mark. The day after the honeymoon, I went to work, then came home and started my 'housework' while my new 'prince' sat on the couch and kept asking for dinner.

This is so different to the dreams that we grow up believing. The dreams are strongly rooted. Councilors warn recently divorced women not to marry quickly. That they will be inclined to marry someone who was the same – or worse – than the man they left. I attended a large church in the city, with more than 25 women in a 'single women's Sunday school class.' Sadly, in the 5 years I attended, all those women who did marry quickly regretted their decision within months.

The belief that a prince will come and love us is strongly rooted in our faith. We know there is a prince out there who will love us without condition. He will overlook our own mental baggage and pain. We 'know' it. If only we can find him.

Our trust in our prince is strongly rooted in our femininity. We cannot be whole without a man in our life. However, we learn too late that we understood the premise wrong. We cannot be whole without a Godly man in our life. We were made to complete a Godly man.

That is why there is so much divorce. We've lost our focus. Our loneliness, insecurities, and pain turn into weapons that use our beliefs, faith, and femininity against us. Instead of waiting for a Godly man, we hunt for the man who meets our expectations of what prince charming should be like. Unfortunately, it is very easy for an imposter to fake the prince charming images – after all, prince charming wasn't on the movie for all that long. We really never got to see a good picture of what he was really like.

We do not see the imposture's true self until after the ball ... then it is too late.

What is Divorce?

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How did a divorce change your relationship with God?

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Many people have not researched the bible enough to realize that God is divorced – and remarried. (Jeremiah 3:6-11). God married Abraham the day he made a covenant with him, and his children. But Israel committed idolatry against God (they sought the good life instead of an intimate relationship with God)

And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. (Jeremiah 3:8)

God only divorced the nation. He clearly stated that there is a remnant that will turn to him and 'choose' him. He also stated that in the second marriage, he will not be the one doing the courting. The new bride must be Born Again (John 3:3) God is quick to remind us that He did not break the relationship with his people. He

did not abandon those who loved him.

Romans 9:6

Not all of the people of Israel are the true people of God. (New Contemporary Version)

For it is not everybody who is a descendant of Jacob (Israel) who belongs to [the true] Israel. (Amplified version)

For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. (New International Version)

Not as though the word of God hath taken no effect. For they [are] not all Israel, who are [descendants] from Israel (Webster Literal Translation)

But the present condition of Isra'el does not mean that the Word of God has failed. For not everyone from Isra'el is truly part of Isra'el; (Complete Jewish Bible)

Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew (Romans 11:1-2)

This last verse is the most important. It states that God did not cast away those that he 'knew' and that knew him. Only those who had chosen another suitor. new testament believers in Jesus, are we not now called the people of God? (2 Cor 6:16, 1 Peter 2:10). This means that we are part of the covenant of God. God is not saying, one day after the resurrection. He said we 'are' his bride.

In Galatians 6 Paul says that in Christ there is no more circumcision or uncircumcision. There is no more Jew or Gentile. There is only a new creation, which he calls The Israel of God (vs 15-16). This is what he means when he writes in Romans 9:6, "They are not all Israel who are of Israel."

Question?

Does God lie? Does he ever deceive you? The answer is no. However, men are apt to switch up the scriptures to make them say what they want. I honestly admit without malice that many men react in innocence while others repeat dogma without understanding. I have met men who are sinister in their intent, but thankfully they are few and far between.

Many people try to find quick answers in the bible. They will grab Matthew 5 where Jesus was talking to Pharisees (non Christians) and mix it in with a little Genesis, then for good measure bringing in one single line from the Pauline Privilege – just one line. Then, their argument sounds good. You've bought it – and leave wondering how you could ever have doubted this teaching, especially if it originates from your church.

We would never teach children math by taking 1 line from page 45, 4 lines from page 2, and 8 words from page 243. But, in some cases, that is how the church teaches us the scripture.

Then the argument flags the word adultery as if it is the unforgivable sin. That there is no redemption. Today, in many denominations and in many churches, there are leaders who will take no stand against someone who cheats on their taxes, beats their wife, lies, watches porn, skips small group the occasional Monday to watch the game(idolatry), believes that all Christians are hypocrites – but, an adulterous woman is shown no mercy. It

reminds me of another situation where a woman was charged by the church based on a twisted scripture, personal opinion, and men who also believed they knew the will of God. Except this time, the woman was brought before Jesus.

Jesus was presented with this same situation. Pharisees brought a woman caught in the act of adultery. They changed the law (the man was not present), they twisted the scripture to suit their purpose (asked if it was lawful, not is it God's will), and they self-righteously said that the scripture 'commanded' them to commit the cruelty of stoning her to death. They were forced to do it 'by Moses law' (yet, what about the other laws they broke without concern?) Then, like what happens in many of today's churches – the woman was singled out and made to stand out, alone, to be judged by all.

Jesus bent and wrote on sand. He stood and said, 'He who has no sin cast the first stone.'

Jesus turned to the adulteress and **forgave her**, charging her to *sin no more*.

Jesus made a strong statement here. In this story Jesus did one of two things. He either broke his father's law and sinned, or he had a deeper understanding of the law and was trying to show the leaders of the church that their understanding was flawed.

You see, one thing that I've learned from Jesus' writing is simply that the law without relationship with God is death. No one can follow the law. No one can live a sinless life. The law was meant to help God's people become God's bride. Take the groom away(God) – and the law is nothing more than a set of rules that brings death to the soul.

What God Says about Marriage?

We often forget that God is the author of Marriage. For God says, 'the two shall become one flesh.' In the same way, 'the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.' The parallel between marriage and our relationship with God goes far beyond 'symbolic.'

Marriage is a relationship that binds two people into one: Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (Gen 2:23)

The man who finds a wife finds a treasure and receives favor from the LORD. (Proverbs 18:22)

Let your wife be a fountain of blessing for you. Rejoice in the wife of your youth. May you always be captivated by her love. (Proverbs 5:15-19)

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper (who is just right) for him. (Gen 2:18-25 18)

What God Says about Divorce

We must understand that Divorce is the result of sin. If we sought God in the selection of a companion, if a couple seeks God first, and if they do not let lust rule their hearts, then there is never a need for a divorce. The very fact that a couple is in a divorce situation means that they are not walking in God's will for their lives. This may sound harsh, but it won't by the end of the book. In fact, it will offer comfort and freedom.

"For the LORD God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with *violence*," says the LORD of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit that you do not deal treacherously." Mal 2:16

And Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded. 2 If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth. Num 30:1-2

When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. 5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay Eccl 5:4-5

When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. 2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. Deuteronomy 24

Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. Matthew 19:8-9

God's definition of a Marriage Relationship is:

Enter Your Thoughts Here

- Two that were not complete – were made complete by a relationship
- Eternal Commitment
- A Joy
- A Blessing
- Communion/Friendship

Gods definition of a Divorce is:

- Violent
- A Breaking of a Covenant
- Abandonment
- To Put Away
- To Throw Out
- In fact, in many places the word for widowed and divorce interchangeable

Why did God Create Marriage?

You only need to study the history of marriage for a few hours to realize that what man calls marriage has long been an abomination in God's eyes. God did not intent for women to be kidnapped, sold, or reduced to the state of broodmares and servants.

There was a time before sin that God communed with Adam and Eve. While it is argued that the bible does not say "God walked with Adam", I would argue that the following verse implies that Adam and Eve fully intended to meet God and that he would see their nakedness.

"And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the Garden." Genesis 3:8

"Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?'" (Genesis 3:9)

"In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God... and the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1: 1,14)

"For God is faithful through whom you were called into Fellowship with His Son Christ Jesus." (1 Cor. 1:9)

God walked with Adam and Eve daily and taught them as His children. (Isaiah 54:13)

Look at your life. Do you have this type of relationship with God?

God still wants a relationship. In Exodus God rekindled the 'earthly walk' with his people. God is a God of relationships. We were created for relationship. There is something inherently important to our wellbeing that can only be filled when we are within a loving relationship.

"And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them." (Exodus 25:8)

Abraham is instructed to "walk before God and be blameless" (Genesis 17:1). Enoch also "walked with God". (Genesis 5:21-24). Many people in the bible had a close relationship with God. Many more committed Adultery against him.

We often forget this truth when studying the topic of Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage. We forget that we were created for a 'oneness relationship.' It is our purpose. That is why God describes divorce as violent. That is why Adultery and breaking vows makes him angry.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (2 Corinthian 6:19)

God's Blueprint for Marriage

God created 3 pillars of marriage – and none of them included a written, legal, document.

1. Sexual interaction. The first step is a physical interaction. The two people become one, physically. They are joined in a physical act. God made man and women to 'become one' with each other. God has one rule for sex – keep the marriage bed undefiled.
1 Corinthians 6:16 – do not join your soul to a prostitute or you will be united forever
Gen. 2:24 – the two will become one flesh
2. Covenant between two people. It is a God created covenant. This is one thing that very few are taught. In Matthew 19 we see that Jesus tells man not to break what God puts together. He doesn't say that it

cannot be broken. He doesn't say that we shouldn't break apart what the **law** has joined together.
Mat 19:6

3. Relationship between two people. We are rarely taught about relationship in marriage. How should we act? Marriage and relationship training within the church should not be 'voluntary' until something goes wrong. It is difficult to try to fix a wound that has festered for years. All God's rules for marriage refer to the relationship. He never once says 'do not raise another man's son' or 'write a legal document that protects your wealth against an unfaithful spouse.'

Above all hold unfailing your love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8)

Be kindly affectionate one to another . . . in honor preferring one another. (Romans 12:10)

Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. (Psalm 127:1)

Pray one for another. (James 5:16)

Love is forbearing and kind. Love knows no jealousy. Love does not brag, is not conceited. She is not unmannerly, nor selfish, nor irritable, nor mindful of wrongs. She does not rejoice in injustice, but joyfully sides with the truth. She can overlook faults. She is full of trust, full of hope, full of endurance. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7) Weymouth

Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. (Colossians 3:19)

Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled. (Hebrews 13:4)

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another. (Romans 12:10)

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Tim 5:8)

Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest. (Ecclesiastes 9:9)

I once read a book on marriage for atheists. It started by saying 'why get married if you are an atheist' and proceeded to list reasons why religious marriages fail. This obviously is a small sector, and does not represent the general view of the world. As such, the world in general acknowledges that there is no reason to marry when God isn't the center of the home. Why then in practice, are we so blind to the concept ?

God Wants a *Personal* Relationship With You

When I was first divorced, I was terrified. I had believed that I might not even go to heaven. My sin was so great. My relationship was horizontal- *my husband and I, totally ignoring the 'God Factor.'* This meant that every verse was a judgment. Even when I understood the words, all I read was condemnation. When you realize that God is a part of the marriage, then the concept of marriage and divorce take on a new meaning.

God has been a part of 'us,' and a part of 'marriage' from the beginning. Our bodies have always been a part of Him. We were created to be 'one' with God. He sent his son so we could be 'one' with him. He will return and make us 'one' with Him. We are one. We, male and female, were created to be His bride. He did not create man in his image – then create woman as an afterthought.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, (Genesis 1:26)

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; *male and female* he created them. (Genesis 1: 27)

The more I studied the creation, women's role, marriage, divorce, and remarriage - the more I realized that it is impossible to discuss this topic without talking about our relationship with God,

and/or adultery against God. For, one does not exist without the other.

Does your relationship with God influence your daily life?

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What do you think about the concept that marriage does not exist outside of God?

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Did you consider your marriage as part of your relationship with God?

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How can a relationship with a man enhance/damage your relationship with God?

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God Has a Plan

Did God have a plan when he created Adam and Eve? Surely, he knew that Eve would be tempted. Of course, he could have placed the tree anywhere he wanted. Why didn't he put the Angel to guard the tree, before, they ate of the apple?

God is omnipresent. This means that he knew that Eve was being tempted. He watched her take the apple from the tree. He stood and watched as Adam took a bite of the apple. *But, he didn't stop Adam.* God did not protect Eve. Adam did not protect Eve. Neither took steps to stop her – or protect her from being seduced by Satan. In fact, God not only knew that Eve would sin, but there is a strong argument that he needed her to sin to move his plan forward.

The only other alternative is that, God needed to see one of two outcomes. First, Eve needed to eat the apple. Second, Adam needed to attack Satan and defend his wife from being seduced. It is easy to see that God wanted Adam to protect his wife. When that didn't happen, the B plan was put into place.

We will never know if it was God's will for Adam to leap up and destroy the serpent, or to give God the freedom to destroy the evil trying to betray the wife God gave him. We will never know what would have happened if Adam had picked up a rock and killed the serpent. We will never know what would have happened if Adam cried out for God to save them. The truth about what would have happened if Adam refused to eat the fruit, and instead went running to his father to 'make it right' may be buried for all eternity.

I can say with clarity that I believe it wasn't God's perfect will that Eve was tempted, Adam stood by, or that they both ate the apple. I am sure that, divine as God is, his heart held out hope that his children would choose him instead of choosing the promises of Satan.

The clues to the reason why he didn't step in and protect his children from being tempted. He walked into the garden, knowing that His children would hide. He walked into the garden knowing that the relationship was over, forever. But, he also knew that the end of innocence (Childhood) was the beginning of the creation of his real – true – bride.

Why did God let all this pain happen? Why did he turn the world over to Satan? Why did he allow another suitor to tempt and seduce his children?

- God wants a bridal relationship with a true equal
- He wants a true and spotless bride one who chose him above carnal lusts and desires
- He needed a bride that could understand him
- He wants a bride who would never commit adultery against Him – she has proven in this life that she will be faithful for all eternity
- He created children – but he is waiting for a bride
- He needed a bride who was given a choice of suitors – and chose Him
- Right now, in our world, we are making that choice. Which suitor will we choose?

Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:8-9)

"Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city." (Revelation 22:14)

To the woman he (God) said,
"I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing;
with pain you will give birth to children.
*and you will desire to control your husband
but he will rule over you.."*
Genesis 3: 20(NL)

The beautiful relationship that Adam and Eve shared was ruined. Before that moment, there was no talk of man being the Head, or wives being submissive. No one asked whether one of God's Children had to tolerate abuse. Eve never feared her husband's touch.

From that moment, Satan worked on his plan to destroy marriage. Polygamy and Prostitution entered before Genesis ended. Incest followed. Divorce followed.

What happened?

What changed the relationship between Adam and Eve?

Did Adam stop loving Eve?

Did Eve resent Adam for not protecting her?

Only one thing changed. Adam and Eve no longer had an intimate relationship with God. The relationship was broken. The third part of the marriage covenant was removed. Without God, marriage is flawed.

Can there be a marriage without God?

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Can you leave a marriage and start another relationship that improves your relationship with God?

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What do you think about the concept that God wants an intimate relationship with you?

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You can lead a sanctified life, even when married to a non Christian. Paul states that it is so. Do you believe that God will honor your marriage if you put him first?

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How can God bless a woman who chooses to remain in her marriage, when the law of God, and the world, tells her that she can leave?

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Did Something Go Terribly Wrong? No. God doesn't make mistakes.

We must understand God's plan before we can understand his views of marriage or divorce.

He wants us to become a worthy companion. As his children we loved him because we were created to love him. After sin entered our life we were different than all other beings in creation. We had the ability and the will to choose a relationship with him, or to reject him. The breach in our relationship with God, that would enable us to eventually become his companion, also ripped apart the harmony that created a natural relationship, the foundation of marriage.

This is something that is worth remembering. In a very real way, we are already Divorced. When Adam and Eve ate the apple the relationship was torn apart. God had to 'Throw them out' of the garden. God 'put them away' from his site. The 'break the ties' that bound them to an intimate relationship with God were torn apart. The definition of divorce in Greek and Hebrew include: put away, tied, thrown out, thrown away. We *put*

away, threw away, our communion and relationship with God. This is the first time that God was divorced. Humanity divorced God. Humanity committed adultery against God.

God wants You to Become a New Creation ... He wants a Relationship With You

God is Love. (1 John 4:16). Love requires a relationship. Love requires a worthy companion. It may have been God's will that we live in harmony and peace with him for all eternity. But remember, he didn't break his vow. He did not break the covenant. We did. However, it wasn't long after we broke the covenant that God started working to renew the relationship. It will now be better than before because we 'choose' him.

"It is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure"
(Philippians 2:13, NRSV)

You may not believe it. But, God can work through a divorce. He can renew us and return us to a right relationship with him. Then, when we are ready, he may just have a 'holy' marriage on your horizon. He does not want you to enter into another carnal relationship. He does not want to 'free' you from one marriage, only to have you end up 'knitting yourself to' and 'tying your body' to another partner who is more interested in sin, pleasure, and misery.

He is willing to save his children from a horizontal marriage, but his plan is to have them move closer to the original relationship he shared with Adam and Eve. You must understand this before you can understand the Bible's teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

There is no Marriage Without God

One thing is certain. It is impossible to have a true marriage without God. God created marriage. It is a divine institution. This truth is a little hard for some to believe. Utilitarianism is a vital part of the world. We can follow their acceptance of euthanasia, abortion, gay marriage, and the death penalty. Yet, as Christians, we have a hard time accepting that their acceptance of multiple partners, living together, commonlaw, free sex has anything to do with the lack of God in their lives.

Marriage is far more than a piece of paper. It is the union that connects us to God. It is the relationship he yearned for when he created 'man, male and female, in his own image.'

The first relationship that God created was to create a companion for himself. Then He created a companion to complete the unity. This is a three sided relationship that mirrors the Trinity. This was God's original plan for a marriage.

Politics and law were not a part of marriage for thousands of years. The world's view of a marriage was a union designed to protect bloodlines and property. This was not God's purpose. God was never concerned with property, or bloodlines. He wanted a relationship.

Can a marriage that is not built around a relationship be considered a marriage under God's definition?

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Do you think God considers a marriage as the union of two people in a relationship, or a legal union designed to protect a monogamous society?

Ancient Biblical Views of Divorce

The bible has many places where it allows divorce.

1. When the spouse is acting like a whore/prostitute (Matthew 19:9)
2. Jews formed illicit marriages with non Jews (Ezra 10:3, 11)
3. John the Baptist told Herod to divorce (Mark 6: 17-18)
4. When an unbeliever is unwilling to be married to a practicing Christian (1 Cor 7)
5. If there is some uncleanness, maybe means nakedness, could mean illness or mental illness, physical deformity, or just he didn't like her anymore because she behaves indecently. This verse is hard to translate. (Deuteronomy 24:1)
6. If a man rapes a woman he must marry her, and may never divorce her. (Deuteronomy 22:28-29)
7. Polygamy was allowed. (Exodus 21:10, 2 Samuel 6:13, 1 Kings 11:3, 2 Chronicles 11:21, Deuteronomy 21:15)

Note that Adultery was not a condition for divorce, because the adulterer was put to death. It is important to understand (Lev 20:10) that sex was not a part of adultery in the ancient scriptures. A man could have sex with a slave. That slave could have sex with the man's son. No adultery was committed. Only when the bond was broken between the free wife of a Hebrew was adultery committed.

The purpose of the divorce certificate comes from the Hebrew word cipher Kerithuth, which is two words which mean certificate of divorcement, or book of cutting off. The purpose was to give the wife a legal document that allowed her to remarry. (Amram, Jewish Law of Divorce according to the Bible and Talmud, London, 1897)

The new testament also talks about this legal document (Mark 10:4, Matthew 5:31, Matthew 19:7). It is interesting to note that divorce was a part of culture. Jesus never once said, it is unlawful to divorce. What he did say was that there were consequences. There are always consequences.

Important: We have an entire paper that discusses the concept of 'God's Child' kept as a slave, and what God says about it. This paper discusses 'in full' God's law concerning a spouse kept in an abusive relationship. This paper came to us almost complete, and is on our website and is 'under construction' by our authors, pastors, theologians, and linguists. You can view what we've collected to date in the Divorce section at www.godlovedme.com

Historical Views of Marriage and Divorce

The purpose of this section is to show you that the church has not had one definition of marriage, or divorce, since Jesus' time. In fact, the church has condoned many sexual and immoral sins over the last 2000 years.

You may be thinking at this moment that you are farther away from reaching a place where your dreams come true and you are happy. In today's world, it is very difficult to find anyone who wants a Perfect Marriage (God, man and woman). They all want a horizontal marriage (man and woman).

Your views of marriage and divorce are based on hundreds of years of political turmoil and power mongering. Empires rose and fell, each one laying their own interpretation of marriage and divorce. The *church* and *law* focused more on land transfers than the bible when determining the marriage and divorce laws. In fact, I added a few historical references to marriage from 100AD – 1500AD years that might interest you.

The following list is an attempt to prove to you that the church and law has changed their mind on marriage, divorce, and remarriage dozens of times since Jesus walked the earth – that condoned practices have not always reflected a solid, bible based view, since the days when Peter, Paul, and Timothy helped build the first churches.

- Marriage was a financial arrangement. In many cases the bride didn't know about the transaction until she was carried away.
- Marriage was arranged to solidify and protect political power
- Marriage was little more than a real estate transaction
- Marriage was almost always between strangers or business partners
- Middle ages - a marriage required nothing more than a notice to be posted on the church door.
- It wasn't until the 16th century that it was decreed that marriages needed to be public.
- The church wasn't part of a marriage until about 1000 AD. Until then, people were married when they moved in together. Or, if a woman became pregnant.
- The church's adultery laws made it easy to 'steal' a bride (and her wealth) without fear of reprisal.
- For many centuries – the king decided whom and when nobles married
- Many of today's wedding traditions were part of ancient fertility Gods and worship – not of the bible. Ie, rings, tying knots, and the wedding cake.
- Handfasting refers to the old practice of trial marriages for a year and a day, supposedly prevalent in Scotland, Wales and Ireland.
- Until the late medieval times a man was allowed to have a right hand and a left hand wife.
- Until Queen Victoria took a solid stand against immorality, a noble could put away his wife at any time. She was often sent to a poor house so he could marry a woman for her dowry, sons, or lust. It was common and permissible by the church for a man to have a wife and a mistress. And, if a poor man wanted a divorce then he just starved his wife and children to death. Or he just walked out on them.
- For many centuries, Marriage was initiated when the dowry was paid.
- Until Medieval times, consummation of the marriage was unnecessary in Christendom. It was possible to be married and never meet your husband.
- In many Christian countries, a woman and man were considered married if they had sexual relations.
- A nobleman could have sex with a peasant woman. It was not considered adultery, nor rape.
- 14th-15th century: "The popular belief that simple fornication between unmarried persons was

neither a sin nor a crime persisted, although this had been classified formally as heresy since 1287."

- 14th-15th century: "Several authorities maintained that when a woman committed adultery, her husband was at fault and should be punished as much or more than she was, but I have yet to find a case in which that was done." (Martin Luther)
- Because most noble marriages in the Middle Ages were little more than business contracts, courtly love was a form of sanctioned adultery, sanctioned because it threatened neither the contract nor the religious sacrament of marriage. In fact, faithlessness of the lovers toward each other was considered more sinful than the adultery of this extramarital relationship. (1993 - 2009 The Probert Encyclopaedia)
- The bride stands on the left by tradition. The practice of kidnapping brides persisted until after the 1500s, the bridesmen, also called brides knights, would claim their Lord's bride. The groom kept the woman in his left hand. The right hand held a sword to fight off her kinsmen.
- The Hebrew scriptures document approximately forty polygamists.
- Saint Augustine (chapter 20) The Good of Marriage, he compared marriage to the context of a master and slave. He stated that it was legal for a man to have many slaves, but a slave may only have one master. His writing does confirm the ongoing practice of polygamy in church circles.
- Protestants only saw a marriage as blessed by God, nothing more. It is written and/or outlined in many of the first 'institutes' or guidelines for the protestant religion.
- The Romans considered marriage as a sacrament, and for life. The only acceptable way to commit divorce was to have your spouse die prematurely.
- On February 14, 1650, the parliament at Nürnberg decreed that every man was allowed to marry up to ten women. Martin Luther granted the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, who, for many years, had been living "constantly in a state of adultery and fornication," a dispensation to take a second wife
- Divorce has been the privilege of the wealthy until recently.
- In England and Wales, until 1670, a divorce could be had if the parties could not prove they were married. When one party went senile, insane, or seriously ill, they were taken to court and asked to prove they were married. If they could not, then a divorce was issued. Also, if all the members of your wedding party died, (which could be as small as the monk/priest and 1 witness), then anyone could easily challenge and dissolve your marriage.
- In England and Wales, until 1670, a divorce could also be acquired on the grounds of being frigid, impotent, cruelty, or if you went to court and charged your spouse with heresy. Heresy was the best bet. You'd claim he said something against the Church. Then he/she would be tortured until they confessed. Even if the divorce was not issued, the death would leave the other party free to divorce.
- The official "Birth" of Christian Polygamy as a social movement has been identified as being on "Independence Day" (July 4), 1994. Less than 2 decades old!!!!
- There are churches, today, who deem that polygamy is only denied to pastors and deacons. After all, God never condemned polygamy in the old testament. And, Jesus never spoke against it in the new testament.

It is easy to see why today's laws and church dogma are difficult to understand. Even men like Martin Luther told women that they should engage in polygamy if their husbands were unable to give them children (to save the woman's soul because God ordered her to multiply). It is interesting that the same authorities who preach that the bible must be taken literally when it comes to women in ministry, divorce, and remarriage will switch tactics and claim that the bible must be taken 'in context' when discussing topics such as polygamy.

The truth is, when you remove the God-Factor from the marriage-divorce controversy, even the most educated people can become confused and misinterpret the scriptures. In some cases, this was a deliberate attempt to control the population, wealth, and power. In others, it was an innocent mistake made by placing more emphases on a single rule or sin, while ignoring the reason God created us, relationships, and marriage.

The Modern Church Defined Marriage and Divorce

The problem started at the Council of Trent. In fact, most of today's dogma, in many world religions, has their basis within that council. This council convened for 18 months and argued out many of the controversies of the church. At the time, the council was unimportant. No one asked them to solve the problems of Christendom. They were just setting some ground rules. In fact, this was the 19th of such councils. Not only that, it was illegal. It did not have Rome's support. Add this - the men in attendance were not the leaders, top scholars, holy men. (Catholic Encyclopedia)

These men determined that Tradition was as inspired as the scriptures were, and in such, would play a role in interpreting the scriptures. This had a major impact on the institute of marriage. As the council was held in Germany where the king held absolute control, and nobility was maintained by land and power, then it was important to make sure that the current liberties were curbed. These liberties included the allowance of divorce.

The second thing they did was make marriage a sacrament. This meant that marriage was divinely appointed, arranged in heaven, and written in the books of heaven. They had this partly right - but where they erred was in the fact that they made it a 'sin' to seek divorce. As I will explain later, nowhere does the bible say that divorce is a 'sin'.

The third thing they did was split the ideal of marriage. Now there was divorce and 'divorce in Gods eyes.' Nowhere in the bible does it state that there are two types of divorce. Only that a sin is committed **against your spouse** when there is a divorce. The bible says you sin against your spouse. The bible does not say that you sin against God in the 'act' of divorce. However, there are places where it suggests that you sinned against God long before the divorce took place. The sin started when the couple started to break their covenant. The divorce is the consequences for those sins.

The verse many people quote is Matthew 19:9. Jesus said "What therefore God hath joined together *let not* man put asunder." He did not say they couldn't break the bind. He didn't say that there was a 'divorce in Gods eyes' and an 'evil divorce that God would not recognize.' This is prevalent in today's church where some translations use the scriptures against divorce as an absolute threat. Other translations even go far enough to impose their own threats and claim that Jesus clearly states that infidelity is the only reason for a divorce.

It is important to read the scriptures as they were written. Jesus did not say to the people he was teaching that a man who put his wife away must remain single or that a woman who was divorced must remain single. He did say that a Christian, Godly, man should not divorce his wife except for whore mongering (the continual act of prostitution) and that you shouldn't marry the whore who is divorced.

The second thing that is overlooked is that adultery involves more than physical intimacy with another person. Adultery, as we will look at, had a much deeper meaning that it has today. In history, the church has taught that only the woman can commit adultery. They taught, that a man can have sex with a never-married woman without committing adultery.

Here are some ways that various denominations, Christians, and theologians, read their personal ideals into the scripture.

1. Jesus said, "Whoever puts away his wife, except for fornication"

Church Tradition says, "*Not possible* to put away wife except for fornication"

2. Jesus said, "and shall marry another"

Church Tradition says, "*is not* married (cannot marry) to the next wife in God's sight"

3. Jesus said, "commits adultery"

Church Tradition says, "adultery not committed until later sex acts or remarriage"

4. Jesus said, "Whoever marries a put-away woman commits adultery against her (against the first wife, not against God)."

Tradition says, "all divorced women are adulteresses. They are ineligible for marriage."

5. Jesus says, "and marries another"

Church Tradition says, "And commits the unforgivable sin of re-marriage/adultery."

6. Jesus says, "do not divorce unless the marriage covenant is broken"

Church Tradition says, "Divorce is forbidden. Divorce is okay. Remarriage is not." It all depends on which religion you are...what your pastor believes...and whether you are the one getting divorced, or your friend is.

7. Jesus says, "commits adultery"

Church Tradition says, "Divorce and/or remarriage is the unforgivable sin."

The bible has one word for marriage. This would not be true if there were 'God sanctioned marriages' and 'God forbidden marriages.'

Once the church decided that marriage was a sacrament, the church taught that Jesus was warning us not to break the marriage binds or else you committed an unforgivable sin. It was easy to toss everything else the bible teaches on our relationships and our relationship with God.

This theory created a separate issue, that marriage was for those who had not sinned, and that the covenant was more important than salvation or our relationship with God. This in itself is idolatry for nothing is more important than God's will for our lives.

What the Council at Trent, and future church leaders did not take into consideration is that the bible does list those who are ineligible for marriage. (I included this list later in the book) Being divorced was not on the list. Divorce was *not* added to the list of sins that would keep someone from God, or salvation. The bible does not list Divorce or remarriage as unforgivable sins.

Many people refer to Paul's teaching that Christians who are married should not consider a second marriage. Paul was addressing an entirely different issue, that has more to do with their relationship with God, than with any affinity he had with the law. Paul states 'every man should have a wife. Every wife should have a husband.' He did not put any limits on whether those wives and husbands were divorced.

Not all the churches have been against divorce. In fact, divorce has been part of the church since Christ's

time. One of the most renowned theologians, Martin Luther, wrote the following:

Now in the law of Moses God established two types of governments; he gave two types of commandments. Some are spiritual, teaching righteousness in the sight of God, such as love and obedience; people who obeyed these commandments did not thrust away their wives and never made use of certificates of divorce, but tolerated and endured their wives' conduct. Others are worldly, however, drawn up for the sake of those who do not live up to the spiritual commandments, in order to place a limit upon their behavior and prevent them from doing worse and acting wholly on the basis of their own maliciousness. Accordingly, he commanded them, if they could not endure their wives, that they should not put them to death or harm them too severely, but rather dismiss them with a certificate of divorce. This law, therefore, does not apply to Christians, who are supposed to live in the spiritual government. In the case of some who live with their wives in an un-Christian fashion, however, it would still be a good thing to permit them to use this law, just so they are no longer regarded as Christians, which after all they really are not.

Thus it is that on the grounds of adultery one person may leave the other, as Solomon also says in Proverbs 18, "He that keepeth an adulterous is a fool".

It is important to realize that God nor Jesus nor Paul ever once commanded women to become subjected to their husband. The church has overstepped their bounds when they created the marriage vows. When a woman vows to obey her husband, she is in essence putting her husband's will above God's. She is agreeing that her 'Lord' is now her husband. This is, in essence, committing adultery against God.

This is why men believe they have so much power. This gives men power that God never intended. This is why men in the church do not need to be Christian, but can use God's word to destroy their wives' body, soul, and mind.

God *never* intended this as the earthly representation of a heavenly marriage.

The Samaritan Woman: Jesus Acknowledges Divorce

When Jesus talked with the Samaritan woman he told her she had had five husbands. Unless all of them died she must have been divorced at times. Each time she remarried it was considered marriage by the Lord for he told her she had had five husbands. They would not have been husbands if she were not married to them. Jesus said the man she was presently living with was not her husband.

Why? Because she had never been married to him. Jesus did not tell her she had only been married one time, to the first husband. Thus, in the "eyes of the Lord" this woman was married five times. Our teaching that one cannot remarry is not in harmony with what Jesus taught.

Why is this important? It is important because it shows some of Jesus' intent. It is easy to take one verse, or even one part of a verse, and create a dogma around it. It is much harder to stick to a strict code when you take everything written on a specific subject and combine it to develop an understanding.

Why did the early writers add this story to the bible? What is important about this story? Yes, it is a story of forgiveness. But, it is more. It is a story of reconciliation with God – renewing the relationship between God and this woman. Jesus did not tell the women to go 'get her house in order' – 'straighten out her marital problems' – 'go back to her first/true husband'. No, Jesus was not concerned about her past. He was only concerned about her now, and how that effected her relationship with God. Jesus only had one word for the

woman, 'Go and sin no more.'

There is so much freedom in this simple sentence. What is accomplished when you stop sinning? Your social position may not be restored. Your financial situation may deteriorate. In fact, it may look like your life is falling apart. You may even appear to be falling away from what God wants – according to some dogma and traditions. The only thing that may improve is your relationship with God. And, if you read the words of Jesus, he had one message. "Get right with God."

Do you feel like the Samaritan woman? Did you make bad decisions in your life? Are you afraid of coming to Jesus because you've been told that he will turn you away, or you feel that he will condemn you? Yes, he will tell you to 'go and sin no more' – but only you know what your sins are. Only you know how to make your relationship with Jesus whole.

What does "Go and Sin No More" Look like in Your life?

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What 3 things can you do to improve your relationship with God? These should be things that turn your heart toward God, and do not necessarily need to be things that you've been taught a 'good Christian woman' should do.

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Note: The concept that Jesus **defended** the victim of a divorce in Matthew 5, Matthew 19, and in this story requires more space than is afforded in this paper. Please visit <http://christian-divorce-remarriage.godlovedme.com/> to explore this topic more.

Can You Remain Married in The Law - But Divorced in God's Eyes?

There are two reasons that I make the argument that an abusive husband has already divorced his wife. First, the consequences of divorce and an emotionally or physically abusive marriage are identical.

What are the consequences of Divorce in your life?

1. A broken heart
2. Shattered dreams
3. Broken spirit
4. Unbearable bitterness and anger
5. Broken relationships with children
6. Low self esteem
7. Living in fear
8. Poverty
9. Broken relationships with friends and family
10. Separation from church family

11. Low self esteem
12. Separation from God
13. Emotional disconnection, distancing
14. Friends don't understand
15. We stop feeling
16. We become jaded and hard and aggressive
17. We try to hide our feelings, even from ourselves
18. We continually lie so that no one will see what is really happening in our lives
19. No one listens to what you are saying, but they are quick to tell you what you should do.

What would you add to this list?

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How does the views and opinions differ from the women in your group who have never been divorced, and those who are divorced?

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We asked whether you can be married according to the law, but already divorced in God's eyes. It is amazing that the list of consequences for divorce is *exactly* the same as the list of torments suffered by a woman in an abusive relationship. What do you think?

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Any divorce results in 'breaking the covenant' and severing the three way bond between two people and God. This 'sin' results in a breach between the people and God. How can you heal this breach?

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The danger of divorce. Do you think that our fears, pain, and desires can damage our relationship – not only with God, but with our family, children – and future relationships?

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The second, and most convincing reason that I argue this point is by referencing Matthew 5:31-32

MATTHEW 5 vs MATTHEW 19

32 But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife (divorce), saving for (exception) the cause of fornication (original word – pornea – sex with an unmarried woman, acting the whore, prostitution), (Mat 5:31, 32)...

Young's Literal Translation

'And I say to you, that, whoever may put away his wife, if not for whoredom (prostitution), and may marry another, doth commit adultery; and he who did marry her that hath been put away, doth commit adultery.'

What Jesus is saying is that in his Father's eyes, the woman (and in today's definition, the man) who is acting the whore, whore-mongering, the prostitute, is already single. He used the word (pornea) that only refers to someone who is unmarried. The marriage covenant is already broken. Jesus could easily have used the word for a married woman committing an act of adultery – moicheia.... But he didn't. He was stressing the fact that his father valued the spiritual bond more than the legal letter when concerning divorce. Jesus was taking the reader beyond the law and in essence, saying that a couple can be married under the law and divorced in God's eyes.

The original word used, "pornea" is not the word for adultery. Bible scholars agree that the word for adultery is "moicheia". In fact, this same verse does use the word for adultery in the second part.

Let's go outside of the bible to explore this concept further.

We know the definition of the word Moicheia because it is used in literature used when:

Lysias (ca. 401 B.C.) writes concerning Euphiletus, an Athenian, who killed Eratosthenes after catching him committing adultery with his wife.

Xenophon (ca. 401 B.C.) describes the adulterer who "enters the woman's quarters, knowing that by committing adultery moicheuonti he is in danger of incurring the penalties threatened by the law.

Sextus Empiricus (ca 200 A.D.) wrote: "Adulterers moichous are, of course, punished by law with us, but amongst some peoples, intercourse with other men's wives is indifferent" (*Pyrrhonism* III.209).

Moses wrote that the man who "commits adultery moicheusetai with another's wife" is subject to death (Leviticus 20:10)

***Nowhere in literature, or scripture, was the word pornea used to refer to **a married** woman having sex with a man who is not her husband.

When theology argues the words pornea and moicheusetai, they insist that adultery is between a man and a married women, and fornication is between a man and unmarried women.

Before we can understand the concept of being married in the law, and divorced in God's eyes, we must understand both Adultery, and Adultery against God.

Remember: There is no marriage without God. Marriage is a relationship between a man, a woman, and God. Turn away from God and there is no marriage.

Now, let's look at Matthew 19

⁸Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. ⁹I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery."

Again, we see that while Jesus is not denying marriage, he reminds us that the original marriage was designed to last a lifetime. He is also making another statement, once again, he uses the word fornication as the reason for divorce, and adultery as the consequences of breaking a marriage covenant on any other grounds.

Again the greek word pornea is related to akatharsia, meaning uncleanness. They are key terms used to describe sexual sins, and appear dozens of times. Strong's defines these words as three activities: prostitution, adultery and incest. And here lies the confusion. Over and over, the bible lays these two words side by side, fornication and adultery. If they mean the same thing, then why are they constantly being placed side by side, by different writers, in different books of the bible?

Easton's bible dictionary uses fornication to mean forsaking God, following idols. (Isaiah 1:2, Jeremiah 2:20, Ezek. 16, Hosea 1:2, 2: 1-5, Jeremiah 3: 8-9) When Easton's refers to fornication it is always with a single woman (Lev 21:9, 19:29m, Deuteronomy 22:20, 21, 23-29, 23:18, Exodus 22:16). When Easton's and Strong's refers to Adultery, it is always with a married woman.

The only clear conclusion when taking these verses literally is to assume that Jesus is implying that you may divorce a spouse who has already had sex outside of the marriage relationship – because they have already broken the covenant. This is how the law read in the bible, and in the legal courts, all through history until hundreds of years after Christ's death.

IMPORTANT: You'll notice that we only dealt with the one aspect of Matthew 5 verse. We never took the verse 'as a whole'. There is not enough room in this paper to deal with the 'adultery' and 'political' issues in full. We did complete this section, but chose to upload the finished sections onto our website:

<http://christian-divorce-remarriage.godlovedme.com/uncategorized/matthew-5-jesus-defends-the-divorced-woman/>

<http://christian-divorce-remarriage.godlovedme.com/uncategorized/matthew-19-bible-scripture-on-divorce/>

These two pages challenge exactly what Jesus did say, and what he could have said by rewording the verses – but did not. The purpose is to help readers separate what people 'imply' and what is really said in these verses.

Is Adultery the Unforgivable Sin?

In translating the New Testament scriptures as absolutes and mistranslating a few words, it created the allusion that adultery is the unforgivable sin - that you cannot ask God to forgive you, cannot receive atonement, cannot rebuild a right relationship with God, none of which is true.

If we were to apply this same absolute law to other sins then we would be laughed out of the church. We would never shun a soldier because he murdered. We would never shun a child because they stole. We would definitely not condemn men for staying home on Superbowl Sunday (year after year) and worshiping a sport above God. All of these are considered foolish. Yet, the church refuses to abandon the views first set out by the Council of Trent.

A new theory is starting to take hold. That one person is guilty. One is not. That the one who is guilty bears the sin. The one who is not is free to marry without consequences. This is not an absolute truth. Remember that there is no marriage without God. That God's rules are given to Christians to govern their lives. That the sin of adultery is between the married couple. When we focus on vindicating ourselves then we lose focus of God's true purpose.

The trap of trying to be the 'innocent' party is in our motives. Why do you want to be innocent? Because you are already focusing on your next relationship with a man. If you were focused on your relationship with God then your thoughts would be toward redemption, forgiveness, spiritual growth. After these, you would be forgiven and 'free'. In biblical times it wasn't so. The wife was still 'bound by the law' to her husband. Today, the law makes no such demands.

There is no place in the bible that places more blame on one person than the other. There are several places where God tells a person that he shouldn't stay with someone who is engaging in sexual relationships outside of marriage.

Discuss your beliefs of the following:

- Divorce is not a matter of heaven or hell. It is not the unforgivable sin
- The church's ideals are necessary in 'the law' but do not necessarily reflect the full extent of God's teaching
- No one is defiled and no longer eligible for marriage - a God created institute
- God is a part of marriage - but marriage itself is not a sacrament
- Moses allowed divorce, and did not make any limits on remarriage
- Nowhere does it mention that a divorced person is defiled, or an unforgivable sinner.
- Some doctrines teach that remarriage causes one to commit continual adultery
- Some doctrines teach that adultery is the act of committing sex outside of marriage – nothing more.
- Some doctrines teach that only a woman can commit adultery because translation of the Greek is 'A woman who breaks her marriage covenant.'
- Can you commit adultery against God?
- Paul does not tell the divorced that they are not eligible to be counted 'among the saints.' or that they must be cast from the church. Despite the fact that he does, very clearly, state that there are other sins which do require either immediate repentance or disassociation from the church.
- The person who is 'not at fault' is innocent. The person who committed fornication or adultery is the only one bound by the law.

Why do partial sermons that are based on limited Bible Scriptures, or tradition, cause so much fear? Discuss the difference between the Law and the Heart. What do you see as the sins that Paul preaches against and warn Christians that these sins can separate you from God? Compare these to what you've been taught about divorce, adultery, and remarriage.

1. Hate
2. Bitterness
3. Unforgiveness
4. Lust
5. Adultery
6. Breaking a covenant

Were you taught something about divorce and remarriage that you are now questioning?

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What is your definition of Adultery?

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Can You commit Adultery against God?

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Do You believe there are unforgiveable sins?

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Why is it dangerous to identify as the innocent or guilty party? Do you think this can have a negative impact on your relationship with God?

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God protects the victim of a divorce, and some theology claims that God sees the offender as 'dead.' Do you think he offers grace to the victim for either of the following reasons: a) so they can come closer to him, b) so they can start another relationship?

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Can we remain in a marriage, prevent a divorce, and still commit adultery?

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The Consequences of Divorce?

Divorce is a sin between two people. Divorce is a sin against God. Divorce breaks a covenant. Divorce tears apart something that God created. Divorce breaks the relationship between a man, a woman, and God. God values relationships more than anything. That is why sending his son was the ultimate sacrifice. When Jesus left his place in heaven, God was forced to sever their relationship – for our sake.

Divorce is often nothing more than the consequence of a series of decisions we made without any consideration to what God wanted in our lives. Women are so easily swept away that they never consult God until after their hearts are broken. They do not focus on their relationship with God until it is time to clean up the mess. Even when they do turn to God, their only purpose is to learn whether they are free to create another mess in their lives.

When the teaching that she should not remarry angers a woman, it is never because she is seeking God's will for her. It is because she wants a man. She is angry with God because she wants to go to heaven and be his bride – but later – after she dies. Right now, she wants a man for personal reasons and God is standing in her way.

If she would stop and listen to what God says she may hear:

“My beloved. I’ve loved you since the day you were born. You are hurting. You are wounded. Let me heal you. Let me love you. Do not be so anxious to rush into another relationship. It breaks my heart that you are asking me to condone your unending rush into relationships where you will be hurt, abused, and used. First, let’s work on fixing your relationships. Let’s make you whole. Let’s build your self worth. Let me give you a valuable place within my world. I will give you a ministry. I will give you a purpose. Then, if it is in your best interest, let me find you a companion that is worthy of you, a companion that is your equal, a companion who chooses you above all others, and a companion who will bring you closer to me.”

When I was studying divorce, one question burned in my mind. “Can a divorce happen before the government gives you a piece of paper that says you are not legally and financially bound to the ‘estate of marriage’?”

When do you believe that a divorce ‘In God’s Eyes’ happens?

1. When the covenant is broken?
2. When the relationship is broken?
3. When God is no longer part of the marriage?
4. When one person has extramarital sex?
5. When the court hands the couple their divorce papers?
6. When one party is deserted physically or emotionally?
7. When violence threatens one’s life?
8. When marriage vows are broken?
9. When reconciliation cannot happen?
10. When the couple separates?
11. When one person is neglected, cold, hungry, and in pain?

Whether you are married, single, remarried, or divorced and single, as yourself the above 11 questions concerning your relationship with God:

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We understand that (#9) reconciliation with God can happen at any time. We just need to accept our salvation as a marriage covenant, and become 'one' with God. Have you ever considered the concept that you can separate yourself from God?

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Adultery Ruins Everything

Adultery ruined God's relationship with Israel.
Adultery ruins marriages
Adultery ruins our relationship with God
Adultery prevents Christian homes from living in peace

This chapter is designed to challenge your definition of the word. It is designed to challenge the 500 year old definition. This chapter challenges why the older versions of the word, the 1600 year old definition is not suitable for the modern church. The chapter was not designed to definitively define adultery or idolatry.

It is no mystery why God called idolatry 'whoredom' in the Old Testament. They both involve the same sin - breaking a relationship.

Idolatry - worship of something other than God. Also means fornication.

Adultery - worship of someone other than a spouse. Can refer to a single act.

Fornication - a way of life, promiscuous, continuing act

Fornication

The foundation for the word harlot and pornography is pornea. This word is also the foundation for the word fornication. It means someone who engages in acts that are sexual in nature. They also include idolatry.

porneia - harlotry; fig. idolatry

porneuo - to act the harlot, indulge in unlawful lust; fig practice idolatry, commit fornication

porne - strumpet; fig an idolater, harlot, whore

pornos - a male prostitute, debauchee, fornicator, whoremonger

These Greek words are the foundation of our word pornography.

The older bible translations translated the word 'whoremonger' which means to have sexual relations with a

whore, or multiple whores. It is important to note that **prostitutes** are all whores, but all whores are not prostitutes. It is also important to note that all whores are not women.

Adultery

The definition of the Greek word, Moich, includes being unfaithful and breaking an agreement with God.

Moichos – adulterer, adulterers (male). Strongs uses both the word paramour (a sexual predator) and apostate (someone who has turned away from God)

Moichaomai – It is important to understand that this word refers to a onetime event. It is singular. This is evident in Matthew 5:32, Mark 10:11-12.

Moicheia – This includes unfaithfulness to a spouse and in God's eyes, whether the act was committed or not. Matthew 15:19, Mark 7:22.

Moicheuo – to be sexually unfaithful and may refer to sexual immorality (porneia) Rev 2:20-22.

Moichos – Sexual unfaithfulness. May be more of a relationship intent. Luke 18:11, 1 Co. 6:9, Hebrews 13:4

Moichalis – an adulteress

Moichous – may mean anything that defiles the marriage bed. May include sex partners, or unwanted sex

Hebrew zannah - to commit adultery; fig. to commit idolatry. To play the harlot, whore, whoredom, whorish.

Hebrew - Strongs 5003 - to break wedlock.

What is interesting in the Hebrew language is that adultery usually comes first, and fornication comes second. God accuses Israel, his covenant wife, of both fornication and adultery (Jer 3:8 & Ezekiel 16:26-29).

Jesus uses the word to include thinking about having sex. It includes sins that happen in the mind and in the heart.

You have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28)

We also see that you can sin against another person. Not all sins are against God or his law. It is interesting to note that Luke and Mark do not include the part 'except for fornication.'

And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committed adultery **against her**. (Mark 10:11)

Figurative Adultery

The bible speaks of Israel committing adultery against God in several places. The figurative use of the word adultery is used to refer to acts that break the relationship covenant with God.

This verse is important, because it separates the fact that adultery is the sexual act between a married man and a married woman. Jesus did not say 'if you look on another man's wife'. The second verse states that the 'harmed' party is the first wife.

It is interesting that if a man raped a woman he must marry her, and could never divorce her. (Deuteronomy 22:28)

Foy Wallace Jr. wrote:

"The word adultery in New Testament usage does not necessarily refer to the sinful physical [sexual] act, it is not restricted to the one way of violating the bond. In the four passages in Matthew, Mark and Luke the term adultery is given the sense of ignoring the bond, of which a man is guilty who formally puts away his wife unjustifiably and regards himself unhitched" (The Sermon on the Mount and the Civil State; p. 42).

This theme is mimicked in the following translations:

And I will judge thee, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will bring upon thee the blood of wrath and jealousy. [American Standard Version] (Ezekiel 16:38)

And you will be judged by me as women are judged who have been untrue to their husbands and have taken life; and I will let loose against you passion and bitter feeling. [Bible in Basic English] (Ezekiel 16:38)

I will find you guilty of being an unfaithful wife and a murderer, and in my fierce anger I will sentence you to death! (CEV) (Ezekiel 16:38)

These three use the word for adultery to imply that a covenant is broken.

Adultery is a life style

"The adulterer is the devil's firstborn; unclean; he is a moving quagmire; he is all over ulcerated with sin; his eyes sparkle with lust; his mouth foams out filth; his heart burns like mount Etna, in unclean desires; and he is so filthy, that if he die in this sin, all the flames of hell will never purge away his uncleanness. And, as for the adulteress, who can paint her black enough. (Luke 11:24)

An adulterer is not belonging to God. An adulterer is not Christian

Whereas a believer's body is a living temple, and his soul a little heaven, be spangled with the graces, as so many stars. The body of a harlot is a walking dung hill, and her soul a lesser hell. (Prov 23: 27)

Adultery is on the list of sins that separate someone from God. In the same way that adultery comes between a man and a wife, adultery comes between a Christian and God.

1 Cor 6:9

Heb 13:4

2 pet 2:9-10

Jesus enunciated that uncleanness is moral and spiritual, not ceremonial. Things that defile us come out of the heart, evil thoughts, hatred, adultery, murder.

Greek words Katharina (noun) and akathartos (adjective)(Used 31 times and is used to reference unclean spirits 23 times, 1 time for demons) Translated as uncleanness - Occurs 10 times in the new testament.

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lust of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: (Romans 1:24)

... and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed. (2 Corinthians 12:21)

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, Fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness.” (Galatians 5:19)

Do you see a relationship between uncleanness and adultery?

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Are there ways to become unclean that do not involve adultery?

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Can you be in a marriage that is strong, with no fear of divorce, and still be guilty of some of the sins committed by a divorced person?

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Can a married person commit adultery against their spouse? Or God?

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What is Unfaithfulness to God?

Greek word distazo means to waver, hesitate, doubt

Greek word apistio means unbelief, unfaithful, distrustful, faithless

Greek Word apistia ‘unbelief’

Mark 16:16 (apistio) “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved (unfaithful) shall be condemned.

Romans 3:3 (apistio) “What then? If some did not believe (unfaithful, faithless) their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?”

1 Peter 2:7 (apistio) "then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve (unfaithful) The stone which the builders rejected, This became the very cornerstone,"

Romans 11:13 (apista) If they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again."

Hebrews 3: 19 So we see that we were not able to enter because of unbelief.

What is most important in the study of these words is that we gain understand that nothing is more important to God than a relationship with us.

Do you see a similarity between these words and divorce between a man and woman?

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Do you believe that we can commit adultery against, or divorce God?

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Can We Commit Adultery Against God?

Romans 11:2, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew..." In light of all these Scriptures teaching that God never forsakes His own, don't tell me that God divorced His people! God may have put away the nation of Israel, he may have put away the unsaved Jews who rejected Him; but He would never put away His own.

Spiritual Unfaithfulness

There are many verses that talk about people seeking signs. Jesus called people who wanted 'signs' as adulterous. John 12 sums it up clearly. Jesus did do signs but the people didn't recognize them as signs from heaven because they had no relationship with God.

But He answered and said to them, "An EVIL and ADULTEROUS generation seeks after a SIGN, and no SIGN will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. Matthew 12:39

A WICKED and ADULTEROUS generation seeks after a SIGN, and NO SIGN shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." And He left them and departed. Matthew 16:4

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a SIGN from You." Matthew 12:38

Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a SIGN FROM HEAVEN. Matthew 16:1

Others, testing Him, sought from Him a SIGN FROM HEAVEN. Luke 11:16

So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What SIGN do You show to us, since You do these things?" John 2:18

Therefore they said to Him, "What SIGN will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work (Miracle) will You do? John 6:30

Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many SIGNS (Miracles). John 11:47

But although He had done so many SIGNS before them, they did NOT BELIEVE in Him,
Adultery is the ultimate act of betrayal in a personal relationship (CONFRONTATION W/ MINIMIZER)
John 12:37

In 1 John 2:15-16, John tells us the kosmos is made up of three "things." These things are the essence of the "world." Like all effective temptations, each is a perversion of something essentially good.

Today's world has perverted almost every aspect of marriage. This has altered our perspective on marriage, and our relationships. The consequences of allowing the world to tempt us, and indulging in the pleasures of the world are tragic. It changes how we see the world. It changes how we see God. It changes our view of the relationship God wants from us.

Only by returning to the one who loved us, can we start to understand our purpose and what he wants from us. He continually tells us to follow him, stay pure, and do not commit adultery.

Can we commit adultery against God, without having an affair or divorcing?

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How does a person divorce and still commit adultery against God?

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Christian Marriages

The church is not devoid of sexual, emotional, and physical abuse toward women. The sad reality is that even when abuse comes to light, the church ignores it. Too many Christian women reveal horror stories of being forced to act the perfect wife in church, and then being yelled at, and even beaten, on the drive home.

The men who commit these crimes claim amnesty under the fact that they once said the sinner's prayer, are Christian, and now enjoy the privileges of God's protection. This is an abomination of God's marriage covenant.

I went onto the internet to see what the bible said about spousal abuse. Out of the first 4 pages, I found one that discussed divorce, 2 about spousal abuse, and the rest warned women not to divorce. In fact, one of the top websites is almost an abuser's guide to using the bible to give him permission to beat her.

God describes the problem before Genesis is finished. God said that women's hearts would long for God. Men would want to rule the woman. This is true even today. Young girls create fantasies of Prince Charming coming to give them the perfect life. They grow up in the church learning that they must submit to their husband – but who couldn't submit to prince charming?

Young men grew up hearing a very different message. They hear that GOD made them the head of the house. God commanded their wives to obey them. God said that their wives must cater to every whim. And they hear that there is nothing their wife can do or the church would take his side. All he had to do was not commit adultery and he was on 'easy street.'

This is why Christian marriages go downhill so fast.

Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. ¹⁵And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. ¹⁶For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously. (Malachi 2:14-16)

Women read this verse and see that God will 'deal treacherously' with men who deal treacherously with their wife. Men read this and only see that God hates divorce – so if his wife wants to leave then she is going to find herself choosing Divorce or God.

Wives, submit to your husband as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the Word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church – for we are members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:22 –33)

Men read: Husband is head of the wife. I'm the boss. I win.

Women read: Husbands love your wives as Christ loves the church.

Men read: It is my job to purify my wife, by any means.

Women read: Men love your wives as much as you love yourself.

Men read: I get to unite with my wife.

Women read: It will be easy to submit and respect a man who loves me and treats me the same way that God treated the church.

What the church teaches passionately is that divorce and remarriage are wrong. What they don't teach is that love is a command, not a suggestion. That righteousness is not optional. That God's word must be taken 'as a whole' – not chopped up, mixed together, and served 'salad bar' style.

There are many verses that teach us how to tell whether a person is a Christian or not.

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. (I Peter 3:7)

Husbands, love [your] wives, and be not bitter against them. (Col 3:19)

Marriage should be honored by all and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. Hebrews 13:4

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption.
31 Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice,
32 and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you."
(Ephesians 4)

He said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22)

Colossians 3 not only tells people how they should behave to everyone, including their spouse, but it describes a Christian. Cast the following out of your life:

1. put away sinful things
2. avoid sexual sin
3. impurity
4. lust
5. shameful desires
6. greed for the good things in life (idolatry)
7. anger
8. rage
9. malicious behaviour
10. slander
11. swearing
12. lies
13. They do not aggravate their children
14. work as if you are working for the lord

Christians behave in the following way:

1. With kindness
2. mercy

3. humility
4. gentleness
5. patience
6. forgiving
7. loving
8. live in peace
9. sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God
10. Give thanks to God the father

1 Corinthians 13 outlines what love is:

1. patient
2. kind
3. not jealous
4. boastful
5. proud
6. rude
7. demand its own way
8. irritable
9. keeps no record of your wrongs
10. happy about injustice
11. never quits
12. never loses faith
13. hopeful
14. endures through all
15. lasts forever

Many men rarely read anything from these lists but one line, wives submit to your husbands. They don't see that there are conditions and expectations.

When women do go to their pastors for advice they are often met with the following arguments:

1. Divorce is not an option between Christians. There is almost no challenging whether the man is a Christian.
2. God purifies us for him through our struggling. We shouldn't question God's ways but suffer as he suffered.
3. We are to love and pray for our enemies.
4. We should stay with an abusive husband. Our presence sanctifies him.
5. God is more concerned with your eternal soul than your current pleasure.
6. Try to be more submissive and obedient.

Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer (1 John 3:15)

Check off everything that describes your spouse. Is your spouse a Christian, or is he murdering you?

Sexual Abuse

To believe the above means that God condones rape and is the evidence of an extremely depraved, or foolish mind. That a man may force his wife to do anything he wishes, no matter how depraved. God strictly condemns lasciviousness.

Aselgeia occurs nine times in the New Testament. Twice as “wantonness” (Romans 13:13; 2 Peter 2:18), and once as “filthy” (2 Peter 2:7). Six times it is translated as “lascivious” (cf. Mark 7:22; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 4:19; 1 Peter 4:3; Jude 4) The word lascivious means sexual filth, or a degrading form of sex.

Christians are to treat their bodies as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:15-20)

God has no tolerance for sexual abuse.

Verbal Abuse

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (Ephesians 4:29)

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. (James 3:10)

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (Ephesians 4:31)

Pauline Privilege – Marriage to Non Christians

If a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him....But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.” 1 Corinthians 7:13, 15

Pauls’ writing gives Christians a method of divorce when they are married to non Christians. If the non Christian wants to leave then the Christian is not bound in this circumstance. The church has created all sorts of rules around baptism, totally ignoring the fact that Paul was talking about ‘believers’ – Christians. The church can become confused in their own theology.

The Pauline Privilege and Petrine Privilege mean that a marriage can be dissolved in the case of:

1. both parties were not baptized
2. only one party remains unbaptized
3. one party was baptized in another church
4. if you want to divorce someone who is not catholic, and marry a practicing catholic

What the church does agree on is that a marriage should be between two practicing Christians. The term ‘unequally yoked’ implies the same importance as God telling the Israelites not to marry into other races. It has

nothing to do with whether you satisfied a church ceremony. To quote an old Brethren pastor I knew once, 'I could baptize my cow – it doesn't make her Christian.'

God continually gives us instruction on who we should have relationships with – and whom we should 'knit' our souls (and God's) with. I've talked to a few women and I ask 'would you marry your son to a whore?' The answer is inevitably no. What heart break do we force God to endure when we force him into a relationship with a non believer, someone who indulges in worldly values and pleasures?

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? (2 Cor. 6:14)

True Christian partnership is that which exists between genuine yokefellows (Philp. 4:3),

The closest place we find a command that Christians must marry other Christians is in a verse referencing divorce. Peter (1 Peter 3:7) charges husbands and wives to be 'heirs together of the grace of life'

If her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, *only in the Lord* (1 Cor. 7:39).

However, there are very severe verses that command Christians to keep non Christians out of their church family. While we know that God does not tell us to kick out all Christians, there are instances where he tells Christians whom to build relationships with, and whom to avoid. We are also told to associate with people who have godly habits. (Proverbs 13:20)

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty (II Cor. 6:14-18).

The problem arises when we use a very broad, secular definition of the word Christian. And, we apply the principles given to a Christian woman, and tell her that they apply to the man she is married to – no matter how wicked.

The focus of the Pauline Privilege that most people should focus on is 'If the unbeliever is willing to stay.' This is misused on several levels. Many Christian women translate 1 Corinthians 7 to mean:

1. I may not pray because it makes him angry
2. I cannot attend Church functions because he doesn't like it
3. I must not teach the children about God for it isn't in submission to my husband
4. I cannot play my Christian CDs or he will smash them
5. I must attend his parties and drink it up so that he gets a promotion
6. I must endure the sexual innuendos of his poker buddies and laugh because that pleases him
7. He is allowed to spend all our money on booze and sporting events, and I must be satisfied with the fact that I can only tithe the few dollars I find in my purse Sunday morning.

This is not creating a situation where the non Christian is willing to stay with a Christian. This is a situation where the non Christian is forcing the wife to choose between him or God. This is simply, idolatry.

Can a Christian Save their Spouse? 1 Corinthians 7

I believe this is one of the most misquoted, misused verses in the bible. Paul is not, by any means, telling a woman that she has the power to save her spouse, or her children. First, you have to stop reading anything into the scripture that isn't there already.

The verse doesn't say:

1. If you are divorced because of fornication
2. GOD binds you to your husband as long as he lives – it says 'by the law'
3. It says you have not sinned.
4. It does not say that all marriages between a Christian/non Christian are legitimate – or illegitimate
5. Paul is not saying that you must remain single
6. Nowhere does it say that God recognizes divorce on the grounds of adultery only. That is an implied translation of the scriptures. It is the only conclusion if you dismiss everything written on divorce except one single verse.
7. It does not say that you can save your spouse, it just says that you sanctify them. It says you 'might' save your spouse.
8. It does not say that the Christian should submit, bend, commit idolatry, abandon their Christian life, tolerate abuse, in order to make the unbeliever *want* to stay.
9. The Christian should work, sacrifice, and compromise to keep their marriage together.

What this chapter does say:

1. Christians who leave each other should remain unmarried or reconciled.
2. IF the spouse is 'willing' to live with a Christian
3. There is no bondage, the marriage vow does not apply, if the unbeliever is not willing to live with a practicing Christian.
4. Christians should **only** marry Christians
5. A Christian is not bound (this word is translated in older scripts to say enslaved, the servant of) in this situation.

We see a dramatic alteration in this chapter when we focus on what it literally says, and what it does not say. As Christians we are too willing to 'rewrite' the scriptures to fit what we want them to say.

For example, if we take the verses that refer to the unbeliever, and we continue through the letter from Paul to the summary, we see the following:

³²I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord. ³³But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— ³⁴and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. ³⁵I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 32 – 35 NIV)

Note:

This verse drives a wedge into many theories that claim that God only allows divorce for adultery. Here, the bible is telling us that a Christian can divorce if her husband is not happy living with a Christian. It is

important to take the bible 'as a whole'. That is how God meant us to read it. The bible is saying that the Christian woman shouldn't be a slave to her unbelieving husband.

To be a slave to an unbeliever? Paul uses a strong word here, and I believe it is for a good purpose. Many Christians are lead to believe that this chapter tells them that they must keep their marriage together. I knew one woman who was abused (until she committed suicide) because her husband refused to leave the house. She read this verse to mean that she must stay and endure severe beatings, because he would not leave. This is the way a cruel master would treat a slave. Paul specifically addresses the situation where a woman is not allowed to go to church, tithe, play worship music, stay home from violent movies, avoid parties, dress modestly, read her bible, etc... He used the word slavery, enslaved, or servitude.

This puts a dramatically different spin on the entire chapter. How many women are slaves to their husbands? How many women endure bondage and abuse to remain married? Yet, if you read to the bottom of the verses written for the married.

I believe that Paul is saying the following. "Your spouse is okay with Joyce Meyers on the TV while you are making breakfast. He comes to Church with you on Christmas and Easter? He doesn't throw your bible in the trash every time he sees it. You can invite church friends over without them being embarrassed or humiliated? Is this your lot in life? Have you found yourself in a situation with a spouse who does not expect you to go clubbing with him? Then by all means, stay with him. I do not see any harm in the situation. You are not committing adultery or idolatry against God. Your children and spouse are seeing by example that Christians live a different life. You are not sinning against God – so stay."

Is Paul outlining a new law here concerning Christians? Yes, that we should put God before our spouse. That we should live for God and not divide our interests, this brings us back to the original intent of marriage, to create a union between a man, woman, and God. The danger lies in the false belief that God calls us to save an unbelieving spouse. It is unfortunate, but at least one Christian woman dies every day in the USA after being told to return to an unbelieving husband.

The only rule that Paul does lay forth is in verse 28, that a Christian woman should only marry a Christian man. And that, Paul believes that she would be happier if she remained single.

Christian Relationships

God does have commandments for his children when it comes to forming relationships. The following passage refers directly to anyone in the church who claims to be Christian but continue to indulge in evil. It is not surprising that a church who will not throw a person out of their midst for polluting the church, will demand that a woman remain in a marriage that pollutes her body, mind, and soul.

Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth.

Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. (1 Corinthians 5:9-13)

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. (2 Thessalonians 3:6)

And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. (2 Thessalonians 3:14,15)

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. James 3:17

Christian Marriages

Paul does command women who are married to Christian men to remain with them. If they separate, then remain unmarried. There is no exception to this rule. If your spouse meets the burden of proof of being a Christian, and you meet the burden of proof of being a Christian, if either of you are not hypocritical or just 'faking' the life, then God wants you both to turn to Him and restore Him to the center of your marriage.

Do You Agree with the following statement:

God is the head and rules a Christian home – The husband (or an abusive wife) rules a home that has rejected God?

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God's laws were created to protect and Guide his Children until Christ came and gave birth to the New Covenant. God's laws were completed by the covenant, and still work to protect the Christian. They do not apply to a non Christian.

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How important is it to avoid a non-Christian after a divorce? Do you think God expects more accountability in the second marriage?

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It all makes sense when we realize that prince charming does exist. He has been waiting for you all your life. You do not need to dress up in expensive gowns. You do not need to go to a ball. You do not need anything but turn around. He is standing there. Unlike the prince's in fairy tales, he will not arrive at the end of the story to save you – he has been here all the time – patiently waiting for you to grow into a princess.

Prince charming is not of this world. He is not interested in the law – he only wants your heart. He does not carry a big scale where he weighs your virtues against your sins. He is not going to marry you and then lay out a list of demands. All you have to do is chose him. All he wants is your heart.

Jesus will return your love with grace
Jesus will repay your loyalty with eternal life
Jesus will trade your sin for forgiveness
Jesus will settle your debt to sin with Holiness and a place in his father's house

This is the marriage covenant, the vows, he shared with you on the day you were born again.

What is a Christian?

This chapter is harsh. You may challenge your own belief and motivations. Many women who have husbands in ministry will find themselves wondering if they are married to non-Christians.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 1John 4:8

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins... *Hebrews 10:26*

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. James 1:26

The Sinner's Prayer

But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Matthew 15:9

Many Christians are surprised to learn that the Alter Call is only 150 years old. Charles Finney created the concept so he could separate the repentant sinners from the vast crowds that came to hear him preach. Finney called the front pew the 'mourner's bench' or the 'anxious seat.' Finney never 'led them in a prayer.' There was no altar team.

The Salvation Army expanded the theme to create 'the mercy seat.' After a rousing time of singing and passionate preaching the sinners could come to the front and repent.

The very act of leading someone in the sinner's prayer was not developed until Billy Graham wrote the sinners prayer in the 1960s, less than a decade before. To believe that someone could quote a prayer and receive instant repentance is ludicrous.

Today, the church has reduced Jesus to a begger. The sinner enters church and receives a 1-2-3 outline for a quick trip to heaven. It starts by seeing Jesus as a lonely wanderer who pathetically knocks at your heart just waiting for the day you'll be kind enough to let him in. And why not? Open the door. Say the sinner's prayer and you can continue on your merry life because 'you are saved.' This is confirmed by cute little bumper stickers - *Christians Aren't Perfect Just Forgiven.*

Saved from what? Your own sinful nature? Your enslavement to Satan? The church teaches that if you show up on Sunday morning, tithe, have a daily devotional, and attend a small group then someday you'll hear God

say *Well done, good and faithful servant!*" (Matt. 25:21)

You can do whatever you want through the week. Enjoy any sinful pleasure. Commit adultery by putting sports, jobs, cars, sex, money, pleasure, or pride above God. In fact, in today's world you don't even have to worship from the heart anymore. All you need to do is put on a CD and sing along. God will understand that you really mean it.

Unfortunately, we never learn until it is too late that God is not a big Santa Clause sitting on the clouds that is so desperate for a few moments with us that he will forgive anything, and answer our prayers, just because we took 30 minutes out of our life to say a sinner's prayer.

The Bible's View

The scriptures have a much different opinion of a Christian. They are someone who forsakes their old life. They are someone who seeks an intimate relationship with God. God is very clear on the things that he cannot abide. These are things that creates an adulterous or idolatrous breach in your relationship with God.

'Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil A false witness who utters lies And one who spreads strife among brothers,' Proverbs 6:17-19.

1. Servants of God hate what is bad. (Psalm 97:10) That means avoiding certain practices that God hates.
2. Fornication: Sex before marriage, bestiality, adultery, incest, are serious sins against God. (Leviticus 18:6; Romans 1:26, 27; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10)
3. Living together, or having sex before marriage. They should separate or else get legally married.— Hebrews 13:4.
4. Lying, Gambling, Stealing: Jehovah God cannot lie. (Titus 1:2) A liar cannot gain God's. (Proverbs 6:16-19; Colossians 3:9, 10) Every form of gambling is driven by greed. (Ephesians 5:3-5)
5. Christians do not steal. They do not buy stolen property or take things without permission.— Exodus 20:15; Ephesians 4:28.
6. Fits of Anger, Violence: (Genesis 4:5-8) A violent person is not God's friend. (Psalm 11:5; Proverbs 22:24, 25) Revenge is wrong.—Proverbs 24:29; Romans 12:17-21.
7. Magical and Spiritism: The power behind all these practices is Satan. (Deuteronomy 18:9-13) Staying close to God is the best protection from spells.—Proverbs 18:10.
8. Drunkenness: Heavy drinking and drunkenness are wrong. (1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 1 Timothy 3:8) It leads to other temptations.—Proverbs 23:20, 21, 29-35.
9. People who practice evil "not inherit God's kingdom." (Galatians 5:19-21) If you really love God and want to please him, you break free from these practices. (1 John 5:3) You hate these practices. (Romans 12:9)

God wants his children to live in peace. He doesn't want us to be tormented to 'purify' us. He wants a relationship with us. He wants to create his bride. God wants women to come to him and put him first in their lives. Then, see if the husband is willing to stay.

WARNING Many men will not leave. I want to warn you to be careful. Violent men are most violent when they realize that they are losing their 'possessions.' You may have to settle for walking from the marriage with nothing but the clothing on your back. You may need to run in the night and disappear. Do not be fooled for one moment to believe that Paul was only referring to men who would 'walk out the door.' Listen to God's warnings. If you are forced to choose between God and your husband, and your husband uses your decision to

terrorize you – then it is time to involve the police, women’s shelters, or find help wherever you can.

Galatians 5:19 (NIV)

19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Paul makes it clear that a Christian follows Godly principals and sin is not a major part of their lives. But, the above list includes sins that all of us are guilty of. How do we reconcile Paul’s teaching with our own lives?

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Can we accept grace in our lives, while condemning another person for adultery? Consider that the bible teaches, in James, that if we commit one sin, we commit them all?

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Our Marriage to God

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. (Romans 7:4)

Too many Christians are caught in the trap of believing that our marriage to God will happen after we die and are resurrected in Heaven. I find several verses in the bible that state that our marriage happened when we accepted Christ. In fact, Salvation is a marriage covenant.

The day we made a covenant with God. The day we loved him with all our heart. That was the day of our marriage to God. From that moment we must strive to create an intimate relationship with God. He is our husband. He is the head of the Christian home.

We must strive to worship God. Give him everything:

1. Give him your wounded heart – he *will* fill it
2. Give him your longing to be loved – he *will* love you
3. Learn to hear his voice – He *will* talk to you
4. Learn to trust him – Things *will* work out in the end
5. Give him your Children – He *is* a good father
6. Forgive everyone who has hurt you – and he *will* give you back 100x more than you lost
7. Spend time with Him – and you *will* feel his comfort
8. Trust Him – and you *will* feel his strength

9. Give Him your dreams of a Prince Charming – He *will* make you feel like a princess
10. Do His Work – He *will* reward you
11. Give Him your heart – He will never forsake you
12. Tell Him your secrets – He will never betray you
13. Marry Him – and he will turn you into a Queen

I watched the movie ‘One Night With The King’. It touched me that all those women were chosen, but only the one who saw the king, not the jewels, caught his attention. However, even though she was beautiful, she had to undergo one year of beauty treatments before she could even see his face. It took one year to make her presentable, not as a wife. The one year of treatment just prepared her for the king to decide whether he wanted to see her a second time.

This is so like our walk with God. We come to him as a peasant girl. Dirt beneath our nails, calluses on our feet. We don’t even know our full potential because so much of the world’s filth has hardened our skin and dried our hair. As we become a princess we will learn to act properly before a king. We will be taught to be God’s bride. The bible is very clear what he is looking for. He has charged the Holy Spirit to create a bride that is:

1. Graceful
2. Humble
3. Loving to everyone
4. Giving
5. Knows Jesus
6. Beautiful of Spirit
7. Not lured away by the temptations of daily life
8. Pure of spirit – no hate, bitterness, unforgiveness
9. Seeks her Lord and kneels before him without anger, bitterness, or resentment.

You Can Be That Bride

So, to answer the questions

Does God Allow Divorce?

Not if you separate because you are hoping to find someone who will fill the wounded places of your heart.
Not if your motives are to engage in the lustful desires of the world

Yes, when your motives are pure and you leave the marriage to create a union with God.

Yes, when your life is in danger, or you are being murdered physically or spiritually.

Yes, when adultery has ruined your relationship with a man, and with God

Yes, when a husband is forcing you to commit idolatry

Does God Allow Remarriage?

Not if you want to marry a non believer

Not if you are marrying to pay the bills, sexual satisfaction, or because you are lonely

Not if you do not have a good relationship with God

Yes, if you have become a princess worthy of a man who has put God as the head of his household long before you showed up.

Are There Consequences to Divorce and Remarriage?

Yes, Paul insinuated that it is better to remain single and not marry

Yes, there are always consequences to breaking a vow. It is one of the strictest warnings God gives us, to never make a vow – and if we do, never break it.

Yes. There is sin involved. Are these sins unforgivable? I think it has more to do with your motivations and way of thinking. The objective is to put God in the center of your life.

Yes. The entire debate about the guilty party, fornication, and adultery is a moot point. After all, if two people separate, one of them is going to engage in sexual activity within a short time. I believe that we need to look at whether we are responsible for the break up, instead of trying to see who ‘wins’ the celibacy race.

Yes. You will never return to the person you were before you married, or divorced. That person is lost forever. However, in many cases, the sin started long before the marriage – so everything else is controversial.

What Does God Want?

That You value your relationship with him as seriously as He values His relationship with you

That you put your trust in Him, not men or their theologies

To have you willingly surrender your heart, body, and mind devoted, and madly in love, with Him

God hopes that you value your relationship with Him more than a relationship with a man. He wants you to look to him first before looking for a man.

My only wish is that you will never again let anyone take 1 scripture, or one part of one scripture, mix it with a few others, and dictate God’s will to you. You are God’s child. You are anointed – Jesus is in you. The Holy Spirit is your comforter. Test the scriptures for yourself. Learn them. Know them.

Appendix

The Argument Against Adultery and Breaking a Covenant

It must be added that many people claim the definition of adultery as breaking a covenant has no scholarly background. Although there has not been a serious, “in-depth, study of the word in approximately 400 years.” This is a blatant misrepresentation of the truth on these scholars part. There *are* reliable sources which allow us to determine the meaning of these words: 1. God's Ancient Revelation (AR/OT) Hebrew words as quoted by the Greek "moich" words in the God's First Century Revelation (FCR/NT), and 2. the Greek "moich" words in God's FCR.

On the other hand, there is nowhere in the new testament where the word is defined. The definition is always assumed. Unlike many secular documents where the word is used in both contexts. Documents we can attribute to satanic or pagan worship from this time uses the word as ‘breaking vows.’ These people also say it is wrong to go outside of the bible for definitions of a word. This is as foolish as saying that Christians who do not read English, should not use a Webster’s dictionary to help understand the English words. After all. The Webster’s dictionary is not a Christian publication.

In the old testament, the Israelites committed adultery against God. The bible did not use the word idolatry which would mean worshipping other Gods. No, their hearts were in the wrong place. They were not in relationship with God. This is becoming a widely accepted doctrine in the USA. However, I have not seen it in European teaching.

Another argument is put forward that Mary and Joseph were not married. They did not have sex. They were not one flesh. Mary was single. The word used in Matthew 1:24-25 is adultery, but Mary was not married. The word used should have been fornication. To combine this teaching with the theory that Joseph was Jewish, and Mary Muslim (Aramaic) would add a different dimension to the argument. It would strengthen the ‘purpose’ of Jesus’ life on earth. Not only was he bringing a new covenant to His children. He was also bringing together, or mending, old breaches in family. This would have significant impact on the ‘intimacy with God’ teaching – as it is the first time God ordained the marriage of one of His Children to a Gentile. This would remove the entire argument against ‘unlawful’ marriage – and may indicate why Paul was not against an ‘unequally yoked’ marriage.

Many Pre-King James bibles used the Greek word Avowteria. This word is akin to adultery, but means breaking a vow. A few foreign language translations of the bible still adhere to this meaning for the word adultery. The word ‘avower’ or ‘break marriage’ to translate the Greek word moichaomia. Avowteria is not listed in current dictionaries, but in the older scripts, and older lexicons(I am currently tracking historical documents to find exactly when it was removed). Current German translations of Mt 19.9 do not use the word adultery, but translate moichaomai as ‘breaks the marriage’. They contend that sexual activity is not a part of the definition of moichaomai in the divorce text. This is not a singular theory, but has been repeated throughout the histories.

It is interesting to notice that in Rabbinic Judaism, adultery applies to both parties. In their law, two adulterers could not be married. In fact, the adulteress is divorced from her husband, then from the adulterer. This removes any doubt as to her status as being free to marry another, or that of her children. The Jewish halakha forbids a man to continue living with an adulterous wife. This contradicts the law that states an adulterer must die.

Theologians argue that if God imposed the death penalty, then the question is: is the adulterer already dead

in God's eyes, which is why Jesus so flippantly responded to the Pharisees in Matt 5 and Matt 19? Was he insulting their intelligence and being facetious regarding their education – suggesting that they could have tried harder to find a question that would challenge Him? The question of whether the person is already dead in God's eyes, so the divorce was a moot point, does fit into Jesus' teaching style. However, it does open the translation for people who wish to continue 'implying' meanings based on their own emotional state, education, cultural influences, and religious expectations.

The implication can be challenged in the fact that all sinners are dead before God, and if we include Paul's teaching.

These arguments can be used to contradict the attempted literal translation used within this paper.

The Author

Suzanne James has studied Latin and Greek, and has read many bibles and scripts dating back to 200 years after Jesus walked our earth. This paper started (as so many are) as an open source, public domain document created by members of the e-word, and people interested in translating old scripts. Culmination of this paper after Suzanne chose to compile this document, included seminary professors, one Jewish theologian, three linguists, several pastors from varying denominations, and more than 23 translations of the bible from 1560 to current date.

All topics discussed have at least 5 documents published by someone in the theological world that agree with the statement. Instead of quoting all theologians, Suzanne combined the information, and then wrote it out in an easy to understand format.

References are only included in this paper when there is a direct quote, or a theory is attributed to one single man/woman. However, if you are interested in downloading the reference papers and continue the research yourself – contact admin@4gracealone.com and admin@godlovedme.com. Please be aware that the zip file of the research information is, at this time, 28kb and cannot be emailed. You need to be willing to pay shipping to have a DVD sent to you, or you need a high quality (business level) bandwidth service.

This document does not end here. Many supporting papers have been posted to www.godlovedme.com and the godlovedme facebook page.

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My contribution to the theology in this paper is:

Jesus referencing the prostitute as already divorce. I made this claim based solely on the linguistic value of the words he used, based on 3 different 'published' lexicons.

I expanded greatly on the theme that Marriage is a three-way covenant with God. While the theory itself is not mine, I was unable to find any theological papers to debate and argue the topic.

I expanded greatly on the theme that we can commit adultery against God whether we are married, divorced, single, or waiting for reconciliation. This theme was only met favourably by an estimated 50% of the theologians whom assisted in the research for this paper.

I do want to add one qualifier that is my own opinion, and in no way do I claim that I have supporting documents, scriptures, or affirmation from other theologians. I disagree with the theory that a person with brain damage, or suffering a mental disability will be held accountable to Galatians 5, to the same level as the rest of God's Children.

After 4 years of study, my personal view is:

A Christian should remain married unless:

- i. They fall under the biblical/Rabbinical identity of a misused Slave
- ii. Their children's hearts are being turned away from God
- iii. They are not free to worship God (which probably puts them under i.)
- iv. Fornication will not stop. I agree with the last statement, based on the fact that fornication can cause death.

A Christian may remarry after restoring their relationship with God, and if:

- i. They fall under the biblical/Rabbinical identity of a misused Slave
- ii. Fornication from their other spouse
- iii. They are the victim of a forced divorce
- iv. Their partner is non Christian, and they tried to reconcile but their efforts were rejected

A Christian should not remarry if:

- i. You are the person who petitioned for the divorce without falling under the conditions of a misused Slave, or your partner was immoral, or sexually active outside the marriage
- ii. You fell in love with someone else
- iii. Both parties in a divorced relationship were Christian at the time of a divorce. I understand that there are many people in loveless marriages, and my heart goes out to you. I understand that your spouse may not meet your needs, and does not live up to their responsibility as a Christian husband(wife). My only comfort to you is to challenge you to let God fill the empty places in your heart. Live your life for God. Create an intimate relationship with him. Let him love you. I have seen many people come to a place where God is so real to them that they are happy. I've also seen a loved one return to the marriage.
- iv. Are you waiting? Do you believe that reconciliation will come? This is a good place to be. It brings us closer to God, but sometimes for the wrong reasons. Put God first. I spoke against people who expected God to bring back their loved one in this paper. It is important to affirm that people sometimes turn to God, but they cannot be forced. It is their choice.

God Bless and Keep You