



Josiahs Scott

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Table of Contents

Preface Information and Explanations	7
1. Considerations, Contact, & Copyright	7
The Website for this Book – www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com	7
We are in “Beta Stage” – Please Help Us with Corrections and Feedback.....	7
If You Are Poor, Please Contact Us With Questions.....	7
Technical Copyright Information	7
2. How To Use This Book	8
Hebrew and Greek Basics.....	8
Representing More Advanced Details From the Ancient Languages	8
MT vs. LXX – Old Testament Source Texts	9
Genesis 2 Example – What Do All Of These Details Have To Do With Marriage?.....	9
Notes Concerning Genesis 2 and the New Testament	10
Important Appendix Resources – Where I Document a Lot of My Extra Research	10
A Heart for True Salvation	11
Chapter 1 – Demanding A Revolutionary Return to The Garden	13
1. An Initiating Call... (An Introduction)	13
2. The Ancient Marriage Teaching	14
A. The Original History of Degradation	14
B. Jesus Restored the Reverence of One Flesh to His Church.....	15
C. Scriptural References for ‘The History Of Degradation’ and ‘Restoration of One Flesh Reverence’	16
D. Approaching Today – How Does Jesus’ <i>One-Flesh-Reverencing Garden Revolution</i> Look Now in Our Generation?.....	18
3. It is Time to Re-Reverence The Creation of One Flesh	19
Genesis 2 – The First Husband and Wife	19
Mat 19 – Jesus on The First Husband and Wife	20
“Bound” – For Life.....	20
GOD is The One Who Binds – No Wonder It’s Permanent!.....	21
To Be Glued/ “Joined”.....	21
Death Has Always Loosed a Spouse	24
A Summary of Being “Glued”/ “Joined” and “Bound,” Together.....	26
The Lawful Outcome of One Flesh – “Marriage” is Cohabitation in The Bible.....	26
4. Salvation Never Alters Your Marriage Covenant	34
The Marriage Covenant Applies to Everyone, Before and After Salvation	34
Marriage Covenants Are Love-Debts that Continue After Salvation.....	34
Salvation Has No Bearing on the Validity of Marriage Covenants	38
2Co 5 – We Must Believe that “All Things Have Become New” – WITHOUT HYPOCRISY!.....	39
College Debts Teach Us about Marriage Debts	40
1Co 7 – The Command to Remain With a Pagan Spouse Proves Salvation Does Not Change One Flesh	41
Summaries of Salvation and Marriage – It is Absolutely Clear that these Standards Apply to Everyone!.....	41
Chapter 2 – Divorce, Adulterous Remarriage, and Real Repentance	43
1. Some Basic Terminology	43
The Biblical Words Behind “Divorce” in English.....	43
Defining and Understanding Geographical “Separation”.....	44
Remarriage After Divorce? – No Permissive Statement Given	45
2. Deuteronomy 24 – A Brief Preview Summary of The Mosaic Law of Divorce And Remarriage	45
A. A Brief Summary of Deu 24:1-4.....	45
B. Basic Notes About Deu 24:1-4.....	45
C. The Great Mystery Surrounding Deu 24:1-4.....	45
3. Malachi 2 – God’s Surprising Opposition of Divorce and Astonishing Persistence in Affirming Original Marriage!	46
Malachi 2 Prep – A Necessary Technical Textual Explanation	46
Malachi 2 – A Source Text Summary: God Opposes their Divorce and Reaffirms their First Marriage.....	47
Meshing Malachi Together to Clearly Demonstrate its Implications on this Issue.....	47
4. Matthew 5 – The Clear New Covenant Proclamation Against Adulterous Remarriage!	49
Matthew 5 – Divorce and Remarriage Is Adultery	49
Matthew 5 – Immutable Truths that Jesus Taught About Adultery	49
Matthew 5 – Some Basic, Undeniable Facts about What Jesus Said	50
Matthew 5 – 4 Ways Men Become Guilty Concerning Adultery	50
Matthew 5 – Some Ways Women Become Guilty Concerning Adultery.....	51
Matthew 5 – It is Clear and Certain that these Standards Apply to Everyone	52
Matthew 5 – The Seriousness of Adultery.....	52
5. The Rest of Matthew and the Gospels Confirm this Strong Opposition Against Adulterous Remarriage	54
Matthew 19 – Divorce and Remarriage is Adultery	54
Mark 10 – Divorce and Remarriage Is Adultery.....	55

Luke 16 – Divorce and Remarriage Is Adultery	55
6. The Epistles Agree with Jesus and Make it Absolutely Clear that Divorce and Remarriage is Adultery, Without Exception!	55
Romans 7 – Only Death –“oozes” (Ends) One Flesh, and Marrying Another Before this Makes a Woman An Adulteress	55
First Corinthians 7 – Remain Unmarried: The Only Option After Divorce	57
First Corinthians 7 – Only Death –“oozes” (Ends) One Flesh.....	57
7. A Summary of Some of the Main Divorce And Remarriage Passages, and “the Missing Exception Clause”	57
8. The Basics About Repentance from Adulterous Remarriage	58
Religious vs. Biblical Repentance	58
What Is Real –“Repentance”	58
Deu 29 – You Can’t Make Yourself Forgiven Apart From True Repentance	59
You Can’t Continue To Sin and Go To Heaven	59
Maintaining a Remarriage After Divorce Is Continuing to Sin Because Jesus Called it –“Adultery”	60
We Have Got to Start Taking Repeated Acts of Adultery Seriously!	62
Jesus Called It Adultery and Ascended into Heaven! <i>Anathema</i> * to Anyone Who Tries to Change This!	63
Repentance Pragmatics	64
How to Repent of Adultery.....	64
God Positively Judges Adulterers.....	65
Choose This Day Whose Testimony You Will Believe!	66
9. Distinguishing Sins.....	67
All Sins are Not –“Created Equal”	67
Condemned Sins.....	67
10. How to Face Ignorant Adultery	68
Is Ignorant Adultery Still Adultery?	68
Biblical Fact: Ignorant Sin Exists – If you Don’t Believe, Repent!	69
Ignorance Means Less Punishment, Not Immunity	69
Punishing Ignorant Sin is in Accordance with the Divine Standard	70
Gen 12, 20, 26, and Mal 2 – The Bible Specifically Teaches that God Punishes Ignorant Divorce and Ignorant Remarriage Adultery	71
Ultimately, God Spares Faithful People From Ignorant Sin – So Ignorance is No Excuse!	74
11. A Few Basic Principles That Demand Repentance from Adulterous Remarriage	75
The Law of Non-contradiction – God Does Not Change His Mind.....	75
Our Awareness of the Sinfulness of –“Fornication” Testifies Against Us.....	75
The Root and the Branches – Are We Talking Holiness or Unholiness Here?	76
12. A Few Grammatical and Contextual Principles That Demand Repentance from Adulterous Remarriage	78
The Present Tense and Continual Context of –“Adultery” in Greek	78
A Very Simplified Overview of Some Greek Grammar Considerations	78
The Context of Continual Action is Even Clearer than the Grammar.....	79
13. Confronting and Condemning the Hypocritical Excuses to Not Repent of Adultery.....	81
The False Accusation of Teaching –“Unforgivable Divorce”	81
I Warn Everyone Everywhere: This is What It Means and This is What it Looks Like to Remain in Adulterous Remarriage	83
14. The Law of Moses vs. Remarriage Repentance? – First We Need to Go Over Some Basics	84
God Related to the Israelites’ Flesh From a Distance.....	84
First the Flesh, and Then Adaptations For Its Sin.....	85
The Spiritual Solution is the True Solution	86
Don’t Misapply the Old Covenant Against the Flesh of New People.....	86
First, We have No Right to Judge the Law of Moses	87
The Law is Not Sin.....	88
Hebrews 8 Says The People Are the Problem, Not The Law!	89
What Does this Mosaic Marriage Law Show Us?	91
15. The Divine and the Mosaic Aspects of the Law of Moses Both Proclaim Truth to Us About Remarriage!	91
God’s Special Friend Moses	92
–“Of Moses”	92
Jesus is a Prophet Like Moses	93
16. Deuteronomy 24 Did Not Allow Reconciliation After the Defilement of Remarriage.....	95
Deu 24 - The Mosaic Law of Divorce And Remarriage	95
Things to Notice Concerning Deu 24	96
17. God’s Call to Return To The First Spouse	97
Jesus’ Amendment of Deuteronomy 24 (Specifically Verses 1-2)	97
Jeremiah 3 – The Lord’s Amendment of Deuteronomy 24.....	97
Return! – God’s Clear Proclamation Through Jeremiah!	98
A Notable Textual Variation – The –“They Say” in the Current Hebrew of Jeremiah 3	99
Jesus & Jeremiah 3 – Notice the Change!.....	100
Hos 2, Isa 50, & Jer 3 – The Prophecy of Return, Even After The Officialness of God’s Divorce Certificate!	100
Hosea’s Prophecy of Return and Amendment of Deuteronomy 24.....	103

A Repeated Heart Expression	105
Malachi 2’s Amendment of the Mosaic Divorce And Remarriage Permission	106
18. 2Sa 3 – David’s Example: He Returned to the First	107
We Must Continually Submit to the Examples Given to us in the Bible	107
David Did Something that We do not Agree with	108
David and Jesus’ Example About Sacrifice and Offering	108
David and Jesus’ Example About The Sabbath	109
Jesus Repeatedly Approves of David’s Authoritative and Prophetic Examples	109
2Sa 3 – David and The Lord’s Example About Divorce And Remarriage	109
A Summary of Sacrifice, Sabbath, and Returning to the First After Remarriage	110
19. The Mosaic Death Penalty Explains Deu 24:4 and Returning to the First.....	111
Deu 24:4 – “That the Land be Not Defiled...”	111
Mosaic Death Penalty Legislated	112
Mosaic Death Penalty Enforced	114
Mosaic Death Penalty Amended.....	114
The Law – The Highest Order of Social Justice	117
How Does the Death Penalty Relate To Marriage?	120
Conclusions About the Death Penalty and Returning to the First.....	121
20. A Summary of Returning to the First	121
21. The Seven Examples that Demand True and Complete Repentance From Unlawful Marriage!	123
Ezra and Nehemiah Broke Up Forbidden Marriages	123
We Must Still Obey Ezra and Nehemiah Today In the New Covenant	125
John The Baptist – The First Martyr for God’s New Testament Teaching Against Adultery.....	127
The Adventure that John the Baptist Calls Us To	128
The Divine Proclamation of The Seven Examples!	129
Chapter 3 – “The Exception Clause”	130
1. Introductory Facts About the Exception Clause.....	130
What is “The Exception Clause”?.....	130
What’s Behind the Modern Use of “The Exception Clause”? – Wicked People Always Want to Break God’s Yokes	130
Common Myths About Adultery Freeing a Person to Remarry	131
Adultery Cannot Be The One Exception Allowing Divorce.....	132
Adultery Cannot Allow Remarriage	133
BIG Dilemma: The Exception is Only in Matthew!	133
2. Does <i>Porneia</i> Show that the Exception Is for Adultery or Prostitution/ “Fornication”?	134
The Very Basics of “Fornication” vs. “Adultery” in English	135
Scenarios of Sexual Sin	135
<i>Porneia</i> – One of the Main Exception Words We Need to Understand	136
How Translations Represent and Misrepresent <i>Porneia</i>	136
Defining <i>Porneia</i> – Charting the Linguistic Development of <i>Porneia</i> , and Every Single Occurrence and Variation Throughout the Entire Bible!	136
Defining <i>Porneia</i> – Several Summaries of <i>Porneia</i>	143
Defining <i>Porneia</i> – Clear Examples Where <i>Porneia</i> is Sometimes Used to Specifically Address Fornication.....	146
<i>Porneia</i> vs. Adultery – Sometimes there is Contrast	149
The Question that Arises: How Can the Divorce Exception Be Before Marriage?.....	149
3. Jewish Betrothal Explains the Fornication-Exception.....	149
The Gospels Were Written to Specific Groups.....	149
Matthew Was Uniquely Written to the Jews.....	149
Both The Verbal and the Written Gospels Were Audience-Specified Proclamations.....	151
The Separation of Jews and Gentiles May Trip Us Up On Understanding Marriage	152
What is “Jewish Betrothal”?.....	152
Basic Betrothal Concepts.....	153
Some Basic Biblical Examples of Betrothal.....	153
Deu 22 and Beyond – Facing the Fact of Divorce During Betrothal	154
The Two Divorces in the Law of Moses – The Solid Context For Betrothal!	156
Matthew 1 Requires a Qualification to Be Made in Chapters 5 & 19 – The Exception is in Matthew Three Times not Two	158
Why Didn’t Joseph Have Mary Stoned? – This Actually Teaches Us A Lot About Jesus’ Exception!.....	159
4. A Word of Prostitution/ “Fornication”? – <i>Logos</i> in Matthew 5!.....	162
The Confirmation of <i>Porneia</i> in the Betrothal of Deuteronomy 22	162
The Discovery of <i>Logos</i> in Matthew 5	163
The Problem: <i>Logou Porneias</i> Seems Like a Phrase!?	164
The Answer to <i>Logos</i> in Mat 5: The Greek Old Testament!.....	165
Judah and Tamar – A Word of <i>Porneia</i> in Gen 38?	168
A Summary of <i>Logos</i>	169
5. The Context of the Exception Clause Demands a Betrothal-Exception	169
Reckless and Sloppy Claims Against Betrothal.....	169

The Most Basic Contextual Needs – Submission and Diligence	170
Matthew 5 & 19; Mar 10 – Jesus Did Not Re-teach Moses – Jesus Taught that Deu 24 Tolerated Evil, NOT that _Moses Really Meant to Regulate Something Good’	172
Stop Fragmenting Porneia; Submit to the Clear Command!.....	174
The Common Fornication-Divorce that the Rabbis Constantly Dealt With.....	175
6. Matthew 5 Shows that the Exception Does Not Allow Remarriage.....	175
Matthew 5 and 19 Focus on Two Different Things Concerning Divorce and Adultery	176
The Ridiculous Attempts to Apply The Exception to the Second Half of the Verse	177
7. None of the Ancient Source Text Variations of Matthew 19:9 Permit Remarriage	178
Variation #1: The <i>Textus Receptus</i> and Other Traditional Sources Allow Divorce, But Not Remarriage	179
Variation #2: The <i>Byzantine Majority Text</i> And Some Alexandrian Texts Say –Not Upon Prostitution”	180
Variation #3: A Minority of <i>Alexandrian</i> and <i>Caesarean Texts</i> Have Matthew 5’s Exception in Matthew 19	181
Variation #4?: Mixed-up Versions that Allow Remarriage?.....	182
Variation #1 and #2 – The Two Primary Exception-Options.....	183
8. So What Should We Do With All Of These “Exception Variations”? – Summaries of Solid Proclamations from Matthew 5	184
From Mat 5 to 19 – Repetition of the Exception Proves that Remarriage is Not An Option	184
Matthew 5 Helps us With Matthew 19	184
Matthew 5 – The Divorce and Remarriage Teaching in The Sermon on the Mount.....	185
9. Recognizing More Specifically Why None of the Variations of Matthew 19 Allow Remarriage	186
Matthew 19 Translation Appeals Before We Go into More Details	186
Matthew 5 vs. Matthew 19 – The Difference Between Exception Words in Variation #1	187
The Early Church’s Understanding of the Greek of Mat 19	188
General Problems with Matthew 19:9 in English Versions	189
The Parenthetical Nature of The Matthew 19:9 Exception Clause	190
–Only Upon Prostitution” Grammatically Accomplishes Something	191
Some Natural Examples that Agree With the Parenthetical Nature of the Exception Clause, Even in English!.....	194
Examples Where Translators Know that <i>Ei Mē</i> , Specifies Rather than Making an Exception	195
Origen Confirmed that –Only” Is A Reasonable Representation of <i>Ei Mē</i> for Matthew 19:9.....	198
Charting the Greek of Mat 19 Helps Us More Exactly Understand This Verse	199
A Summary of Why Matthew 19:9 Does Not Allow Remarriage	200
10. The Spiritual Parallel Confirms Both Betrothal and No Remarriage	200
God’s Engagement is a Betrothal!.....	200
Jer 2 – Divorce is Possible During Betrothal to God, But Not After The Marriage Feast	201
God is Not Looking for Others to Marry After Divorce	204
The Jewish Surprise Marriage	205
Temporary Divorce: The Only Option Allowed and Exemplified By God Himself.....	205
Real Christians (Who Go to Heaven) Follow God’s Example.....	206
11. The True Exception Has to be Consistent With The True Revolutionary	206
Jesus Taught Something Revolutionary.....	206
Will We be The Same Old Pharisees, or Revolutionary Disciples?.....	207
Chapter 4 – First Corinthians Seven.....	209
1. Summaries of First Corinthians Seven	209
2. 1Co 7 – Paul vs. “The Pauline Exception”	210
A. What is it? – Defining the –Pauline Exception”.....	210
B. The Fact That Paul Uses Two Different Words Disproves It.....	211
C. The Context of First Corinthians 7 Disproves It Beyond Any Doubt	213
D. That Which Motivated, Predated that Which was Created	213
E. Summaries and Conclusions About the –Pauline Exception”	214
Chapter 5 – Applications of The Teaching	216
1. Warning: Pastors are Propagating the church!	216
The Compromised church – Locked in Bondage to Death, Darkness, and Sin.....	216
Some Serious Biblical Warnings About Pastors.....	217
Don’t Lie About Divorce And Remarriage.....	219
Some Questions to Ask Yourself As A church Person and or Leader	220
2. The REAL Problem: Prioritizing People Before God!	220
Pastors and church Leaders are No Different than School Kids Who Compromise Out of Peer Pressure.....	221
The Root of The Apostasy.....	221
church People Have the Same Problem that Other Unbelievers Have	222
Either We Repent or We Fall.....	222
A Right Priority for Love – It is Time We Finally Loved God FIRST!.....	222
The Solution is Prioritizing Jesus... Who is The Truth	223
3. Your Stance on This Issue is Not Morally Neutral.....	224
4. We Should Be Right Ourselves Before Opposing Other People’s Sins	224

5. Experience – The Bible Actually Works When You Believe and Obey it	225
6. From the End of This Book to the End of this Age	227
An Overview of Appendices.....	228
Explanations	228
Divorce And Remarriage Track.....	228
A Translation and Analysis of the Primary Divorce and Remarriage Passages	228
Exception Clause Research.....	228
Extra Notes on Church History.....	229
Marriage Statistics	229
Works Cited.....	229
Bibliography and Glossary	229
Bible Studies Referenced In This Teaching.....	229

PREFACE INFORMATION AND EXPLANATIONS

1. Considerations, Contact, & Copyright

General things to consider when you read this book

The Website for this Book – www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com

You are encouraged to visit the official website for this work, www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com, which is a sub-ministry of my main website, www.TrueConnection.org. Here you can view this entire book in its most up-to-date form as a webpage (HTML), download it as a PDF, follow the many “live” links throughout this work, find the short PDF “rack” version of this teaching, and much more.

It should be noted that the most official and up-to-date version of this book, including the appendices and all other components on up to the main teaching itself should always be considered to be the versions that are online. Please check online for all corrections and updates. In many ways, especially initially, these things are printed simply as a convenience and as a help for many who would find it challenging to spend hours online reading them from a computer screen.

We are in “Beta Stage” – Please Help Us with Corrections and Feedback

When reading this work, please consider emailing me with feedback: Josiahs@TrueConnection.org. This book is still in “Beta stage,” and especially because of this, we need all of the help we can get with this “work in progress,” especially in preparation for future revisions and printings: Feedback goes a long way, and is deeply appreciated.

Because of the magnitude of this book and the infinite nature of truth, we expect to be updating this book frequently. If God permits, we expect to be making major revisions and significant updates a year or more after printing this book, and will need to print more correct and helpful copies very soon after the first “Beta Release.” Whatever you can do to help us find and make these critical changes is very needed and appreciated. If you give us another year of prayer and pursuit of truth, it is sure with God’s help that we will not only have many corrections, but also many more exciting and critical additions that we will be constrained to add to this book, making major updated printings in the near future nearly unavoidable, as long as God may let us live and work for His good proclamation.

If You Are Poor, Please Contact Us With Questions

Contact us if you have more questions about divorce and remarriage in general, or this book project specifically. We are especially here to help if you are in troubled and complicated relationship situations, and want to do what is right and Biblical. Male and female helpers are usually available for prayer and counseling as needed: www.trueconnection.org/Main_Pages/Contact.html

If you are poor, humble, and in need of truth, we are here to help.

Technical Copyright Information

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2. How To Use This Book

The important, unique features that you will need to keep in mind when reading this book

Hebrew and Greek Basics

The big picture on how critical Hebrew and Greek details affect the contents of this book

Essentially, the Old Testament was first written in Hebrew (with a little Aramaic), and then we also have it officially [translated into Greek](#), while The [New Testament](#) was mostly simply written in [Greek](#) (with the exception of at least Matthew and Hebrews) so at various times, we English speakers need help extracting [Scripture](#) out of imperfect representations of the Bible.

I am a student of the original languages so as to be as accurate and truly **Biblical** as possible. Whenever I correct or clarify a translation, I often do so by inserting corrections and or important facts within ^[brackets] and sometimes ~~marking out inaccuracies~~. I also translate some passages myself especially when I cannot find a translation that accurately represents what the actual Greek says. I call this, “[Jos.Trans.](#)” which is short for “[Josiahs](#)’ Translation,” and this is covered in detail in the [Bibliography](#).

But beyond these basic translational needs, there are also more advanced details from the original languages that often need to be represented in technical abbreviations and symbols...

Representing More Advanced Details From the Ancient Languages

Methods I use for communicating and abbreviating the more technical needs of Hebrew and Greek in English

Note: Most of these things are explained in much more detail in the [Bibliography](#) (including many of the symbols I use here).

Within a number of the Bible passages quoted throughout this work, I have added numbers alongside many of the words to indicate a reference to the original languages. Each number that you can find is based off of the standard convention as established and assigned by [Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries](#) (James Strong, S.T.D., LL.D., 1890; See “[Strong’s](#)” herein). Each number is a standard reference to a Hebrew or Greek word so that the English reader can quickly and easily secure a dictionary definition with virtually no knowledge of the original languages, simply by looking up each number. With this I have conformed to a contemporary adaptation of this convention by adding “[-G](#)” or “[-H](#)” (as done by [e-Sword](#) Bible software) next to the numbers to indicate whether I am referring to a Greek or Hebrew definition.

I also use the common conventions for some advanced abbreviations and terminology representing very technical details about Greek grammar (see [RMAC](#) and [ALS](#) herein). Please see the [Bibliography](#) at the end for more details to better understand these grammatical tools for Greek that I use in this work.

As you can see, I have gone to great lengths to hold myself accountable as much as possible to the reader by including such details that I present throughout this work, so that if you wish, you may look up and verify the statements that I make here, and see for yourself if they are factual.

MT vs. LXX – Old Testament Source Texts

Whenever quoting from the Old Testament, I consistently try as much as possible to quote from whatever ancient version of each Old Testament book it is that is used and preferred by Jesus and the Apostles. Please don't let this alarm you too much if this means that a number of Old Testament quotes in this book will be somewhat different from most printed Bibles available today, since most of what we use today is almost always based off of the current version of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, which is called the "Masoretic Text" (see [MT](#) herein). Since this version of the Hebrew was somewhat given to us and standardized through the Jews in the midst of their rejection of Christianity (and the Christians use of the ancient Jewish [Greek Old Testament](#)), let it seem reasonable to the readers that I would prefer to differ from the majority and defer to the wisdom of Jesus and His Apostles when needing to determine which ancient version of the Old Testament is most correct and appropriate to use in each quotation.

If in many places the New Testament demonstrates that we should quote from the [Greek Old Testament \(LXX\)](#) and not the [current Hebrew \(MT\)](#) because of the differences, then so be it, because this is one of the places that we could actually and accurately say in truth, "if it was good enough for Peter and Paul [and Jesus Himself] then it is good enough for me."

To most effectively understand many of the abbreviations that I use and some of the advanced references that are made in this book, it is helpful to know some basic things like the fact that when talking about the various versions of the Old Testament, "MT" commonly stands for "Masoretic Text," (the current Hebrew Old Testament) and "LXX" stands for the Greek Septuagint (the Greek Old Testament that the New Testament and early Church frequently used). To learn more about these things and many more important details, see the topics in the [Bibliography](#) entitled: "LXX" and "MT."

Genesis 2 Example – What Do All Of These Details Have To Do With Marriage?

You might wonder why we have to go over all of these details about source texts and advanced facts about languages when this is supposed to be a book about marriage, divorce, and remarriage? Well, it turns out that the need for source text details can even be seen when looking at some basic, foundational statements Jesus makes about the nature of marriage when we consider an important Old Testament quote from two different source texts and compare it with the Words of Jesus and Paul when they quote from this passage. Which one of the source texts ([MT](#) or [LXX](#)) makes the most sense to use as our base text:

Genesis 2 – in the MT, LXX, and GNT

OT – MT <i>What we usually use</i>	Gen_2:24 ...and...	they	shall be <u>one</u> flesh...	KJ2000 Translation
OT – LXX <i>What the NT usually uses</i>	Gen_2:24 ...and...	The[y] <u>two</u> [Greek: v δὺο]	shall be one <u>one</u> flesh... [Greek: εἰς σὰξθα κίαλ]	CAB Translation
NT	Mat_19:5 ...and...	<u>they two</u> [Greek: v δὺο]	shall be one <u>flesh...</u> [Greek: εἰς σὰξθα κίαλ]	KJ2000 Translation
NT	Eph_5:31 ...and...	they <u>two</u> [Greek: v δὺο]	shall be <u>one</u> flesh... [Greek: εἰς σὰξθα κίαλ]	KJ2000 Translation

Note: OT = Old Testament; NT = New Testament; MT = Majority Text (the Hebrew Old Testament we usually use today); LXX = The Greek Old Testament that the New Testament usually uses

Notes Concerning Genesis 2 and the New Testament

- Did you notice that the Greek of [Gen_2:24](#) (i.e. the LXX) is exactly the same as the Greek of [Mat_19:5](#) and [Eph_5:31](#)?
- Did you notice that the Old Testament LXX agrees more with Jesus and Paul’s quote than the Hebrew Old Testament (MT) that we usually use?
- Did you notice that KJ2000 cannot even represent [Gen_2:24](#) (from Hebrew) the same as it does [Mat_19:5](#) and [Eph_5:31](#) (from Greek), and you have to look somewhere else (i.e. the LXX) to find the specific reference to “the two” which Jesus and Paul are capitalizing on?
- Have you ever noticed that in [Mat_19:5](#) Jesus uses the LXX (Greek) to teach about marriage, and He even re-emphasizes the differences of the LXX yet again in the following verse by repeating the LXX word, “two”:

[Mat_19:6 WEB](#) So that they are no more two, but one flesh...

With Jesus even repeating and emphasizing the differences that are not in our Bibles, it is clear that Jesus and Paul not only read the LXX version of [Gen_2:24](#), but they also clearly based their very teaching about the nature of marriage on this Greek Old Testament text, and not the current version of the Hebrew that is behind our versions. As for this book, in seeking to compile the most authoritative resource possible on marriage, it only makes sense to use the same types of texts that Jesus and the Apostles trusted and passed down to us in their teachings, and viewed to be authoritative enough to base their teachings on, especially because some of these elements that they declare to us are not in our Bibles today.

All of this is only a very small example of all that has gone into the background of compiling this book. Many more examples can be seen as you read, and are frequently marked in gray with words like, “Technical Source text Note.”

Important Appendix Resources – Where I Document a Lot of My Extra Research

The Appendix Resources are the extra resources at the end of this book that have important helps and documentation for those who are willing and able to do further reading

I highly recommend readers to frequently refer to the extra resources at the end of this book, especially whenever there is information or terminology that a reader is not familiar with. It is almost impossible to tackle many of the challenging things in this book without going into the complicated details that lie

behind many issues, and we usually end up unearthing many forgotten facts of advanced research. While I have labored many countless hours to present these things in the clearest way possible without sacrificing truth, there is a very likely chance that you will need to glance at these resources to fully understand some of the complicated things that are referred to and addressed throughout this defense of one flesh marriage.

This —Appendix” area of the book is also sometimes where I might include all of the thorough documentation for my research when it becomes too long, complicated and detailed to insert in the middle of this work.

Out of all the tools and resources that I have added to the end of this book in the appendix section, the [Bibliography and Glossary](#) is probably one of the most critical features which I have poured much labor into, and I anticipate it will be worth your while to avail yourself of all of the information and definitions in this resource. Many of the unusual words and terms that you can find in this book are defined back in the [Bibliography and Glossary](#). If you find a word or some complicated terminology that you need to understand that is not in this appendix resource, then please [email](#) me so that I can have the option of adding it to future additions of this book.

The abbreviations that I use for the names of the books of the Bible, and the documentation for all of the Bible versions that I reference and many of the other Biblical tools that I use are all given in the [Bibliography and Glossary](#).

For the printed version of this book, please see the table of contents at the beginning of this book for an overview of these extra resources at the end.

A Heart for True Salvation

For all clarity and confirmation: The notable need for the details of source texts and ancient languages is definitely **not our greatest need!** If we would simply be faithful with what we already have, it would be enough to call us to desperate brokenness and repentance. By far our greatest initial need is not for more novel information, but for some actual obedience to that which is more or less already been made accessible to us all when we clearly read in the Words of Jesus the demand for repentance from living in sin, and His call to forsake all to follow Him ([Luk_14:25-35](#)). It is time we saw some church people actually repent with sackcloth and ashes and great mourning for sin, so that we may all have some faint hope of salvation from a merciful God who comes with real salvation in His wings!

I write this book with an excited but burdened heart, because I care for the True salvation of all people, including so many church people who say that they belong to Jesus, most of whom do not. If you are rich, and filled with the affirmation of your own life and have consolation from your own wealth of experiences and understandings but are willing to endure with this book despite your competence in these matters, then I would ask you to either repent quickly ([Mat_3:6-12](#)) or stop reading this book:

[Mat_3:7 CAB](#) But seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, —Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?

In the same way, I am not here to entertain rich people but I have only written this book for poor and humble people who are serious about obeying Jesus and being hungry for truth, because only poor people can be saved (ex. [Mat_5:3-13](#); [Luk_6:20-26](#)). I have not written in this book anything that pertains to benefiting people who are already filled and confident (as in [1Co_4:8-13](#)), and unwilling to repent to conform to the Bible (like [2Co_7:6-11](#) displays). And ultimately, what is your heart or soul really worth* anyway, unless at some point we lay hold of a basic and desperate commitment to obey

the Bible, no matter what? Nothing in this book or even in the Bible itself will truly benefit any of us until we cry with a desperate plea:

Rom 3:4 Jos.Trans.** ...let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, that you may be justified in your words, and overcome in your being judged.

[* –worthless people”: **Jas 2:20** (ἄλζζ σπε θελ – empty/ vain/ –worthless” man); **Jer 2:5**; **Rom 1:21**; **Gal 6:3**; **Zec 11:17** (i.e. H457/ G3152); (Also compare: **Psa 94:8-11**; **1Co 3:20**; **Jas 1:26**)]

[** –Jos.Trans.” stands for –Josiahs’ Translation” – which is directly and literally from the Greek (as seen in the Bibliography)]

CHAPTER 1 – DEMANDING A REVOLUTIONARY RETURN TO THE GARDEN

1. An Initiating Call... (An Introduction)

There is a forsaken truth... will you dare to believe it?

Greetings to all who read and hear this message, and may favor, goodness and truth be given to you to obey the Scriptures when reading this book.

My name is Josiahs Scott, and I hope as you read throughout this book that I have written for you, that you will be willing to consider what the Bible says about divorce and remarriage no matter how hard it is to accept, knowing that it is worth whatever the cost to come into agreement and obedience to Jesus. If we are in a lifestyle that the Bible condemns, turning away from it is the only way we will escape from the wrath of God that is coming upon the earth for those who don't believe Him enough to obey Him.

God obviously has a lot of Love for mankind, and desires all of us to inherit Heaven with Him, but unfortunately most never answer the call to obedient faith in Him because they consider the price to high. Tragically in this day and age, this compromise holds true both outside and inside what we call the modern church. Going to church, or even being a leader in a church, in this day is no indicator as to whether or not a person has prepared their heart for Judgment by keeping Jesus' commands.

What if your pastor doesn't believe it? What if your parents reject it too? Are you still willing to believe the Bible no matter what the cost?

From numerous years of praying and experience in both standing up for, as well as teaching on this issue, I have found that it is not made unpopular because of its interpretive complexities. But instead I have found that this teaching is almost always unwelcome by most people because their actual amount of dedication to Truth does not match their creed and profession of faith. So many think and say that they are willing to die for their faith, but when it comes to sitting down and believing simple Bible verses, they suddenly back off. –What gives?"

Would you believe the Bible if it cost you your life? What if it cost you your reputation, your job, and your most cherished relationships in life? Would you still be ready to forsake all to follow Him?

The following Bible verses just might be the most controversial Bible verses in the whole world, because not even most of the visible (modern) church believes them anymore. I know this may be hard, and it may hurt deeply for many who read this, but know only with a surgeon's hands do I cut for your good, with a Love for God that is prioritized far above your comfort, and with full assurance that His truth is the only thing that is in our best interest and will make us free.

Here are only some of the main Bible verses about divorce and remarriage...

Adultery Condemned

Exo_20:14/ Deu_5:18; Lev_20:10; Deu_22:22-24; Pro_2:16-19; 6:23-33; Jer_5:7-9; 29:21-23; Eze_23:43-47; Mal_3:5-6; Mat_5:27-32; 19:9, 16, 18/ Mar_10:17, 19/ Luk_18:18, 20; 1Co_6:9-10; Gal_5:16-21; Heb_13:4; Rev_2:22-23... etc. Also see: Mat_15:19; Mar_7:21; Rom_13:9-10; Jas_2:11-12; 2Pe_2:14, 17-22

Divorce and Remarriage is Adultery

Mat_5:27-32; 19:3-10; Mar_10:2-12; Luk_16:16-18; Rom_7:2-3; 1Co_7:10-11, 39

Rom_7:3 *CAB* So then, while the husband is living, she will be called an adulteress if she becomes *married* to a different husband...

1Co_6:9-10 *Jos.Trans.* Do not be deceived: neither male prostitutes* [i.e. fornicators]... nor adulterers... will inherit the kingdom of God.
(and similarly in Eph_5:3-12)

[* i.e. male fornicators (as in the preceding context: 1Co5:1), and by extension, including men who are involved with the female prostitutes/ fornicators in the following context: 1Co6:13, 15-20]

There are obviously countless details to all of this, but if you make the simple step of actually believing these verses, you've already come 90 percent of the way there, before you've even hardly started reading!

There is an indescribable and infinite freedom and victory in simply believing the Bible. If your heart is first right, full of faith and eagerness to obey, then the countless details and "theological expositions" will be a cinch (relatively speaking). Hold on as you read, and I pray that God would revolutionize your willingness to go all the way with what He says. I am delighted and I rejoice that you are reading this message, and I pray to God that it is some indication that you are willing to consider disregarding the seemingly high price tag, and embrace the revolutionary call to believe what the Bible says about divorce and remarriage.

2. The Ancient Marriage Teaching

A. The Original History of Degradation

At the beginning God the Father presented His very first daughter to His first human son, Adam. In doing this God established a grounds for the couple to come together rightly, which served as a pattern and example¹ of what was required for two people in future generations to come together, and what was required from them unto each other² before God after they had come together. God prepared man and woman to belong to each other, and worked in them His special work for this to happen, creating, proclaiming, and defining this work as "One Flesh"³.

As time passed and people multiplied⁴, God at the very same time instituted along the way that peoples and society should hold each other accountable to their commitments⁵ as they partnered through life together. In this way, a fundamental social accountability was established for the sanity and good order⁶ of the humans for their interacting with each other and living together in communities and homes.

The highest order of this social accountability was a recognition and protection of what God had formed in the garden when He at the first made Adam and Eve and brought them together in lawful unity. This recognition and protection of One Flesh came to be known as "marriage"⁷, and was socially recognized in ancient times with a marriage supper and celebration⁸, which we have come to call a wedding⁹.

The corporate verification of joining a man and woman together held a solid basis and foundation for humans to work and relate to each other as societies and peoples, and they could not afford for this to be damaged¹⁰, morally or socially. At first, they celebrated this One Flesh covenant with ~~marriages~~” or ~~weddings~~,”¹¹ having the tradition of the original model before them, having been kept from what was then recent times¹², and they were presently experiencing the good order¹³ that resulted from honoring this model¹⁴ for making and recognizing the great blessing of the covenant that God had given them.

But as sin-bound people tend to continually hurt and wrong each other, their faithlessness starts first against God. And as wicked people loved themselves and their sin more than God¹⁵, so also they came to recognize and validate their own ~~marriages~~”¹⁶ over and above what God had actually established¹⁷, so that the Truth of God’s work in One Flesh began to commonly be supplanted, replaced, ignored, and even violated by the ceremony of man before the eyes of society. Men began so quickly to recognize their own works above those Divine and enduring works of God Himself, so as to think that they did not need the Divine approval and validation whenever they felt to terminate their current relationships and perform other marriages to new partners contrary to the original model of Adam and Eve.

While at first, marriages were meant as social expressions¹⁸ of recognizing the work of God, these marriages came to replace and even ignore His very work in the name of these social expressions. Men loved their own preferences¹⁹, became more impressed with their own recognition of things, and enjoyed their own marriage feasts and social ideas more than the Originator that caused them to have opportunity to experience such blessings in the first place.

The idolatrous and the adulterous way go hand-in-hand continually throughout history²⁰. Because whenever men wanted to divorce their wives and marry others as they pleased, and because of man’s independence in marriage ceremonies, as they forsook God they also felt free to defy the covenant that God had born witness to in the garden, which at the first would form One Flesh, the only type of ~~marriage~~” that God ever recognized, defended, and gloriously bore witness to in the beginning.

By the time of Moses and the Law He instituted, divorce and remarriage was a de facto social norm²¹, so that its vices had to be restricted and regulated²² in suffering such evil from the people. Truly, man cared not a thing for what God had spoken originally, but gloried in their own various and multiplied recombinations of ~~marriages~~,”²³ whenever and to whomever they pleased, not considering that God stood faithfully by His Word in the garden, unpersuaded²⁴ by the masses of peoples branching off on their own ideas, pagan beliefs, and wicked practices. People married and remarried as they found others and ~~swapped~~ partners,” and cared not that God called this defiling violation of His One Flesh covenant, adultery.²⁵

B. Jesus Restored the Reverence of One Flesh to His Church

This confusion of marriage and forgetfulness of the garden continued even into the regulation of its insanity under Moses²⁶, but the corporate assemblies of peoples with darkened understandings and hardened hearts²⁷, as a whole, did not get much of a shot at hoping for anything better, which would be according to God’s own heart²⁸, until a revolutionary man stepped on the scene named Jesus. Both Jesus and His Apostles constantly warned and solemnly admonished²⁹ the assembly³⁰ of followers to take close heed to the doctrine³¹ and to its faithful and pure transmission³² into future generations, that none of the things which Jesus had Divinely restored, would ever be lost.

In Jesus, renewed mankind had now just found his way back to the glory of the Garden, and had found God there, still faithfully standing by the enduring standard of His Word on man and woman, so that it was as it was from the beginning, with God faithfully testifying about His own work of One Flesh, and a remnant society of people celebrating this work with lawful, God-honoring marriages³³.

Now a special and radically different people called out³⁴ for God’s own possession³⁵ stood before Him in the World, trembling in reverent and holy fear, that no more of their marriages should ever be

acceptable if they did not line up with the standard³⁶ of the One Flesh Covenant which God now demanded³⁷ that they keep, as it was from the beginning in the garden.

C. Scriptural References for ‘The History Of Degradation’ and ‘Restoration of One Flesh Reverence’

With much thanks to persecuted writer S for their scribal collaboration in compiling this section

1. **a pattern and example:** Gen_2:18; Mat_19:4; Mar_10:6-8
2. **what was required from them unto each other:** Mal_2:14-16; Pro_5:18; Gen_2:18, 22-23; 1Co_11:8, 9; 1Ti_2:12-14 (compare this general verse with 1Pe_3:1); Hos_3:3-5
3. **One Flesh:** Gen_2:24; Mat_19:5-6; Mar_10:7-8; 1Co_6:16-17; Eph_5:28-31
4. **people multiplied:** Gen_1:28; 5:4; 6:1
5. **accountable to... commitments:** 2Ch_34:29-32; Exo_24:7; Deu_29:10-15; 31:28; Jos_24:24-27; Neh_10:29 (etc.); 2Ch_15:12-13; They also applied this corporate accountability to marriage: Deu_22:15-21; Rth_4:9-11
6. **social accountability:** see point 5; **sanity and good order:**
_Sanity and good order‘ are the intended effects of having social accountability.
Before the flood, mankind had a really strong reference point and accountability to the original model of marriage with Adam and Eve still being around. At least for a time, we know that marriage was upheld, recognized, and honored and that _sanity and good order‘ existed because God did not send the flood until marriages started being tampered with and perverted. As men began to multiply, and as wickedness increased, and as marriage was unlawfully touched, things fell to pieces and were ultimately destroyed by the furious judgment of God (Gen_6:1-7, 11-13; Luk_17:27; also compare Deu_30:19).
7. **marriage:** Consider a few examples how _One Flesh‘ was protected with a marriage ceremony: Gen_24:67; 2Ch_18:1 (LXX); Also see point 8
8. **socially recognized:** Mat_24:38
a marriage supper and celebration [~~m~~arriages were meant as social expressions¹⁸”]:
Gen_29:21-22; Jdg_14:1; Est_2:18; Mat_22:2-4; Son_3:11; Isa_61:10c; 62:5; Psa_45:8-15; Rev_19:7-9; **Note:** Jesus‘ first miracle was at a marriage celebration (Joh_2:1-2). God makes a big deal about recognizing one flesh unions.
9. **wedding:** an English term not really used in the Bible; Instead, the Biblical terms come from the concept of a ~~M~~arriage Feast” (see points 7 and 8) rather than having a separate word for a ~~w~~edding.”
10. **they could not afford for this to be damaged:** Even pagans knew the importance of recognizing and protecting the union between a male and female: Gen_20:2-10; 26:10-11 – Early in history we see the existence of some surprisingly solid marriage concepts that were generally common to mankind as a whole. If this was common knowledge even to pagans, what does that say about many today who call themselves —Christians” but deny the testimony of the permanency of the one flesh union? Here is a call to repent of walking in ignorance with a **gravely** debased mind, having our understanding darkened (Eph_4:17-18) beyond that of the heathens of Abraham’s day! And now that Jesus has come, we are not only charged to surpass the obvious immorality of paganism, but we are also told that unless our righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and the Pharisees then we will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven (Mat_5:20).
11. See point 9
12. See point 6
13. See point 6
14. See point 1

15. **people loved themselves and their sin more than God:** Jer_2:5; Gen_6:5; Jdg_2:19; Jer_7:24; 16:12; Psa_81:11-12; Eze_20:24-25; Isa_30:1, 9-12; Mat_15:3; Mar_7:9, 13; Joh_3:19; 7:7; 8:44; 12:43
16. **their own “marriages”:** Luk_17:27; Gen_6:2; Mal_2:11; Jdg_3:6-7; 1Ki_11:8; Neh_13:23-29; Jdg_15:1-2; Mar_10:11-12; 6:17-18; Luk_16:15-18
17. See points 1, 2, and 3, and compare with Mat_19:4-9; 5:31-32; Mar_10:2-12; Luk_16:16-18; Rom_7:1-3; 1Co_7:39; Heb_13:4; Jesus insisted that we return to this standard.
18. **marriages were meant as social expressions:** see point 8
19. **men loved their own preferences:** see points 15 and 16
20. **the idolatrous and the adulterous way go hand-in-hand continually throughout history:** 1Co_10:6-8; Exo_32:4-8, 17-25; Num_25:1-3; Jer_3:9; Eze_16:15-20, 30-32, 35-38; 23:27, 30, 37, 45-48; Eze_10:2; Mal_2:11-15; Rev_2:14, 20-22; and also compare the many passages like Lev_20:10-23 (and Lev_18:1-30) addressing sexual perversions, where these teachings flow right along with passages addressing various idolatries: Lev_20:1-7.
21. We know that it was a **de facto social norm** because Moses had to do something about it in order to govern it (see point 22). If Moses had to do something about it in order to govern it, that means that it was already an existing practice before He addressed it.
22. **restricted and regulated** (divorce and remarriage): Deu_24:1-4; Lev_21:7, 14; Exo_21:10
23. **–marriages”:** Notice how God did not approve: Deu_24:1-4; Jer_3:1 (etc.), the remarriage was defiling therefore not accepted; Mal_2:13-14; Jesus says ~~but~~ “I say” indicating that He did not accept their recombinations of ~~–marriages”:~~ Mat_5:32; 19:9; Mar_10:11-12; Luk_16:18; Rom_7:3; If you pay attention, this point is covered over and over again throughout the rest of this book.
24. **unpersuaded:** God does not change in order to agree with prolonged sin and defiance of His declarations: Heb_1:12; 13:8; Num_23:19; 1Sa_15:29; 2Ti_2:13; Luk_21:33; Job_40:8; Isa_14:27; not changed with prolonged sin Gen_20:7b; Jos_7:11-13; Jer_6:8; Eze_23:18 Even if a practice is popular, God is unpersuaded: Luk_16:15; Rom_3:4 Also see: Chapter 2, Point 1, under, “–Summary of A, B, and C”
25. **adultery:** (A) See the rest of this book. (B) Also compare: Hos_4:1-2; 7:3-4 with Mar_6:14a, 17-18; (C) God (through Moses) suffered for divorce to happen: Mat_19:7-8; Mar_10:4-5; (D) Here are a few of the many examples in the OT where God indicated that the betrothed woman and or fully married wife was being defiled by adding another relationship: Deu_24:4; Jer_3:1; 2:2, 5, 7, 11, 13, 19-21, 23-24, 32-33; 3:7, 12-14, 22; 4:1; Hos_5:3; Hos_6:10; Eze_23:17
26. See point 22
27. **darkened understandings and hardened hearts:** Exo_32:9; Deu_31:27; Act_7:51; Psa_78:8; Neh_9:16; Jer_17:23; Zec_7:11-12; Isa_6:10; Mat_13:13-15; Deu_32:28-29; Eph_4:18; Isa_44:18-20; Rom_1:21, 28
28. **according to God’s own heart:** Act_13:22; 1Ki_15:5; Heb_8:7-10; 10:7-9
Compare: Chapter 2, Point 4, “–David’s Example: He Returned to the First” to see how David showed the distinction of doing what was actually according to God’s own heart.
29. **Both Jesus and His Apostles constantly warned and admonished:** See point 31
30. The word for **–assembly”** in the Bible is typically poorly represented in English versions with the word ~~–church.”~~ But in Greek, the actual word is a combination of the words ~~–έθ~~”^{G1537} (*ek*), meaning ~~–out”~~ (as in Exit), and ~~–θα σ~~”^{G2564} (*kaleō*), meaning ~~–to call,”~~ which when combined forms this important word, ~~–έθθι εσ α”~~^{G1577} (*ekklēsia*), which means, a ~~–called out”~~ assembly.
31. **Jesus and Apostles warned about doctrine:**
The thief comes only to steal/ Hired shepherds: Joh_10:1, 12-13, 10; Act_20:28-31; 2Pe_2:1; Mat_7:15; 24:11, 24; 2Jn_1:7; Gal_1:8-9

Beware of the leaven and take heed: [Luk_12:1](#); [Mat_16:6](#); 11-12; [Mar_8:15](#); [Rom_16:17](#); [1Co_5:5-7](#); [Gal_5:9](#); [1Ti_4:16](#); [1Co_3:10-11](#)

Men will not endure sound doctrine in the last times: [2Ti_4:3](#); [2Pe_2:2](#); [1Ti_4:1-2](#); [2Ti_3:13](#)

Will the Son of man find faith on the earth? ([Luk_18:8](#))

- 32.** Whenever the Bible talks about Divine *traditions*, in Greek this has to do with “transmissions” ([παξ νσηο](#) - *paradosis*) of truth to future generations.

Keep the traditions: [2Th_2:15](#); [1Co_11:2](#); [2Ti_2:2](#); [Jud_1:3](#); [2Th_3:6](#); [Phi_3:17](#); 4:9; [Heb_13:7](#); [1Th_4:1](#); [3Jn_1:11](#)

For those who are like typical Protestants and want to take cheap shots and compare this to the repulsive traditions of men ([Mat 15:2](#), [Mat 15:3](#), [Mat 15:6](#); [Mar 7:3-13](#); [Gal 1:14](#); [Col 2:8](#)) it goes without saying that Divine traditions have nothing to do with this, since Divine traditions are commandments from God ordained throughout the Old and New Testaments. Did you notice that we gave many Scripture references for defining these “Divine traditions”? If then they are traditions instituted in the Scriptures, it goes without saying that these are the traditions (transmissions) of God, not men, and God continually commands us to keep these things all throughout the Bible. Any tradition set in order for God’s assembly by the Scriptures pertains to God, and any tradition that opposes the Scriptures is man’s tradition, and if you will have wisdom toward knowing truth, you will know that there is no in-between.

- 33. lawful:** See the rest of this book and compare the appendix resources entitled, “[The Historical Church Teaching](#),” and “[Extra Notes on Church History](#)” for a number of samples of the profound early church quotes affirming this new, revolutionary attitude that they had about marriage.

God-honoring marriages: (1) **General Instructions for this in NT:** [1Ti_3:2](#), 9-15; [1Co_7:12-14](#); 3; [Col_3:18-19](#); [1Pe_3:5-7](#); [Eph_5:22-33](#); [Heb_13:4](#); (2) **Aquila & Pricilla had a ‘tag-team’ ministry:** [Act_18:2](#); 18; 26; [Rom_16:3](#); [1Co_16:19](#); [2Ti_4:19](#); (3) **Peter:** [Mat_8:14](#); [Mar_1:30](#); [1Co_9:5](#); From these passages (and the affirming testimony of early church leaders) it is evident that Peter had a wife. For the apostle Peter to write instructions about a good relationship between a husband and wife, he himself had to be abiding by what he preached and not living hypocritically with his wife ([1Pe_5:3](#));

- 34.** [Heb_12:23](#); [Mat_16:18](#); and see point 30

- 35. God’s own possession:** [Tit_2:14](#); KJV has it, “peculiar people,” but it actually means “owned” people ([ιαδλ πεξην σηνλ](#)); [Mal_3:17](#); [1Pe_2:9](#); [Deu_26:18](#)

- 36. if they did not line up with the standard:** Christians emphasized “one flesh” afresh, and this is proven in the fact that Jesus established this reality at the foundation of His marriage teaching, and it occurs more frequently and emphatically in the NT than the OT that originated it; See points 1, 2, 3, and 17

This reverent and stringent attitude about marriage is also a historical fact that is easy to read about and verify throughout church history (see the appendix entitled, “[The Historical Church Teaching](#).”)

- 37.** See point 17

D. Approaching Today – How Does Jesus’ *One-Flesh-Reverencing Garden Revolution* Look Now in Our Generation?

After the times of the beginning of the New Covenant, many courageous leaders of the early church faithfully fought and maintained the Biblical teaching about marriage within the Church, so that as a result, from saint to heretic, essentially everyone in the church before the corruption of Nicaea (325 AD) taught that divorce and remarriage was adultery and must be forsaken to be a Christian. I have documented and summarized much of this in the appendix entitled, “[The Historical Church Teaching](#).”

Although Jesus, His apostles, and the early Church held to this reverence of one flesh, something completely different, strange and sickening is in our face as we look at the scene all about us today. Although we often maintain some fading expressions of commitment in most traditional marriages by saying words like, “Fill death do us part” and “For better or worse,” such profound words are a radically stringent expression of commitment which really sound strange and curious in our context today, since in many cases we still say them at weddings but have no real idea why, especially since we really mean until adultery, abandonment, sin, boredom, or other crimes or conveniences do us part.

Don’t we realize that such words express a mentality about marriage that far surpasses the ideals and expectations that surround us? And why would we set such a high expectation with our words if no one keeps it? And why is it we say words that are reminiscent of what Jesus taught while we live just as the days of old before Jesus was on earth? If our obligation in marriage is actually greater in this age than the righteous Law of Moses, then why are we no better in our practice today than those generations before Jesus even came on the earth?

These words of permanent, lifelong commitment that we often utter in marriages stand against us and our practices, in and outside of the church, as though they were faint echoes of a doctrine people once believed that we are now truly foreign to, but strangely repeating.

What happened? Did we lose something again?

3. It is Time to Re-Reverence The Creation of One Flesh

There is an answer to all of this distress and insanity! There is a reason why things have gone crazy today, and there is a reason why people used to believe radically different during the days of Jesus and the Apostles. Truth still exists, and the Words of Jesus are still burning off of the pages of the Bible, but there is a complacent and rebellious age of bitter apostasy that rages against all of the goodness that Jesus pioneered for our benefit.

Jesus taught all of His followers to profoundly reverence one flesh, and until we do the same, we will never escape the trap of hopelessness and bitter darkness of slavery to immorality and sin. Are we going to hear the Word of the Lord in our generation and repent and finally start taking Jesus seriously? – For those who will be faithful to Jesus in this way, let us get a close and faithful look at the very basis Jesus gave us for reverencing one flesh, and let us arrange ourselves in submission underneath the Divine dictates about one flesh and marriage in great fear and trembling.

May God help us as we seek to restore what Jesus taught us.

Genesis 2 – The First Husband and Wife

I have given this account from the CAB and have added important insertions in [Brackets] (see explanations afterward):

Gen 2:21-25 CAB And God brought a trance upon Adam, and he slept, and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. **22** And God formed the rib which he took from Adam into a woman, and brought her to Adam. **23** And Adam said, This now is bone [êθ (ek; as in -exit”) – out] of my bones, and flesh [êθ (ek) – out] of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out [êθ (ek) – same exact word as before] of her husband [lit. man]. **24** Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall ~~leave~~ [MT: קבדו^{H1692}; LXX: πρὸς θνήσεισ ἐταί (proskollēthēsetai) – be (passively) joined^{G4347 (H1692)}] to his wife

[woman], and the two [not specified by MT, but affirmed by the LXX and Jesus] shall become [MT: יהיו^{H1961}; LXX: ειο (eis) – into] **one flesh**. 25 (3:1) And the two were naked, both Adam and his wife, and were not ashamed

[Technical Source text Note: I have particularly used the *Complete Apostles Bible* (CAB) for Genesis, because it is based on the LXX, and this Greek source text is basically what the New Testament consistently uses for Genesis (for more, see the online version of our Bibliography under, “Finding the Old Testament”)]

[Details about the Corrections I Made to This Translation: I have made a few content and grammatical corrections to the version used here based on the original Greek source text (LXX), (while also comparing it to the Hebrew) so it will more specifically and accurately represent in English what is actually being said in Greek (as also compared with Hebrew). The specific Greek wording used in this passage from Genesis is the way Jesus quotes this text later in the Greek New Testament (GNT), (as seen in the next point); (For more on these details see our Bibliography, especially under LXX and MT).]

Mat 19 – Jesus on The First Husband and Wife

Mat 19:4-6 **ΚΒ** And he answered and said unto them, —~~Have~~ you not read... 5 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave [lit. *be passively glued to*] to his wife: and the two shall be [ειο – into] **one flesh**? 6 Therefore they are **no more** ^{G3765} two, but one flesh. What therefore **God has fastened** [or *yoked*] **together** ^{G5563} let not man separate .

Also compare: [Gen 2:21-22](#); [Mar 10:6-9](#); [Eph 5:30-32](#)

“Bound” – For Life

[Rom 7:2](#) **CAB** For the woman who is under a man has been **bound** ^{G1210} by law to the **living husband**...

The Greek Word for “Bound”:

“...bind, be in bonds, knit, tie, wind...” (Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries).

The Scriptures clearly and directly reveal that being ~~bound~~ ~~knit~~ ~~–tied~~ and ~~wound~~ into the ~~–bonds~~ of marriage yields a relationship that lasts for life (as we have just seen in [Rom 7:2](#)).

[Mat 19:5](#) ...they are no more ^{G3765} two...

This is Strong’s definition for the one Greek word translated here as “no more”:

G3765 οὐκέτι *ouketi ook-et’-ee* Also (separately) οὐκ ἔτι *ouk eti ook et’-ee* From G3756 and G2089; *not yet, no longer*: - after that (not), **(not) any more**, **henceforth** (**hereafter**), not, **no longer** (more), not as yet (now), now no more (not), yet (not).

So what is the implication of this verse and the weight of the Greek word translated as “no more”? We can see this by inserting the definition of this word directly into the verse:

–They are **no more** [**henceforth** and **hereafter no longer** and **not... any more**] two” ([Mat 19:6](#)), after God makes them One Flesh.

This verse is describing a **permanent** “no more two” effect from God making two people into one. This was instituted by God and continues to be preformed and enforced by Him in “binding” a person unto a spouse which generates a “one flesh” relationship ([Mat 19:5](#)). This “binding” originated in the Garden of Eden, and Jesus tells us that this same reality happens unto this very day when two people get lawfully married.

So many people try to say that a permanent marriage is “god’s ideal,” “but,” they say, “that this does not always work out.” And while people go around pretending that God’s commands “don’t always work out” and they call permanent marriage “an ideal,” God does not call one flesh an “ideal” but a

matter of fact whether we like it or not. Even if we do not live according to the reality that God testifies to, it still remains, and God's testimony will always win on judgment day, and we will always lose whenever we oppose it.

We may indeed find many reasons to complain against Jesus' Words today and resist what He taught us by saying things like, "Yes, Jesus, I know they **were** one flesh a long time ago, but now they are loosed from that marriage by adultery and or divorce and they have married someone else now." But this pagan and rebellious belief is opposed up front by Jesus with the very plain and simple Words,

"They are **no more** [**henceforth** and **hereafter no longer** and **not... any more**] two" (Mat 19:6), after God makes them One Flesh.

GOD is The One Who Binds – No Wonder It's Permanent!

Malachi 2 Clearly Confirms this

Note: Malachi 2 is discussed in much greater length in the next chapter

Mal 2:14b – "Because the Lord has borne witness between you and the wife of your youth..." (CAB)

Mal 2:14c – "And although they had divorced their wives, still God says..."

Mal 2:14d – "... **she is your companion**, *and the **wife of your covenant**." (WEB) [LXX: θαι γπλη ηζηθεο σνπ – lit. and woman of your covenant]

Mal 2:15a – God takes full credit for making it this way

In Malachi 2 and Matthew 19 it is clear that the Bible teaches that God has always been the One who binds two people into one flesh "from the beginning." God is the one that makes two people into one, and not man, and because of this, God is the only one that has a prerogative to tell us the rules, and He is the only one who can tell us when the "oneness" of one flesh is finished.

Mat 19:6 KJ2000 Therefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore **God** has joined

[σπλ δεπμελ – fastened/ yoked] together, let not man put asunder.

Also: Mar 10:9

In the context of Jewish culture and even the Greek language this means, by making them one flesh, God has also caused them (as a lawful result) to also cohabit together (σπλ δεπμελ) in marriage* – God takes credit for both of these things in this passage, therefore we should not deny any of this by the "separation" (geographical space) of divorce.

To Be Glued/ "Joined"

Gen 2:24 Jos. Trans. on account of this, a man will leave his father and his mother and **be** [passively] **glued unto** [MT: דבא (dabaq); LXX: πζνσθνι ι εζ ησεται (proskollēthēsetai)* – or stuck unto] his woman [-wife"], and the two will become into one flesh.

Mat 19:5 Jos. Trans. and said, "On account of this, a man will leave father and mother and **be** [passively] **glued unto** [πζνσθνι ι εζ ησεται (proskollēthēsetai)* – or stuck unto] his woman [-wife"] and the two will become into one flesh..."

The word behind "be [passively] glued unto" spans (Biblically) from Hebrew into Greek. In **Hebrew**, this word is defined this way by Strong's:

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H1692 דָּבַק *dābaq daw-bak'* ...cling or adhere... - abide, fast, cleave (fast together), follow close (hard, after), be joined (together), keep (fast), overtake, pursue hard, stick, take.

This —aiding,” —leaving,” —joining,” and —sticking” communicated by the definition of the Hebrew word *dābaq* is often accomplished in Greek with the word —πρὸςθνήσκειν” (*proskollaō*). This Greek word is a compound made up of *toward* (*pros*) and *glued* or *stuck* (*kollaō*). Whenever you compound a directional word (such as *toward*) into another word (especially an action verb such as *glued*) this is generally referred to as *an intensification*. This means that when the Bible talks about being *glued toward* a woman, this is an **intensified** gluing, and by the context and the Greek grammar we see why it is so —intense”: the couple is (passively) being (intensely) **glued together** [πρὸςθνήσκειν ἐξ ἡσεται] (*proskollēthēsetai*) into [εἰς (*eis*)] one flesh [σάρκα κ’ αὐτή (*sarka mian*)] by God!

This Hebrew term was first fundamentally translated into Greek by the LXX, and then consistently quoted* and applied this way by Paul* and Jesus Himself* throughout the Greek New Testament.

[* **Additional Hebrew and Greek Technical Notes:** (1) Although *dābaq* cannot always be represented as *proskollaō* throughout the LXX because the Hebrew term has a somewhat wider —semantic range” than the Greek term (and because of this the Hebrew term occurs more frequently than the Greek term), yet still, the majority of the times whenever *proskollaō* is used in the LXX, it is because it is representing *dābaq* from Hebrew; (2) The primary form of this Greek term is —πρὸςθνήσκειν” — lit. *toward gluing* (an *intensive sticking*), but a few times, (especially in a minority of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament) this *intensive gluing* or *sticking* is simply abbreviated as —θνήσκειν” — *gluing*, and this is the way that Westcott and Hort represent it in Mat_19:5, yet everyone agrees that this term is —πρὸςθνήσκειν” in Eph_5:31 (just like Gen_2:24 LXX) and most everyone (including Westcott and Hort) agrees that the original form in Mar_10:7 is also like the LXX. — All of this shows that there is very strong support for concluding that both Jesus (especially in Mar_10:7) and Paul quoted this term exactly as it is in the LXX, and in any case it is certain that the New Testament is consistently referencing the LXX terminology of being *glued* or *stuck* to a woman; (for more, don’t forget to compare the Bibliography, especially what is documented under GNT and LXX)]

Deu_11:22-23 CAB And it shall come to pass that if you will indeed hearken to all these commandments which I charge you to observe this day, to love the Lord our God, and to walk in all His ways, and to cleave [lit. *glue yourself*] close [LXX: πρὸςθνήσκειν ἑαυτῶν— Middle Voice, i.e. and action done to *yourself* (V-PMN); MT: דָּבַק (*dābaq*), (H1692)] to Him; 23 then the Lord shall cast out all these nations before you...

Jos_23:8-9 CAB But you [all] shall [passively be] cleave[d] [lit. *glued*] to [πρὸςθνήσκειν ἐξ ἡσεται— (V-FPI-2P); MT: דָּבַק (*dābaq*), (H1692)] the Lord our God, as you have done until this day. 9 And the Lord shall destroy them before you...

Notice that though cleaving to God obviously takes priority, the same Hebrew word (*dābaq*) is used in Genesis 2 for marriage, as it is throughout the Hebrew Old Testament for the covenanted relationship between the Lord and His people. This effectively communicates what kind of permanent unbreakable union a man has with his wife. Do you see that God gave us the phenomena of —sticking” in marriage as a parable to show how we ought to —stick” to God? Before there was ever a command recorded that we should —join” ourselves to God, we are told of the reality of —joining” that happens in marriage. So to what degree should we as a people seek to be stuck to God, and to what degree should we as individuals consider that we have been stuck to our spouses when we get married? These two things are described with one and the same word in Hebrew.

God twice uses this word to describe the inseparability of the scales of a dinosaur (which are historically called dragons). They knew this particular creature (from Hebrew texts) as —Leviathan.” The context of these verses affirms the definition we read previously, even using some of the exact same words from within the definition as synonyms. I have underlined words that affirm the definition of this word in this way:

[Job_41:15-17](#), [23 WEB](#) Strong scales are his pride, Shut up together with a close seal. [16](#) One is so near [LXX: θνι ι ὠλταη– passively glued (V-PPI-3P)] to another, That no air can come between them. [17](#) They are joined [MT: דָּבַק (dābaq), (H1692); LXX (at least in some texts): πξνσθνι ι εζ ήσεταη– glued together (this is the primary form); (Note: this part has significant variations surrounding this word in the LXX)] one to another; They stick together, so that they can’t be pulled apart... [23](#) The flakes of his flesh are *joined together [*MT: דָּבַק (dābaq), (H1692); LXX: θεθόι ι ελταη– Perfect Tense, Passive Voice: they have been (passively) glued as a complete action in the past (V-RPI-3P)]. **They are firm on him. They can’t be moved.** (This is also illustrated in: [Job_41:26-29](#))

Notice that in verse 17 (at least with some texts), the consistent word is used for *gluing* or *joining* in the Hebrew and Greek of Job [MT: דָּבַק (dābaq), (H1692); LXX (at least in some texts): πξνσθνι ι εζ ήσεταη]

[**Technical Source Text Note:** I do not generally use the current LXX as the most original source text when quoting Job, because this is one of the few cases where direct New Testament quotations of the Old Testament do not match in the current LXX. This is why I have primarily based this quote on the current MT (as represented by WEB), and only when they at least partly agree here I reference the LXX as well in this case, because it helps demonstrate the nature of this Greek phrase and its relationship with the Hebrew terminology. (For more, see the online version of our Bibliography under, “Finding the Old Testament”)]

How profound is the strength of this word! Please see the significance that it can command! And I hope that you will be honest enough to admit that the Bible does nothing to lessen the potency and impact of this word as it is applied to marriage, especially as seen originally in [Gen 2:23-24](#).

As far as the Greek New Testament goes, this intensified form of this word is only used 4 times, ([Mat 19:5](#); [Mar 10:7](#); [Act 5:36](#); [Eph 5:31](#)) whereas it appears 52 times in the Hebrew Old Testament. In 3 of these New Testament references the word is applied to marriage. It is interesting that the one time that *proskollaō* is not applied to marriage, it still describes a joining (apparently in some kind of intense covenant) that was —“death did them part”:

[Act 5:36 CAB](#) For before these days, Theudas rose up, claiming himself to be someone, to whom was joined^{G4347} a number of men, about four hundred. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered...

So from Hebrew initially, we see that “being joined” is a serious and potent thing. Though both Biblical languages retain this concept of permanency, in the case of the New Testament Greek, the context of the New Covenant teaching affirms this even more than the dictionary definition.

But someone may say that in some of the previous examples, though it might be hard to undo the “sticking,” it would still be theoretically possible to do, since a person may change their mind, or break their covenant; One can renounce cleaving to God after having temporarily “stuck,” and one could have renounced cleaving to —“Theudas” in [Act 5:36](#) if they became disenfranchised with his rebellion. However, we should be sensitive to this very important distinguishing fact: Although people are commanded to “join” or “leave” themselves to God, God tells us that He (not man) joins or “leaves” two people together into one flesh. A person cannot “unjoin” other people or even themselves, when the strong hand of God has joined them together with their lawful spouse!

The Jews could not separate the rebels who had joined themselves to —“Theudas” in [Act 5:36](#), apart from the death of Theudas, and much more so, a pastor, a court or a couple cannot lift the omnipotent hand of God so that lawful spouses can walk away from being joined by Him, apart from death. But rather, in English and even more in Greek, just as we have shown in Malachi previously, we can see that it is God who joins a lawful couple in marriage:


[Mat 19:5 Jos.Trans.](#) and said, —“an account of this, a man will leave father and mother and will be joined to his woman [wife] and the two will both become into one flesh, [Gen 2:24]

The words, –will be joined” represent this one word in Greek, *proskollaō*, and this word is in what is called, –the Passive Voice” because in the Greek grammar the action is being done to the couple (for more, see V-FPI-3S in [RMAC](#) for this grammatical case). They are not –joining themselves” in Greek, they are –being joined.” Those who get lawfully married are (grammatically) –passive” in the process of joining, which leaves God as the sole operator of this spectacular phenomena.

Sadly, we are so used to thinking of this verse in a completely wrong way because a number of translations have incorrectly represented this in English for many, many years:

[Mat 19:5 KJV](#) ...For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

This incorrectly makes it look like the husband is actively doing the cleaving to his wife. Notice that –shall cleave” is a future verb (action) which in the [KJV](#) appears to be attributed to the husband. But in the actual Bible (in Greek) God describes this future verb (action) in the passive voice, so that we can definitely say that –cleaving” or –joining” “comes upon the husband from a third party” – which in this case is God Himself:

[Mat 19:5 Jos.Trans.](#) and said, — account of this, a man will leave father and mother and will be passively joined [*πῶς ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐξέρχεται– passive voice*] to his woman [*wife*]. . .

God’s strong and mighty hands have joined them, and no man can undo His grip. Only God can join two people into one flesh, and only He can unjoin them in death by the dissolving of one or both of the bodies which was joined.

Death Has Always Loosed a Spouse

It is very clear throughout the Bible that death has always loosed a person so that they could lawfully marry a second spouse without defilement.

(1) The “Levirate Marriage” of The “Kinsman Redeemer”

[Gen 38:6-8 CAB](#) And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar. **7** And Er, the firstborn of Judah, was wicked before the Lord; and God killed him. **8** And Judah said to Onan, Go in to your brother’s wife, and marry her as her brother-in-law, and raise up seed to your brother.

We see that Er was lawfully married to Tamar, but Er died. Tamar was then able to lawfully marry Er’s brother, Onan, without sin. It is clear from this that the ancients understood that death loosed a person to marry another. This is reinforced in the Law of Moses:

[Deu 25:5 CAB](#) And if brothers should live together, and one of them should die, and should not have seed, the wife of the deceased shall not marry out *of the family* to a man not related: her husband’s brother shall go in to her, and shall take her to himself for a wife, and shall dwell with her.

In the same way, [Luk 20:27-34](#) shows us that this could theoretically result in a woman having seven successive husbands without sin!

(2) Ruth and Naomi – Two Widows Contemplating Remarriage

In [Rth 1:11-13](#) Naomi understood that she and her two widowed daughter-in-laws could theoretically get lawfully married to other men, but Naomi did not do this herself because she considered herself to

be too old. On the other hand, because Ruth was a young widow she married Boaz after her first husband died (Rth 1:4-5; Rth 3:9-11, Rth 3:18, Rth 4:1-13).

(3) 1Sa 25 – David and Abigail – No Matter How Challenging and Difficult it May Be, Only Death Looses

In first Samuel 25 we are given the account of David, Nabal, and Abigail. Abigail was a very wise woman who, ironically, was initially married to an exceedingly foolish and wicked husband named Nabal who opposed David in the midst of his hardships in the wilderness. But things drastically changed at the end of this chapter.

1Sa 25:38-42 CAB And it came to pass after about ten days, that the Lord struck Nabal, and he died. **39** And David heard it and said, Blessed be the Lord, who has judged the cause of my reproach at the hand of Nabal, and has delivered his servant from the power of evil; and the Lord has returned the mischief of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and spoke concerning Abigail, to take her to himself for a wife. **40** So the servants of David came to Abigail to Carmel, and spoke to her, saying, David has sent us to you, to take you to himself for a wife. **41** And she arose, and bowed down with her face to the earth, and said, Behold, your servant is for a handmaid, to wash the feet of your servants. **42** And Abigail arose and mounted her donkey, and five maidens followed her. And she went after the servants of David, and became his wife.

1Sa 25 – Application – DEATH is the Only Way Out of a “Bad Marriage”

We see from this account that David did not speak one word about marrying Abigail until after it was clear that God had killed her first husband. No matter how bad Abigail’s marriage to Nabal was, David understood that only death would loose Abigail to be a lawful candidate for marriage to himself. And just as Abigail was faithful to her marriage to Nabal, so also (at a time when polygamy was allowed) David remained faithful to his difficult marriage to Michael until the day of her death (**2Sa 6:16-23; 1Ch 15:29**).

So what should we understand from this? No matter how bad of a marriage two people may have, it is God’s divine institution which we must reverence until He himself ends it. In one case we see that God was faithful to deliver Abigail out of her difficult marriage by killing Nabal. In the other case we see that even when David was not delivered from his difficult marriage, David still remained faithful to the one flesh covenant which God had bound him in. This is what it actually means to be a person of faith; this is what it means to be a real man or woman of God, who obeys God’s commandments even if it costs them all the comforts of this life.

And especially because we are commanded to love and pray even for our enemies in the New Covenant (**Mat 5:43-48**) it is clear that we cannot go about praying for the death of our spouse, but rather, we ought to pray for the heart of supernatural courage as David and Abigail had, who revered God’s covenant by faith under the most disheartening circumstances, because they made obedience to the righteous demands of God to be their sole consolation and refused to gratify the raging insanity of the whimsical demands of the flesh to have circumstantial peace and comfort in this short and temporary life. They believe the testimony of God above the agony of their very own souls, so God wrote down their righteous souls in His Holy Scripture as a standard for us to this day.

(4) Roman Seven

Rom 7:2-3 CAB For the woman who is under a man has been bound by law to the living husband. But if the husband should die, she is released from the law of the husband. **3** So then, while the husband is living, she will be called an adulteress if she becomes *married* to a different husband; but if her

husband should die, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, having become *married* to a different husband.

(5) First Corinthians Seven

1Co 7:8-9 – Encourages celibacy for widows (during the current distress) but permits marriage

1Co 7:39-40 WEB A wife is bound by law for as long as her husband lives; but if the husband is dead, she is free [ἐλευθερία ἕα – lit. a *loosed* type of person (the word –free” is somewhat figurative)] to be married to whoever she desires, only in the Lord. 40 But she is happier if she stays as she is, in my judgment, and I think that I also have God’s Spirit.

(6) First Timothy

1Ti 5:14 CAB Therefore I desire that the younger widows to marry, to bear children, to manage the house, to give no opportunity to the adversary because of reproach.

A Summary of Being “Glued”/ “Joined” and “Bound,” Together

We see that the Bible says that being joined and bound in marriage by God produces a **permanent, God-performed, one flesh bond for life**. Some have attempted to interpret the Bible as to contradict its self by saying that marriage bonds could be broken by a divorce. But we can clearly see from Scripture that being bound in the marriage covenant cannot be undone by anything but death, and this is without exception (Rom 7:2; 1Co 7:39)!

No wonder it’s permanent! God is the one that makes the two one! And it says, “... he shall open, and there shall be none to shut; and he shall shut, and there shall be none to open,” (Isa 22:22 CAB). This is repeated in Job 12:14, and in Rev 3:7. (Also see Job 9:12; 11:10). Scripture also clearly says that you cannot change what God says. See Deu 4:2; 12:32; Rev 22:18-19; Joh 13:16. So whatever He says and does concerning marriage sticks despite all the efforts of man.

Galatians 3:15 says, “Brothers, I speak like men. Though it is only a man’s covenant, yet when it has been confirmed, **no one makes it void, or adds to it.**” (Gal 3:15 WEB). If this is the case with a **human** covenant, which is merely witnessed by men, (and afterward enforced by God) then how much more absolutely **unbreakable** is a covenant that is both established and enforced by **God** Himself? And this we can clearly see to be the case even with the Scriptures concerning marriage quoted so far.

The Lawful Outcome of One Flesh – “Marriage” is Cohabitation in The Bible

Let us find out why it is so difficult to define what we are talking about at times when we say “marriage”

Summaries of Linguistic Variations

Please pay close attention and give these definitions very careful consideration:

- A “**Wedding**” – **in English:** a “wedding” is typically associated as the event at which a man and a woman are joined as husband and wife in marriage, but the distinct term “wedding” does not have an equivalent in the Bible. (Whenever you may see the word “wedding” in an English Bible version, typically it is actually taking the place of the primary Greek word for a marriage, as in a “marriage feast” or “marriage celebration”).
- “**Marriage**” – **in English:** “Marriage” is typically considered the resulting relationship of two people who have been joined together as husband and wife, (but the Bible never speaks in these terms about “Marriage”).

- “**Marriage**” – in Hebrew & Greek: —~~Marriage~~” is **not** the resulting relationship of two people who have been joined together, but rather it is particularly the socially established **cohabiting** of a man and woman. (Ideally, two people have already been lawfully and morally joined before this takes place, but this is certainly not true in many cases)
- “**Being Glued/ Joined**” – in Hebrew & Greek: Being Joined is passively received by a couple from God and takes place either before or during a marriage feast celebration as a **distinct element** from the marriage itself, when two people first make a one flesh covenant, (which might sometimes be long before a marriage celebration). – Notice that English speakers do not usually make this distinction between being glued or joined and getting married, but the Bible does. [Reminder Note: Being –glued”/ –joined” and being –bound,” together in a one flesh covenant was covered before addressing marriage here]

An Explanation of Linguistic Variations

Unfortunately there is often a lot of confusion in modern cultures when people start talking about –~~marriage~~,” especially when it is in reference to the Bible. An argument could definitely be made that neither –~~marriage~~” nor any other word is sufficient for the words in the original languages because they often have such drastically different connotations in particular passages, but because of lack of other words while still seeking to be as specific and correct as possible I am using the word –~~marriage~~” while not sticking with the English connotations of this word; I am exclusively going along with the Biblical connotations which are from Hebrew and Greek.

Please be aware: When comparing what I teach about —~~marriage~~” with what a few other people have said seeking to defend –~~marriage~~,” they might very well seem to have said things contrary to what I write here while in fact the difference may not actually add up to anything contradictory at all, since in many cases English writers are simply talking about —~~marriage~~” in an English sense (two people being joined together as husband and wife) while I am talking about —~~marriage~~” in a more Hebrew and Greek sense (two people coming together in cohabitation to live as husband and wife) and I am specifically communicating it this way for the sake of being as exact and consistent as I can as we go throughout the Bible with these Biblical concepts that have all been generically mixed up as —~~marriage~~” in the English language.

A primary example of this linguistic complication would be the saying, –~~marriage~~ is permanent till death.” While this is true in an English sense of the word, yet in a Biblical, Hebrew and Greek sense, you have to say –~~one~~ flesh is permanent...” rather than using the word –~~marriage~~,” because marriage (two people coming together to live as husband and wife) in the Bible is not actually the permanent part of what we often call marriage in English – So please try hard not to misunderstand me at any point: please stretch with me from the vagueness of our English concepts so you can also understand a Biblical world view about marriage in the Hebrew and Greek sense.

Although –~~marriage~~” is probably frequently the closest word in English for the Words used throughout the Bible, yet there are some foundational differences that we need to come to terms with before understanding numerous critical passages about marriage. One of the most basic concepts we often need to grasp is that numerous words behind –~~marriage~~” throughout the Bible at their basis are synonymous with simple cohabitation, and although by the time a marriage happens people have hopefully already passed into one flesh by a lawful covenant at some point, yet marriage itself does not, in itself, equate with or necessarily include the more profound concept of being one substance with a spouse.

Hebrew Expressions for Marriage

Note: While the following references may or may not represent the best source text for each given scenario, the following representative examples are taken from the MT simply to give a summary of Hebrew terminology.

- לָקַח” (*lāqach*), (H3947) – To **take**” (women), ([Gen 19:14](#); [Num 12:1](#); [Deu 25:5](#); [1Ch 2:21](#); [Rth 4:13](#))
- חָתַן” (*chāthan*), (H2859) – To **give**” (women), ([Gen 34:9](#); [Deu 7:3](#))
- נָסָא”/ נָסָה” (*nāsá’ / nāsáh*), (H5375) – To lift up/ carry (women), ([2Ch 13:21](#))
- יָשָׁב” (*yāshab*), (H3427) – To sit (women) down (i.e. *to live as wives in their houses*), ([Neh 13:23](#), [27](#)) [This is represented literally and consistently in the Greek LXX (as seen in the next sub point)]
- [others: יָבַם” (*yābam*), (H2992) – pertaining to the duties of a levirate marriage ([Gen 38:8](#)); H5772 וָנָה” (*ónáh*) – [Exo 21:10](#); see also: [Lev 22:12](#)]

All of these very strange sounding expressions often get represented as **—marriage**” in English (either directly or indirectly).

Greek Expressions For “Marriage”

- κνυ” (G1060; ALS p. 106) – the primary Greek word (especially in the New Testament) for marriage, which is frequently equated with cohabitation.
[An intensified variation of this is *marrying upon*: [Jos 23:12](#); [2Ch 18:1](#); [Ezr 9:14](#); [Mat 22:24](#) (also see v. 25, 30); also see *ἐθγακησθηται*” ([Luk 20:35](#); as well as [1Co 7:38](#))]
- ἡ γλῆ ὑπ’ ἄλ ξ ὀ” – the woman under a man, ([Num 5:29](#), and also v. 20; [Pro 6:24, 29](#); [Rom 7:2](#) (compare [Rom 7:1-4](#)))
- ἡ γλαθη σπλωθησκέλεο” – a cohabited woman (see the following examples)
- ἡ ἄβη γλαῖθα” – (if a man has) taken a woman (i.e. home to himself), ([Deu 24:5](#))
- ἡ ἑκ εταη ὠτήλ ἑαπῶ γλαῖθα” taken her to himself (as) a woman ([Deu 25:5](#))
- ἡ ἑθάζησαλ γλαῖθα” – They sat women down (i.e. to live as wives in their houses), ([Neh 13:23](#), [27](#)) [LXX: [2Esdras 23:23, 27](#)] [Note: *—sitting down*” is sometimes used as a figure of speech in the Bible for *living somewhere*. (this is typically represented simply as *marriage* in English)]

A Few Hebrew and Greek Terms for the Whole Process In General

In addition to the specific terms for entering into a covenant, and those specific terms for entering into marriage-cohabitation, we may also consider a few terms that are often used to describe the entire process in general

Becoming Women to Men

- Hebrew: נָשָׂה”/ נָשָׂה” (*ishshâh/ nâshîym*), (H802) – to **become women**” (i.e. wives) unto men
 - Greek: ἡ ἐλσλαη γλαῖθα”/ ἡ ἐστσαλ γλαῖθα” – becoming/ being women (i.e. to men)
- References: [Num 36:3, 6, 10-12](#), [Jos 23:12](#) (MT); [1Ki 11:19](#)

Lord/ Master

- בָּא” (*ba’al*), (H1167) – To be a **master**” (fig. *be owner*) of a woman ([Exo 21:3](#); [Deu 22:22](#); [Deu 24:1](#); [Pro 30:23](#); [Isa 54:1](#); [Isa 62:4](#), [Isa 62:5](#); [Jer 3:14](#) (LXX = *καταθπίρῦσσ*” – *lord down on*; fig. *rule over*, [compare: [Gen 18:12](#) (ὄξῆρο); [1Pe 3:6](#) (ὄξῆλ); [Rom 7:1](#) (θπίρῆ εη)]); [Mal 2:11](#) (MT = *—Married*,” but not in LXX)

Becoming A Man’s

- ἡ ἐλνκέλε γέλεταη ἄλ ξ ἰ” – Generically, becomes a man’s ([Num 30:6](#); [Deu 24:2](#); [Rth 1:12-13](#); [Eze 44:25](#); [Rom 7:1-4](#))

As an original bases, these terms seem to somewhat initially speak of establishing a one flesh covenant, but by application they are often carried over into cohabitation to describe the entire process as a whole as well.

Tragically, All of these Terms Are Simply Represented as “Marriage” in English Versions

Whether they are from Hebrew or Greek, or they are general terms or specific terms, or they are referring to one flesh or cohabitation, all of these very strange sounding expressions often get generically thrown together and irresponsibly represented as —marriage” with no distinction in English. It can be very haphazard and dangerous to erase such a defining distinction in such a vital teaching as —one flesh” and its relationship with —marriage!”

Do you get the impression that there is a huge cultural gap that Bible versions have been trying to bridge*? But in seeking to —bridge” they have actually —blurred” instead; English readers typically have virtually no idea what kind of concepts they have completely missed in the Bible about —one flesh” and —marriage.” The Bible says a whole lot of defining truth by using particular terms like this, and virtually no one in English has access to fully consider these important implications, since perceiving their distinctiveness is usually inaccessible to them.

Let it suffice to say for now as a summary that one of the main things English readers often have no clue about is the fact that the Bible does not consider these concepts of —marriage” (from Hebrew and Greek) as terms to indicate two people being joined per say, but these terms are about being together and experiencing the life of cohabitation as man and woman. — The —joining” part (where two people become —one flesh”) is truly important, but that is a distinct, preceding concept reserved particularly for the actual —covenant,” and is not directly attached so much to —marriage” as done in our modern cultures. This extremely important truth is all throughout the Scriptures, and we cannot really escape it if we are going to carefully and thoroughly cover the details surrounding divorce and remarriage.

[* The anthropological term —transculturation” is sometimes used in modern Bible translation theory to describe changing the proclamation of the Bible in order to make it fit with different people groups. Nearly all Bible versions do this to one degree or the other (including the KJV) but because you cannot actually separate language from culture, paraphrases at their very foundation are almost entirely based on —transculturation” (for more, see the section on —Bible Paraphrases” in the Bibliography)]

A Few Example Passages Where Marriage is Equated with Cohabitation

Gen_20:1-3 And Abraham said concerning [πεξι] Sarah his wife, She is my sister, **for he feared to say** [ῥτι — that], **She is my wife, lest at any time the men of the city should kill him for her sake** [“for her sake” — δι] [not in MT here, but MT & LXX include this saying in Gen_12:11-13; 26:7]. So [ε] Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took [ει αβελ] Sarah [i.e. Abimelech began a marriage by —taking” (ει αβελ) Sara into his house]. **3** And *God came **to** [εισηι ζελ ο ζεδο πξδο — the God came into (and) toward] Abimelech by night in his sleep, and said, **Behold, you’ll die** [MT: —you are a dead man” (WEB); (compare v. 7)] **for** [πεξι] **the woman whom you have taken** [ει αβεο], **for she has lived with a husband** [σπλωθεθ πα ολ ξι — lit. *cohabited with a man*, i.e. she has already been lawfully —taken” into another man’s cohabitation; MT: —for she is a man’s^{H1167} [lit. *master’s*] wife^{H1166} [lit. *mastered (woman)*]]” (KJV [with insertions]) — for both LXX & MT this is fig. *married*)

Note: it goes without saying that this remarriage (that is, this *re-cohabitation*) was immoral on the bases that she had already lived in another man’s house (that is, she had already married another man). This automatically invalidated her from entering into a lawful and moral covenant with Abimelech, even though he had performed a socially acceptable —cohabitation” or —marriage” with her. It was not enough for them to cohabit; He actually needed a lawful covenant which God would recognize, as a prerequisite and basis for this practice to be considered lawful and moral.

[Also note: this passage is covered much more thoroughly in chapter 2 under, —Gen 20 and Mal 2 — The Bible Specifically Teaches that God Punishes Ignorant Remarriage Adultery”]

Gen_24:67 CAB And Isaac went **into the house** [viθvλ] of his mother, and **took** [ει αβελ] Rebecca...

Deu_21:10-13 CAB And if when you... **11** ...should see... a woman beautiful in countenance, and should desire her, and take her to yourself for a wife*, **12** and should **bring her within your house**... **13** ...and she shall **abide in your house**... [then some specific instructions are given] ...and afterwards **you shall go in to her and dwell with her, and she shall be your wife**.

[* God really understands men, doesn't He?]

Deu 22:13 CAB And if anyone should take a wife, and dwell with [σπλοικήση (sunōikēsē) – lit. is together (sun) housed (oikēsē), or cohabits (with)] her, and hate her...

Deu 22:22 CAB And if a man be found lying with a woman ~~married to~~ [σπλοικισκέλεο – lit. who has been together housed or who has cohabited (with)] a man, you shall kill them both...

Deu 24:1 CAB And if anyone should take a wife, and should dwell with [σπλοικήση (sunōikēsē) – lit. is together housed, or cohabits (with)] her, then it shall come to pass if she should not have found favor before him... ~~that he shall write for her~~ [θαὶ γράσει αὐτῇ – and he writes for her] a certificate of divorce, and give it into her hands, and he shall send^[s] her away out of his house [viθiao – same root within the previous word (together housed)].

Deu 24:3 CAB and the last husband should hate her, and write for her a certificate of divorce, and should give it into her hands, and send her away out of his house [viθiao]...

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It is clear from these examples that the initiation of marriage is considered the exact same thing as the initiation of cohabitation.

1Pe 3:7 KJV Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* [σπλοικν λπεο – cohabit (same Greek word as before)] according to knowledge...

Isn't that interesting? Even Peter considers marriage a matter of cohabitation.

First Corinthians Seven Definitely Equates Marriage with Cohabitation

This becomes extremely evident and clear when we are careful to represent and consider the specific and exact details in this passage. Because this is a very involved chapter I am only including the part that addresses this question about “~~cohabitation~~” aspect here.

Note: This entire passage is covered much more thoroughly in Chapter 4

v. 1Co_7:9 – ~~“Marriage”~~ [used twice: γακεσ τσ αλ/ γακῆσαη] is preferred over (& contrasted with) ~~“burning”~~; (correlating with the marriage vs. prostitution/ fornication in v. 1Co_7:2)

v. 1Co_7:10 – The no separation‘ command (do not separate your women from you‘) is applied to married people (v. 1Co_7:9, not to brothal scenarios‘ [compare v. 1Co_7:6-8]) and is clearly referencing the specific teaching of Jesus (Mat_19:5-6; Mar_10:7-9)

v. 1Co_7:11 – Passively receiving Separation from marriage (v. 1Co_7:9-10) means being without marriage‘ [i.e. cohabitation (as mentioned in the next verse)] yet still being obligated to that spouse [i.e. by one flesh], as being commanded not to marry another; [note: just because you are ~~without marriage~~” (i.e. cohabitation) does not mean you are without ~~one flesh~~” and are allowed to marry another!]

v. 1Co_7:12-16 – Continue cohabitation [σπλ... viθειλ κετ’ – lit. together-... habit with, i.e. fig. marriage (as directly said in v. 1Co_7:11)] with an unbelieving spouse if possible [note: The experience of ~~“marriage”~~ is directly linked with cohabitation here in v. 1Co_7:11-16]

v. 1Co_7:14 – You can be one flesh with an unbeliever, and even clean their pagan flesh by faith*! (So this is certainly a lawful marriage) [* i.e. like David did for Michael]

v. 1Co_7:15 – If the unbeliever leaves, then be content to live in peace (i.e. the ~~“singleness”~~ in v. 1Co_7:11) [i.e. one flesh still exists! – you are not permitted to marry another]

(only unbelievers actively separate from a lawful marriage)

v. 1Co_7:16 – But if you can remain with an unbeliever then you might save them

Basing Our Understanding out of the Original Languages Really Helps

I generally did not have any idea that there was such a definite and consistent distinction between marriage and one flesh until I started reading the Bible in Greek. Before being corrected by the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, I thought that marriage in the Bible was essentially the ‘mystical’ reality of two people being made one flesh, but afterward I realized that this was not at all the way the Bible was describing its word for “marriage.” Instead, I finally noticed that this cohabitation-marriage theme is very strong and consistent throughout the entire Bible, especially when you actually become aware of the original words being used.

Although I certainly agree that there is sometimes an advantageous practicality to terms like, “being married in God’s eyes,” especially for the average English speaker, yet I am simply wanting to encourage us to be sensitive to the fact that the Scriptures never use the “marriage” word like this. When the Scriptures speak about this mystical reality, it usually uses the term “one flesh,” or a number of other phrases, and this can be disconcerting to an uninformed English reader trying to distinctly understand what God has said about the life-long *oneness* of lawful spouses (for example, [Mar 6:17-18](#); [1Co 7:11](#)).

Because there are so many people saying so many things using the same words to refer to different concepts, and much of this ends up having no real Biblical bases to begin with, there is a need to revisit our definitions and clarify these things before moving on. For the purposes of this book, whenever we say “marriage,” we are not talking about modern English definitions, but we have chosen to intentionally stick to the Biblical terms to avoid confusion from using inconsistent terminologies when referring to Scriptural passages and teachings. When we say “marriage” in this book, we mean the more basic concepts and words used in the Bible to speak of the experience of cohabitation, and not necessarily the more embellished connotations in use today. When we say “marriage covenant” we mean the preceding covenant that allows marriage (cohabitation) to be lawful.

I know that this can seem to bring up even more questions than it answers at first, but I have been compelled to go in this direction for the sake of the rest of the passages we need to look at, and when all is said and done we can have a more accurate and thorough understanding of one flesh and the marriage-cohabitation that is supposed to follow.

But for clarity in the meantime, before we go through the rest of this book, let set out some important clarifications:

- Although marriage is cohabitation in the Bible, this does not mean that all cohabitation (or marriage) is lawful before God (for example: if people live together without being in covenant, they have an unlawful, non-covenant cohabitation, or, “marriage” of sorts)
- In the Bible, everyone knew that a father had to give his daughter away to a man before they could ever lawfully cohabit (or even be together)
- In Biblical days, father’s and brothers took it as their vital honor and responsibility to protect the purity of their daughters (compare [Gen 34:7, 31](#); [2Sa 13:20-22, 28-29, 32-33](#); [Son 8:8-10](#))
- In ancient cultures when women were not commonly prostituted before the eyes of all society, it was extremely shameful and dangerous for a woman’s future livelihood to cohabit with a man before being in at least a socially recognized relationship with him. If society concluded that she had committed fornication, she could very easily never get married for the rest of her life (compare, for example, [2Sa 13:20-22](#)), and might have little to no way of finding a livelihood ([Rth 1:9](#); [3:1-18](#)).
- Because cohabitation was generally rare outside of a marriage celebration, marriage and cohabitation could easily be more or less synonymous in the Bible.

- Unless indicated otherwise, it is generally understood throughout the Bible that before cohabitation could take place, socially, a woman had to first enter into a covenant with a man so that he could first own her before they could lawfully cohabit.
- Therefore, one flesh is not marriage in the Bible, but one flesh is the result of a prerequisite covenant that is established first before lawful marriage (cohabitation) can take place.
- This covenant was sometimes established a few minutes before the cohabitation-marriage (Gen 24:64-67), but even more frequently, among the Jews, cohabitation was often done a whole year or more later (Mat 1:18-19). But whether it was a minute or a year, it is this covenant that precedes lawful, moral marriage, and was a standard practice among the ancient societies in the Bible for managing the purity of their people.
- If it is done according to God's rules, establishing a covenant before marriage (cohabitation) makes a man and a woman go into one flesh so that they can now morally and lawfully live together and belong to each other for the rest of their lives.
- If people are lawless and do not reverence the boundaries which God set on marriage, then they will think to enter into a covenant with whomever they please, yet if they seek to be with someone who is not free to marry, then their shameful attempt at making a lawful covenant will fail, and they will live in an immoral cohabitation (marriage) which is just as immoral, and even worse, than if they did not make a covenant to begin with

Isa 28:17-18 CAB ...and you that trust vainly in falsehood... **18** ...it [will] also take away your covenant of death, and your trust in Hades shall by no means stand...

Why Understanding Marriage as Cohabitation is Important

Missing the point that marriage means cohabitation in the Bible can cause great confusion! If we mistake marriage as being equivalent with one flesh then we have some enormous, irresolvable problems, but if we understand a more Biblical concept of marriage being cohabitation then the following passages make a lot more sense.

One passage of notable significance on this issue is first Corinthians seven:

1Co 7:10-11 CAB Now to those who have married I command, yet not I, but the Lord [commanded in Mat 19:6]: A wife is not to be separated from her husband-- **11** and even if ~~she does separate~~ [ἐλ ἐθαίρσζ ησφι] – *separation has happened to her – the Greek is in the -Passive Voice*], let her remain **unmarried** or be reconciled to her husband—and a husband is not to divorce his wife.

We see that the woman is not allowed to marry another even though she is called “~~unmarried~~” after divorce. This is because the moral binding is not dependant on currently experiencing “~~marriage~~” (cohabitation) but on the enduring and immovable reality of one flesh. The question is not whether or not she is currently “~~married~~” (cohabited), but whether or not she is still bound into one flesh with her first spouse. The geography and the social paperwork are not the question here, **but the substance and unity of her flesh is**. It is clear from this passage that she is both **unmarried**, and not permitted to **marry another**, because after divorce, a woman cannot go into re-cohabitation (remarriage) with another man and also accomplish another lawful covenant, even if it is socially established by another *marriage feast* or *wedding*, but even if they attempt to establish another covenant the marriage is still called adultery by the mouth of Jesus and the Apostles He sent us.

Luk 16:18 CAB Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and everyone who marries a woman who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.

It is clear that “marrying another” does not indicate a valid and lawful one flesh covenant. On the contrary: by calling remarriage adultery it is clear that the first covenant is still intact, and the second one is invalidated and gives them an immoral and unlawful cohabitation which is called adultery against the first, enduring covenant. If we thought that marriage was one flesh, then it is really an awfully confusing statement to say marrying another is adultery. But it is clear from Jesus’ Words that you do not become one flesh with another in this case, but instead He says you marry another, and this immoral re-cohabitation is called adultery.

Although this remarriage is recognized as an acceptable cohabitation by society, it is not recognized before God, which (along with other sins) is one of the main reasons why Jesus says previous to this:

Luk 16:15 CAB And He said to them, –You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. Because that which is exalted among men is an abomination before God.

We see that marrying another is not becoming one flesh with another person, but it simply refers to cohabiting with another person in a way that is socially acceptable and lawful in society’s eyes. God on the other hand is standing faithfully by the one flesh He formed in the garden, and treats any other social agreement as nothing but abominable sin. Because marriage in and of itself has nothing inherently to do with one flesh, therefore Jesus calls re-cohabitation (remarriage) with another person –adultery.”

In making a direct reference to John the Baptist (**Luk 16:16-17**), Jesus linked these statements against immoral marriage with what John had publically opposed Herod for, especially by using the Greek word –**βῆ δεταῖ**’ – *violence*, (as also used in **Mat 11:12-13** (βῆ δεταῖ . βῆσαι)) Jesus alluded to how John had ultimately heroically sealed this testimony with his own blood (**Luk 9:7-9**):

Mar 6:17-18 CAB For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of [**ἐθξ τεσε** – i.e. *grabbed mightily*] John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife [**τῆλ γπλαῖθα ηι πππ** – lit. *the woman of Philip*]; because **he had married her**. **18** For John would say to Herod, –**It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife** [**τῆλ γπλαῖθα τν ἄ ει υν σππ** – lit. *the woman, the one of your brother, or the woman of that of your brother*].”

Notes about Mar 6

- If divorce had freed Herodias from being Philip’s lawful wife, and Herod’s divorces had freed him, then Herodias and Herod may have gotten lawfully married.
- The fact that it was not lawful for Herod to marry Herodias proves very clearly that divorce had not freed her from being one flesh with Herod’s brother Philip.
- John does not say, “it is bad what you did,” but he says, “it is bad what you are doing.” – **It is not lawful**”* (in English and Greek) is a present-tense statement.
- Jesus very clearly links this to the New Covenant teaching against divorce and remarriage, not the Old Covenant teaching against incest (**Luk 16:15-18**).
- Just like Luke 16, Mark 6 shows that Herod marrying Herodias had nothing to do with a lawful one flesh covenant, but again, John shows that it was simply an adulterous, socially recognized re-cohabitation, or –marriage.” – This has nothing to do with the one flesh which Jesus defended from the garden!

[* the Greek is, –**ἔθξ εμεστ**” – this is an action verb in the *Present Tense, Active Voice, and Indicative Mood*]

4. Salvation Never Alters Your Marriage Covenant

The Marriage Covenant Applies to Everyone, Before and After Salvation

The Bible consistently recognizes marriages in all kinds of different circumstances, by all kinds of people, whether young or old, Jew or foreigner, monotheist or pagan, sinner or saint:

Gen_4:16-17 – Cain

Gen_4:19 – Lamech

Gen_12:18-19 – Abraham and Pharaoh

Gen_20:17-18 – Abimelech, a pagan Philistine (see all of [Gen_20](#) for the whole story)

Gen_39:4-13 – Joseph vs. Potiphar’s wife

1Ki_16:30 – Ahab was godless, but...

1Ki_16:31; 21:5, 7, 25 – Ahab had a wife

Dan_6:24 – Daniel’s accusers

Mat_14:1-4 – Philip the Tetrarch’s remarried wife (who is still called Philip’s wife after she was remarried to Herod)

Mat_27:19 – Pilate

Luk_17:27 – “The days of Noah” – God noticed that they married

1Co_7:10-16 – Believing spouses commanded to stay married to unbelieving spouses (also compare verse 39)

[This list of verses was initially a summary of these things as discussed in “Fill Death do us Part?” by Mr. Joseph Webb, and then refined over many years for use in this book]

By far my favorite highlight from this list is when Joseph resisted adultery and said, “you are his wife... how could I sin against God?” ([Gen_39:9](#)). We see that at the very basis of Joseph’s righteous flight from immoral adultery is a recognition of the validity of Potiphar’s covenant marriage to his wife.

All of these verses show that God recognized and cared about marriage covenants made by everyone from saints to pagans. It is very clear from this that unsaved people can marry and it still counts before God, even if they get truly saved one day down the road. Because of this Paul commanded converted spouses to remain with their unbelieving spouses in hopes of saving them, even though the marriage was made before conversion ([1Co_7:10-16](#)).

Whether we have been married, divorced, or even remarried, God saw, recognized, and sealed our first (valid) marriage, even if it was before or after we decided to become a christian. If God knew how to recognize Philip’s marriage to Herodias, then He knows how to recognize our marriages too. If God knew how to testify against Herodias’ remarriage to Herod, then He also knows how to warn us today against our adulterous remarriages, whether or not we think we are “saved.”

Marriage Covenants Are Love-Debts that Continue After Salvation

So many people are so willing to minimize their obligations to their spouses when it has entered into their heart to divorce and remarry, but contrary to this, the Scriptures have obligated people to their lawful marriage by calling it a “~~debt~~.” Not only is it called a “~~debt~~,” but it is described as a covenant that is so binding that not even conversion will alter its terms.

But some may complain and say that it is inappropriate to describe marriage as a “~~debt~~.” However, aren’t we encouraged to consider “~~love~~” a debt that should never be considered fully repaid?

Divorce and Remarriage Repentance Revolution - www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com

The Bible Definitely Tells Us to Be Indebted to Love Each Other

Rom_13:8 CAB Owe nothing [κε ελ] to no one [κε ελη], except to love one another...

This —love~~debt~~” especially applies to family:

1Ti_5:4 CAB But if a certain widow has children or grandchildren*, let them first learn to show piety to their own household and to make repayment to their parents**; for this is acceptable before God.

[* ἔθγονλνο – i.e. descendants; lit. –someone” (vo) –generated” (γνλ) –out” (ἔθ) of her]

[** πξγγ λνηο – the exact same word in English is: –progenitors” – those who were before you (πξv/ pro), and ended up –generating” (γ λνηθ) you, including your grandparents; i.e. your *forefathers/ ancestors*]

And when it comes to the most important family relation, of **marriage**, we can be certain that this love is a debt” that God will require us to pay:

Eph_5:25, 28 CAB Husbands, love your own wives, just as **Christ** [ὁ χριστος – the anointed one] also loved the church and gave Himself for her... 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives... (also Col_3:19)

Tit_2:4 CAB ...that they may urge the young women to be lovers of their husbands...

In fact, love is a continual debt in marriage that should always be considered binding as long as a spouse is alive:

Rom_7:2 CAB For the woman who is under a man has been bound by law to the living husband. But if the husband should die, she is released from the law of the husband.

In this verse bound” is the Greek word —σ ” (*deō*) which is where we get our word debt.”

Do you think for one moment that you can divorce your spouse, and God is going to look down on you from heaven and not notice that you are not paying the debt He has bound you to? Now are you going to add remarriage on top of that, and claim to be obligated to a new spouse, and then assume that by covering your tracks God will forget the original debt? We should already know that this is not true.

Whether our debts are generic, relational, or even monetary, God wants us to address our indebtedness to one another, and resolve all things while always paying the continual —love~~debt~~”, whether that is to parents, siblings, or even to those with which we have marital obligations. But using salvation” as a way out of these debts is simply an attempt aimed at avoiding our obligations. We should take warning at how this is condemned by the following Scriptures:

From Zacchaeus’ Example to John the Baptist’s Preaching – We Must Address Our Indebtedness!

About monetary debt and obligations before salvation the Bible gives us the following story:

Luk_19:2, 5-6, 8-9 CAB And behold, there *was* a man named Zacchaeus, and he was a chief tax collector, and this *man* was rich.... 5 ... Jesus ...said to him, **—...I must stay in your house.**” 6 So he ...received Him, rejoicing... 8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, **—Look, Lord, I give half of my possessions to the poor; and if I have extorted anything from anyone, I restore fourfold.**” 9 And Jesus said to him, **—Today salvation has come to this house...**

More than twenty times “tax collectors” are mentioned in the Bible, and only one of these references does not **specifically** link them with sin:

[Mat_5:46-47](#); [9:9-12](#); ([10:3](#)); [11:19](#); [18:17](#); [21:31-32](#); [Mar_2:14-17](#); [Luk_3:12-13](#); [5:27-32](#); [7:29-34](#); [15:1](#); [18:10-14](#); [19:1-10](#).

For this reason John the Baptist commanded the repentant tax collectors, “Collect nothing more than the *amount* which has been commanded to you,” ([Luk_3:13b CAB](#)). Due to the unjust political structure afforded to tax collectors during New Testament times, Zacchaeus had been given many chances over many years to extort a lot of money from a lot of people who were heavily taxed at that time (notice: [Luk_19:2](#)). But like practically all other tax collectors, Zacchaeus did not legally owe these people anything on paper as a result of doing this, but morally before God he owed many of them a lot for what he stole before salvation. In the same way, a person may be legally divorced on paper and no longer legally obligated to their first spouse, but before God they are held to a much greater debt that is of greater value than all the money Zacchaeus ever stole. Love does more than the Law in making us indebted to each other, and the marriage debt is enforced by a much mightier fist than all the legislation that the government could ever make. And if you willfully continue to neglect to pay the marriage debt to selflessly love, cherish, and provide for your spouse, how will you escape the wrath of God?

Zacchaeus’ earthly debts did not disappear when he was saved, but instead, Jesus announced that he was saved because he repented and paid his debts. Although he was in the midst of the process of being (vertically) forgiven of every debt that he ever acquired before God, Zacchaeus showed that he was still (horizontally) responsible unto the people whom he had stolen from by repaying them, instead of simply “saying a little prayer” as we so often do, as though they should all simply disappear!

How much more serious are marriage covenants than money! Money commitments are serious, but marriage is the most serious horizontal commitment one can make in this life. If Zacchaeus showed us that monetary debts remain after salvation, we can be certain that marriage commitments remain all the more!

Although we know that both would definitely end at death, how much more will original marriage debts endure more than monetary debts, enduring through salvation, remarriage and everything else? If salvation could erase marriage covenants made before salvation, then how much easier could it erase the financial debt that a person may owe which was stolen and often spent long before they were saved? And do not neglect to notice that it was only when Zacchaeus had given to the poor and addressed his monetary debts (“in the flesh”) which were acquired before salvation, that Jesus said, “~~T~~oday salvation has come to this house...” ([Luk_19:9 CAB](#)). Although it is certain that we must never even think to “pay God back” for our moral crimes we have committed before His face throughout our lives (ex. [Rom_4:1-8](#)), yet, we had better zealously address our indebtedness to one another if we wish to have any reasonable hope of “salvation coming to our house” as it did with Zacchaeus.

And just as John the Baptist commanded the repentant tax collectors, “Collect nothing more than the *amount* which has been commanded to you,” ([Luk_3:13b CAB](#)) so all the more zealously he charged Herod, the remarried King, —. It is not lawful for you to have her.” ([Mat_14:4 CAB](#); Also [Mar_6:18](#); [Luk_16:15-18](#)). This is because the Scriptures say:

[1Co_7:4 CAB](#) The wife does not have authority ^{G1850, G3756} over her own body, but the husband *does*. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*.

Therefore, if one divorces and remarries, they steal their body from their lawful spouse and give it to another to whom it does not belong! We must make restitution as much as possible if we hope to be saved like Zacchaeus was.

This much that we have addressed here can be clearly seen, but the problem is that we are unwilling to repent and make restitution in this area, because we are stubbornly committed to the slavery of the flesh and it sins, and will by no means obey God when it means sacrificing our own selfish happiness to actually love other people in truth, as God commanded.

Jesus Commands us to Face Our Indebtedness

Instead of being like Zacchaeus, we make up excuses to maintain our stolen property by saying it became ~~re~~possessed” after salvation. Somehow, we think we no longer belong to our spouses (despite what God did in making us belong to them) and because ~~all~~ things are new” we are free from any obligations because of religious affiliation. What sick and filthy perversion! Where is anything like this ever taught in the Scriptures? Oh, how we have become like the Pharisees!

Mat_15:4-9 WEB For God commanded [1 εγσλ (εηπελιν A-texts) – saying], Honor your father and your mother, ^{and,} He who speaks evil of father or mother, let him be put to death [ζαλ τω τει επτ τσ – Lit. with ~~death~~” let him ~~finish~~” life]. ⁵ But you say, Whoever may tell his father or his mother, ~~Whatever~~ help you might otherwise have gotten from me is a **gift devoted to God** [δωξυλ – lit. a gift; fig., cultural, contextual application: to God (i.e. releasing me from being obligated/ indebted to you)],” ⁶ he shall not [νδ κη – i.e. not at all] honor** his father or mother. ⁷ You have made the commandment of God void because of your tradition. ⁸ You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, ⁹ These people draw near to me with their mouth, And honor** me with their lips; But their heart is far from me. 9 And in vain do they worship me, Teaching as doctrine [η σ θνλπεο η ασθαι αο – teaching as teachings] *rules made by [ελτ ι κατα – commandments of] men.”

[** –Honor” – we should take note that ~~honor~~” often means ~~financial support~~,” as in numerous passages such as 1Ti_5:3-18; esp. compare: 1Ti_5:17-18. This is contrasted sharply with simply ~~honoring~~” with one’s lips in v. 8, which (culturally) most Jews should have been able to recognize as a true ~~hypocrisy~~” when pointed out like this]

Do you see the following from Mat 15?

- Children owed their parents —honor
- God ordained and commanded it
- The Pharisees excused sons and daughters from this God-ordained debt to their parents by religious commitments
- In the name of ~~God~~” they made void the very debt that God had ordained
- We do the same thing when we say that salvation somehow frees us from our original marriage commitments
- It is not the ~~freedom of the New Covenant~~” that makes us ~~free~~” from the debts that God says we owe to our spouses, but the hypocrisy and lawlessness of the Pharisees

Applying Mat 15: Repent of the Lawless Hypocrisy of the Pharisees! – Obey God’s Commands to Pay People what You Truly Owe Them Before God

Mat_16:11-12 CAB How is it you do not perceive that I did not speak to you about bread, but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?” ¹² Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine [teaching] of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Luk_12:1 CAB ...Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

Notice that He did not say that the leaven of the Pharisees was —legalism” or —being too literal” or —strict,” but rather He said it was —hypocrisy.” And this hypocrisy is used today within the church to release people from their God-ordained debts to their marriages in the name of —God” (Mat_15:4-6).

I hope you can see that we are doing essentially the exact same thing in the area of marriage that the Pharisees were doing in their day with children’s obligations to parents. God is not opposed to His own work and purpose. His redeeming work of salvation in a person’s life will never undo His uniting work of making two people one (and indebted to one another) in a valid marriage covenant! Remember He said,

Luk_11:17 CAB ...Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate, and a house divided against a house falls.

God will not forget the commitments that He personally sealed when a person is made one with their lawful spouse, because He will not contradict His own work. God takes covenants seriously. He will remember the debts that He ordained to be kept as holy marriage covenants. Because He sealed this covenant, He will also condemn everything that defies and profanes this covenant, including remarriage.

Salvation Has No Bearing on the Validity of Marriage Covenants

Although a lot changed when I repented of my sins to follow and obey Jesus, when I was saved from sin I did not all of the sudden turn around and find myself lawfully married to a spouse! This may sound like a funny statement, but let me go on... If someone was lawfully married and was then saved, this would not make their marriage unlawful. Salvation neither binds an unmarried person in marriage nor does it —unbind” a married person from their current, lawful spouse. Why is this? Because though we should know that salvation is infinitely powerful to save sinners from sin, **salvation never changes the status of anyone’s marriage covenant before God.**

Why am I making such a big deal out of such an obvious point? Because despite these obvious realities many church-goers still say that if one was not —saved” when they remarried, and they got —saved” while remarried, then their second marriage is no longer adultery, because now they are a —christian,” and —all things are new,” (a mockery of 2Co_5:17). Do you see that we are suggesting that salvation changes one’s marital status if we say that remarriage is no longer adultery against the first marriage after —salvation”?

While people go on saying, —I’m forgiven of my divorce and remarriage,” playing religious games in order to avoid obeying the Scriptures and convincing ourselves out of our modern gospel that our marriage state has changed by —getting saved” will not —forgive” us from our responsibility and obligation to our first marriage covenant, nor will it exempt us from the repentance that God calls us to in forsaking relationships that He calls adulterous and sinful.

If remarriage is somehow considered adulterous by God, it is clearly because God considers another marriage valid. That valid marriage, which shows a remarriage to be adulterous, cannot cease to exist because one is saved. Salvation will not and cannot delete that (first) valid marriage, because, **salvation does not change one’s marital status.**

A valid marriage covenant is not like sins that are —forgiven at the cross of Calvary,” since such covenants are not sin (1Co_7:28, 36-39; 1Ti_4:3 → Dan_11:37; Heb_13:4)! Because being one flesh with your lawful spouse is actually **good** and is not **sin**, lawful —marriage” covenants cannot be —forgiven”! Salvation reinforces doing what is good; it does not relieve us from responsibility to the good, one flesh thing which God made!

So we see then, if a remarriage is adulterous, it will continue to be defined this way by God as long as the first, good, lawful marriage covenant continues to exist, and saying a “salvation prayer” will not forgive you of being obligated to what is good, or somehow make the first marriage disappear.”

2Co 5 – We Must Believe that “All Things Have Become New” – WITHOUT HYPOCRISY!

I hope these things are clear to us by now, but for the sake of all understanding and clarity, let’s address 2 Corinthians 5:17, especially because it is in the name of this Scripture that many church people try to justify their inconsistent assumptions about marriage and salvation:

[2Co_5:17 CAB](#) ...the old things passed away; behold, all things have become new.

This is a very powerful Bible verse that I quote in prayer on a regular basis. But if we practice what I call “Fragmented Presumptuous Theology” then we may be able to ignore the clear teachings in the rest of the Bible, including the immediate context of 2 Corinthians 5:17 itself, to pretend this verse into saying that God “makes all marriage relationships” “new.” Against all sanity and zeal for righteousness, we are intently hearing a filthy prostitute preach to us that we have randomly stop being lawfully bound to people we don’t want to be married to, and any adulterous remarriages that we want to stay in are all of the sudden changed so that they are no longer sin for us. I beg you to hear: this irrational mindlessness is a damnable crime which you will certainly not escape the hot wrath of God for falling into!

My prayer for your benefit is that you will agree that a closer look at this passage shows us that it is being much more specific and focused than most church goers have often given it credit for.

Basic Points We All Already Know About 2Co 5

- If a person with wrinkles becomes a follower of Jesus, we all know that their wrinkles do not automatically disappear at conversion, nor does their hair change color! And why is that? I thought all things became new! **Note:** I do not mock this Scripture, but rather, the crude foolishness that we seek to change it into! (compare [Mat 5:39](#); [2Co 11:19-21](#))
- We know this does not mean that a person is made physically young again, especially because this has already been discussed and specified in the Scriptures ([Joh 3:1-10](#))
- It goes without saying that this verse is talking about forgiving sins and making humans into new creations inside spiritually, not changing their physical nature so that they are young again, or are no longer physically related to their parents or spouses.
- While making all things new does change the debt we owe God (vertically, in the Spirit), it does not change the relationship debt we owe our spouses (horizontally, in the flesh)
- Claiming all things have become new in order to allow people to remain in an adulterous remarriage would have to presuppose that salvation stops a person from being married to their first spouse and makes them married to the person they committed adultery with. Now doesn’t that sound ridiculous?
- Making all things new obviously does not change a person’s marital status and let them off the hook so that they are no longer obliged to their spouses and can continue to commit adultery with other people’s spouses! – that is the exact opposite of Biblical Christianity that demands repentance, and the new birth of righteousness that sets us free from sin (for example, [Rom 6, 7](#), and [8:1-17](#))!

Let us not ignore the meaning of this verse by forgetting the verse that precedes it:

[2Co_5:16-17 CAB](#) ...from now on, **we regard** [$\nu\acute{\iota}$ ἀκελ – **perceive**] **no one according to the flesh**. Even though we have known Christ [$\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\nu$ – anointed one] according to the flesh, yet now we know *Him thus* no longer. **17 Therefore** [$\sigma\sigma\tau\epsilon$ – because of this (i.e. what we just said)], if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Please Notice These Points When Considering 2Co 5

- Verse 16 specifically **excludes** “~~–flesh~~” from being included with the substance of what is being addressed by the passage.
- The scope of “~~–all things~~” that “~~–have become new~~” in verse 17 is narrowed by the “~~–flesh-exclusion~~” mentioned in verse 16.
- “~~–all things~~” specifically excludes “~~–flesh~~.”
- Marriage is a covenant based on “~~–flesh~~” (i.e. “~~–the two will become~~ [into] one **flesh**” [Gen 2:24, CAB](#)).
- “~~–all things...becoming new~~” specifically excludes the realm of marriage (that is, “~~–flesh~~”).
- Marriage, divorce, and remarriage are on the plane of **flesh** that does not “~~–become new~~” after salvation.

If we die to this life to follow Jesus, God forgives us from our sins and “~~–makes all things new~~” by an incredible, supernatural, mysterious rebirth of God’s Spirit ([Joh 3:1-10](#)) but He does not wipe out our fleshly responsibilities and obligations in the process. By making us new and setting us free from sin, He does not allow us to get away with disregarding justice by neglecting to meet our responsibilities to others, but Jesus actually enables us to do what we could never fulfill in our sinful flesh in being devoted to loving other people, and in every way fulfilling and even surpassing our responsibilities to care for and provide for each other. This definitely includes marriage in the same way as it includes our responsibilities to honor our parents and take care of our children, and lawful marriage is even more of an enduring obligation than all of these things!

We should repent of making excuses to avoid our lawful responsibilities before God, and we should instead begin to “~~–perceive no one according to flesh~~” ([2Co_5:16 Jos.Trans.](#)). Then we can be spiritually minded and be released from living in sin when we declare that “~~–all things have become new~~” ([2Co_5:17 CAB](#)), and never make the gross mistake of thinking we can be released from our lawful marriage covenants (which are accomplished in our flesh by God) by some filthy, treacherous, and unbiblical view of “salvation,” that makes us no longer responsible to our fellow man and lawful spouse!

College Debts Teach Us about Marriage Debts

We know of many college students in Florida in my home city who loaded up massive amounts of debt while going through college. Some of these students responded to Jesus, and renounced their former evil ways of living in luxury and indulgence and now want to follow Jesus and walk in truth from here on out. What do you suppose I should counsel them to do about all of their student loans and credit card debt? Should they call up their creditors and say (as others have suggested), “~~–I have great news! I don’t owe you anything anymore because all things are new now that I’m saved!” Certainly we all know that this would be wrong, and refusing to pay debts can sometimes get a person into serious trouble! Wouldn’t it instead be right of me to remind them of things like Zacchaeus’ example (as we already went over), and how he paid back debts to follow Jesus? We see then that obligations that we have gained in our flesh do not automatically “~~–go away~~” even if we are legitimately made alive in the Spirit.~~

The Bible says that covenants cannot be broken, as established toward the end of chapter 1, (where we pointed out [Gal 3:15](#)). This is because a person’s debts (and the covenants they made to pay them) are based on their “~~–physical side~~” and not on their spirit, and it is certain that our physical side (our flesh) does not become new at salvation. Marriage covenants are almost entirely based on flesh

[Ex.—.the two will become [into] one **flesh**” (Gen 2:24)] and practically do not require the “personal spiritual involvement” on the behalf of a couple to establish such a covenant.

So whether or not you are saved does not have a bearing on whether or not your marriage is valid.

1Co 7 – The Command to Remain With a Pagan Spouse Proves Salvation Does Not Change One Flesh

Those believers who were already married to unsaved spouses when they believed, were commanded to remain married to those unbelieving spouses (1Co 7:12-16). If these unions were not validly binding marriage covenants established and sealed by God due to the other spouse’s lack of salvation, then they would not have been commanded to remain married. If the marriage to an unsaved spouse was not valid due to their lack of salvation, then 1 Corinthians 7:12-16 would be a command to remain in fornication! If the verse that says “all things have become new” meant that a previous marriage had been undone, then they would have committed fornication by staying together!

So original marriage unions are not undone by salvation, and it should be easy for all of us to say that this would be a ridiculous (and clearly unbiblical) thing to believe. But I also hope we will stick with the obvious when it comes to divorce and remarriage: If we are consistent then we will say: a previously adulterous remarriage would still be adultery (if continued) even if one did get truly saved. They must then face up to the reality of their legitimate marriage covenant and forsake the adulterous one, or else walk away from Jesus.

Summaries of Salvation and Marriage – It is Absolutely Clear that these Standards Apply to Everyone!

In the end, it is really simple: Although I have sought to make these explanations helpful to you, in the end the question about adulterous remarriage and getting saved is extremely simple and basic, and I am consistently amazed at how much we have to wrestle through just to get people to believe the clear and simple thing that Jesus said:

Luk 16:18 CAB **Everyone** [“everyone” as in, well, “everyone” – Christian, Jew, or pagan...] who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery^{G3429} [is committing adultery (κνη~~ει~~ει – Present Tense: *is committing adultery*)]; and everyone who marries a woman who is divorced from her husband commits adultery^{G3429} [is committing adultery (κνη~~ει~~ει – Present Tense: *is committing adultery*)].

If we believe this verse, we will know that it is universally applicable with or without salvation. If we believe Jesus, we will believe that the adultery of remarriage applies to “**Everyone**.” If you don’t believe this yet, then you are not a Biblical Christian yet, and you need to repent and start believing and obeying Jesus.

Becoming a “christian” and “having your sins forgiven” does not entitle you to keep stolen property! Because of this, anyone who claims christianity and pretends that it gives them a license to keep doing what Jesus calls adultery is a blatant liar in need of repentance. This goes without saying, and there is no more time in this desperate hour when souls need truth to spend our lives playing such religious games! Here the Words of Jesus now, and, perhaps for the first time, take Him seriously when He says divorce and remarriage is adultery!

It goes without saying that those who pretend to “get saved” will find just about any and every excuse in the world to keep doing the same sins that they want to do, including adulterous remarriage. We don’t need any more “pretend salvations” like this. It is definitely high time people stop pretending to “get saved” and finding reasons to stay in their sin, and finally got saved from their sin to the point that they actually started leaving it! And if our generation keeps on “getting saved,” and also keeps on living in sin, then what did they get saved from anyway?

Mat_1:21 CAB ...and you shall call His name JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins.”
(Also see Act_3:26)

CHAPTER 2 – DIVORCE, ADULTEROUS REMARRIAGE, AND REAL REPENTANCE

We need Jesus' salvation! We need the Gospel which He preached. But who will give it to this age, and where will we find an escape from such wrath that is due to a rebellious and proud people who do not care that their standard practice throughout modern churchianity is filled to overflowing with filthy immorality... and yet no one cares and hurts over this?! I charge you as a reader who is hearing truth: separate yourself from the filthiness; testify against the blatant sin; rebuke the perverted rebellion, and call all people which God may make available to you to run quickly into the obedience of Jesus!

And how will we know how to repent? The Scriptures have declared these things to us. If your heart will be righteous, then consider and hear the Words of God and the message that has been proclaimed by Jesus and those He sent to us, as God has continued to warn us against adulteress remarriage by the voices of those who have heard His voice.

1. Some Basic Terminology

The Biblical Words Behind “Divorce” in English

The primary word for “divorce” in the New Testament is $\alpha\pi\lambda\upsilon\sigma$ (*apoluō*) – literally, to *lose away*. When applied outside of the context of marriage it means to socially dismiss people, and when applied within the context of marriage it means to socially *dismiss* a wife out of a man's house. Such *dismissals* were official and formal ways of socially releasing or *losing away* people from the obligation to remain with the one who was *dismissing*. With crowds this loosening was given so all the people officially and corporately recognized that they were no longer obliged to stay and listen to a speaker (for example). This was back when people actually had the dignity to stay and listen to a speaker for hours, and recognized the perverseness and disrespect of simply “leaving early.” – they needed to be loosed away before leaving, because they actually cared about propriety at that time! But with a wife, *losing away* said that she no longer had the obligation or right in society to remain in a man's house.

[Note: We very much look forward to completing and greatly expanding this point whenever God may help us. There is so much more we are eager to cover, and there is much more to come in future updates if God may help us in this way.]

Mat 5:32 KJB But I say unto you, That whoever divorces^{G630} his wife, except for a saying of prostitution^{G4202} [i.e. *fornication*], causes her to commit adultery...

Mat 19:9 KJB And I say to you, any one^{G3739, G302} shall divorce^{G630} his wife, only^{G1508} for prostitution^{G4202} [i.e. *fornication*]...

As we can see from the passages we have covered and are about to cover, it is certain by the mouth of Jesus that the civil action of divorce is effective for socially dismissing [$\alpha\pi\lambda\upsilon\sigma\eta$] a wife from her husband, but has absolutely nothing to do with the morally binding obligations of one flesh. You may be truly released from society's obligations by official paperwork that boasts great claims of “freedom” so that you may do as you please with other partners, but in the realm of morality Jesus has made a total mockery of our proud pretensions of divorce by publicly calling remarriage out as adultery.

Defining and Understanding Geographical “Separation”

It is very helpful to be aware of the Greek word behind “separation” throughout the marriage passages:

–χωρίζω (chōrizō), (G5563) means to put space between two objects or people. This “space” is inherently *geographical*, because “space” is at the very bedrock of the foundation of the word itself. –χωρίζω (chōrizō), (G5563) is derived from the word –χωρά (chōra), (G5561) which is the common word for a *geographical expanse*, or *range of land*, such as a “field” or country (or *area*). This *geographical expanse* in turn comes from the word –σχίσμα (chasma), (G5490), which is where we get our word “chasm” from. This gaping “chasm” is the “great gulf fixed” in [Luk_16:26](#) (KJV) between the burning part of hell and “Abraham’s bosom.”

Spatial Separation Summary: (1) (Geographical) –Separation” [–χωρίζω (chōrizō), (G5563)] comes from, (2) A *geographical expanse*/ –Country” (area/ “space”), which basically comes from, (3) A “chasm” [–σχίσμα (chasma), (G5490)] – Needless to say, the connotations of great spaces of separation are very present in these terms.

As it deals with the primary word for separation [–χωρίζω (chōrizō)], this geographical separation can certainly be used for figurative expressions in “separating” concepts, yet its *geography* is especially expressed when you are talking about “separating” two people. All of this is at least one reason why Mr. Strong includes in his definition of “separation,” “. . . to place room between. . .” (Strong’s, G5563). Being sensitive to this *geographical essence* (especially as it is applied to people) can be very critical for understanding a number of important passages.

[1Co_7:10](#) CAB Now to those who have married I command, yet not I, but the Lord: A wife [woman] is not to be **separated** [passively] [χωρίζω] (G5563) from her husband—

If we are informed about the Greek word behind this term, then we can more specifically understand what Paul is actually saying for a husband not to do.

He says, “yet not I, but the Lord” – **In other words:** “I’m commanding you, but I’m not the one who originated this command: Jesus is. . .” – It is clear that Paul is reiterating the following commands that Jesus had already given against such geographical separation. . .

[Mat_19:5-6](#) KJ2000 . . . a man. . . shall cleave to his wife: and they two shall be one flesh. . . 6 Therefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has **joined** [σπλ. δεπμελ. – fastened/ yoked] together, let not man put asunder ^{G5563} [χωρίζω] (G5563) – “. . . let man not **place room between**” – same Greek word as used in [1Co_7:10](#)]. (also see [Mar_10:9](#))

And what do these Scriptures show us about geographical separation? If we are sensitive to the Greek we can particularly see that a command not to “separate” is a command not to do things that result in geographical space between the one flesh, after God has yoked them together in marriage. This command not to “put space between” the one flesh relationship, is a command that most specifically includes a divorce (compare v. 3 and v. 9). Though divorce or separation may be defying what God has accomplished it does not actually stop God’s work of one flesh, but the worst that separation can do to it is to “place room between” it, and this is reinforced by the fact that remarriage is called adultery after being geographically separated by a divorce.

If it is adultery to remarry, we can see clearly that the one flesh relationship has remained perfectly intact despite the separation and divorce, and it continues standing to testify against remarriage. So God teaches us here, “Don’t place room *geographically* with space between those whom God has made into one *relationally* in substance.”

Remarriage After Divorce? – No Permissive Statement Given

There is no permissive statement whatsoever in the whole New Testament about remarriage after divorce. (Though there are a few that liberals slander as giving permission to divorce and remarry, which we cover later in this work, there are no actual Bible verses that really do this). The only permissive statements in the New Testament allowing remarriage is when a person may marry another after death, not divorce.

2. Deuteronomy 24 – A Brief Preview Summary of The Mosaic Law of Divorce And Remarriage

Because we cover this passage a little later in much greater detail under the point entitled, “~~Deuteronomy 24 Told the People Not to Return After Repentance from Remarriage,~~” we are simply giving a very brief summary here:

A. A Brief Summary of Deu 24:1-4

- v. 1 – Moses puts forth a typical case where a man might divorce his wife for whatever reason
- v. 2 – She will typically remarry
- v. 3 – The second husband might also divorce her, or else die
- v. 4 – The command in such a context is that the first husband cannot take her back after she is defiled

B. Basic Notes About Deu 24:1-4

Notice these basic things about [Deu_24:1-4](#) when reading the following passages

- This law (passively) permits (or *accommodates*) divorce and remarriage
- In verses 1-3 Moses puts forth a typical scenario in order to enact a particular, limiting command in verse 4
- As we can see in a moment, Jesus attributes this law as an accommodation for the hardness of heart of evil people ([Mat 19](#); [Mar 10](#))
- All of the passages that follow (in the Old and New Testaments) hinge in the context of this divorce permission given in the Law of Moses

C. The Great Mystery Surrounding Deu 24:1-4

I would urge the reader to consider the great mystery surrounding this passage. If Moses had settled the matter of divorce and remarriage here, then surely the rest of the Scriptures would be content to set themselves within the boundaries of what had already been established. But for some great and eternal mystery of spiritual wisdom, every time God revisits the issues described in this passage He is always grieved and burning for something higher and greater which was not yet able to be established in the days of Moses. As you read the following passages please be softhearted (unlike those who originally received this law) and search out the Word of God to see why this accommodation was made, and why

God is constantly yearning for something more to be said here, all throughout history until the glorious day Jesus stepped on the scene to finally proclaim and establish all righteousness.

3. Malachi 2 – God’s Surprising Opposition of Divorce and Astonishing Persistence in Affirming Original Marriage!

Malachi 2 Prep – A Necessary Technical Textual Explanation

Before reading the main summary from Malachi on divorce and remarriage I need to make some very important explanations:

Malachi teaches a lot about divorce and remarriage. But before we can draw conclusions from this we actually have to address a very difficult challenge which most English versions never even mention: The book of Malachi has many textual variations depending on what source text you use, and it is sometimes extremely difficult to determine which ones are right. To solve this painful difficulty (especially for the purposes of this book) this is what I have done:

- (1) Thoroughly compiled all three major source texts (**LXX, MT & DSS**), especially for Malachi two* and,
- (2) Included in this book a very brief and concise summary of this textual analysis where all three texts agree for the basis of what is being taught here about divorce and remarriage. If God permits, we are about to look at this critical Malachi textual summary in a moment.

Lest anyone say I based my conclusions about marriage off of a “~~faulty~~ source text” or translation of Malachi, I am instead concluding upon what virtually every ancient source text available for Malachi agrees in transmitting to us about what God says about the one flesh covenant through this prophet. To do this, I have not only compared multiple translations of these source texts to address what most people are reading in English, but I have also looked into the original languages to confirm as many details with the greatest accuracy as reasonably possible for the following textual summary of Malachi (not to mention the much more thorough textual compilation which it is based on).

For this summary I have labored over numerous years and countless hours in research into ancient source texts to give you a summary of the safest possible conclusions that I can determine for the original, key thoughts of the passage from Malachi that we are considering here. You are more than free to: (1) also do all of this research yourself to determine the best readings for this passage from Malachi 2, especially since I have already compiled a lot of the necessary information for doing this* (and I have given the background information for understanding all of this in my Bibliography**) or else, (2) you can also consider my source text summary here.

Further Reading

A much more thorough explanation for this ‘Malachi Project’ can be found at:
www.TrueConnection.org/goto/mal

** To understand my methodology in greater detail for determining these technical source text questions, please see the online version of our [Bibliography](#) under, “~~Finding~~ the Old Testament.”

Malachi 2 – A Source Text Summary: God Opposes their Divorce and Reaffirms their First Marriage

God is resolutely angry at ignorant and wicked men for divorcing their wives, and says that He still bears witness to their original covenant despite their divorce

Here is a summary of what I would say are the best readings and most certain summaries from all of the source texts of this passage from Malachi 2, verse by verse, and point by point:

v. 13

Mal_2:13a – God is angry with them despite the fact that they ~~covered~~ [LXX: lit. would cover] with tears the altar of the Lord, and with weeping and groaning” (CAB)

Mal_2:13b – God resolutely refuses to honor or receive their desperate prayers, sacrifices and pleas for help, but instead...

v. 14

Mal_2:14a – When they ask **“Why?”** [LXX: “Ἐλεθελ τὸ νο – lit. on account of what?”] He solemnly declares...

Mal_2:14b – ~~Because~~ the Lord has borne witness between you and the wife of your youth...” (CAB)

Mal_2:14c – And although they had divorced their wives, still God says...

Mal_2:14d – ~~—~~. she is your companion, *and the wife of your covenant.” (WEB) [LXX: θαὶ γπληὶ πρζήθεο σνπ – lit. and woman of your covenant]

v. 15

Mal_2:15a – God takes full credit for making it this way

Mal_2:15b – This has something to do with retaining some ~~remnant~~” of (righteous) ~~spirit~~”

Mal_2:15c – Because of this, they are to guard their own spirits and not divorce the wife of their youth’ (their first wife)

v. 16

Mal_2:16a – God opposes their divorce [MT shows God ~~hating~~” it in **Mal_2:15**, while the LXX basically shows this in **Mal_2:13** (though this ~~hating~~” is not stated as such in the DSS); both the LXX and DSS show the men as being guilty of hatred by divorcing the wife of their youth by saying, ~~but~~ if it is so that you hate and send (her) out and away...” (Jos.Trans., LXX)]

Mal_2:16b – God says this is because a profound wickedness [MT/DSS: violence; LXX: irreverence] ~~covers~~” something [DSS: God’s garment; MT/LXX: the man’s garment; (or some LXX manuscripts: the man’s deeper thoughts and passions)] when they do this

Mal_2:16c – So God says again to guard their own spirits and not divorce

v. 17

Mal_2:17 – God is angry with them over their words for saying, ~~Every~~ one that does evil is good in the sight of* the LORD, and he delights in them**; or, Where is the God of judgment?” (KJ2000)

[* LXX: ἐλώπηλ – lit. in the countenance (of); fig. in front of, or ~~before~~” (NETS)]

[** LXX: εὐ ὀθεσελ – lit. has tested and approved (fig. thought/ judged), (ὀθε) them well/ good (εὐ)]

Meshing Malachi Together to Clearly Demonstrate its Implications on this Issue

The following important summaries are sure conclusions of definite truth from God through Malachi about marriage that we can definitely see, no matter what source text we use, especially as we mesh Malachi with a few other passages to further confirm and draw all of these things together:

1. **–the Lord has borne witness**” (Mal_2:14 CAB; Gen_2:22, 24-25; Mat_19:4-6) of a person’s first, (lawful) marriage covenant (Mal_2:14b; Mat_5:28, 32; 19:9-10; Mar_10:11-12; Luk_16:18) without regard of a church or pastor (Gen_2:21-24; Mat_19:4-6; Mar_10:6-9; Eph_5:30-32), (which is contrary to what **Augustine** falsely taught as seen in the appendix entitled, **–The Historical Church Teaching**” under **–Augustine**”). This is because God’s establishment of the permanency of the one flesh marriage covenant was in the Garden of Eden (Gen_2:21-25), and it has been this way **–from the beginning**” (Mat_19:8).
2. And **this wife** that they were married to was **‘the wife of their youth’** (Mal_2:14, their first wife) because of the initial marriage covenant (Mal_2:14).
3. As the witness of this covenant (Mal_2:14).
4. **God** is the one who did this (Mal_2:15) so that...
5. Even **after the divorce** (Mal_2:14, 16)
6. And remarriage*, **these men of Israel were still married to their first wife** (–she is your...wife of your covenant,” Mal_2:14 NETS).

Note: We can be sure that the children of Israel generally took advantage of the Mosaic divorce and remarriage **–permission**” given in Deu_24:1-2, not only because it should seem obvious by now that they did, but also because the Bible specifically shows us that they did in a number of passages (1Sa_25:44; Mat_19:3, 7-8; Mar_10:2-5; and compare Jdg_14:20), Notice also that Moses and Jesus both presumed that the woman was going to remarry after a divorce, so (according to Moses and Jesus) it is likely that the majority of these woman in Malachi 2 had remarried after their husbands divorced them. Despite the remarriage of the majority of the women after their divorce, God was not concerned about the second or third spouses of the men or the women in this passage, but only the wife of their youth. ‘This is because every new marriage that the first wife obtained was clearly defiling and adulterous (–...after that [second marriage] she is defiled...” Deu_24:4 CAB) and God remembered her first marriage and showed that her subsequent remarriages were not established by Him. God was only proclaiming Himself to be the witness of the divorced wife of their youth in Malachi (Mal_2:14a) no matter what she had done in remarriage in the mean time.

7. **Their ignorance** of the severity of the covenant that they made (Mal_2:14) **had no effect at all to nullify its punishment** when violated (Mal_2:13, 15-16). Despite the fact that they **–covered** [LXX: lit. would cover] with tears the altar of the Lord, and with weeping and groaning” (Mal_2:13 CAB) God still did not listen to them (Mal_2:13) because of their divorce (Mal_2:14, 16). They found no accepted repentance or forgiveness because in their hardness of heart (Zec_7:12; Mat_19:8; Mar_10:5) and stubborn rebellion (Exo_32:9-10; 33:2-5; Deu_9:4-8, 13, 24; 31:26-27; 32:20; 2Ch_30:8; Psa_78:8; Isa_48:4; Act_7:51-53) they were away from their first wives (Mal_2:11, 14-16) leaving them to the defilement and adultery of remarriage (as shown previously).

Some may wonder why I go to such lengths to make this **–Malachi Mesh**” so clear and specific referencing every smallest point of every verse. But if you wonder why, it may be because you have not experienced how few people believe these verses. Pastors, church leaders, and many other seemingly reasonable people almost always read these verses and walk away saying, **–It’s ok to divorce and remarry,**” or, **–God forgives us, even when we stay in such a remarriage relationship,**” or, **–God recognizes second marriages after divorce and would not want you to break them up to return to the first spouse.**”

I also write this to draw out understanding so that you will not miss the HUGE implications of what Malachi is used to teach us here. I hope you walk away from reading Malachi having both understood, and embraced what is said, because if you do, you have surpassed 98% of the church who simply

ignore it, and become ignorant. If you truly believe Malachi Chapter two (especially [Mal_2:11-16](#)), you have obligated yourself to a Divine revolution, having believed God's truth that most all men reject, in and outside the church.

4. Matthew 5 – The Clear New Covenant Proclamation Against Adulterous Remarriage!

Matthew 5 – Divorce and Remarriage Is Adultery

[Mat_5:27-32](#) ΚΒ You have heard that it was said to those of old, —“You shall not commit adultery.” 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust toward her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and through *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for **your whole body to be cast into hell**^{G1067} [γέενναν (*geennan*) – the second (eternal) hell (i.e. [Rev2:11](#); [20:6, 14](#); [21:8](#))]. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and through *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for **your whole body to be cast into hell**^{G1067} [γέενναν (*geennan*)]. 31 It has been said that “Anyone divorcing his wife, must give her a divorce certificate” 32 But I say to you, that whoever divorces his wife, except for a report of prostitution [*i.e. fornication*], causes her to commit adultery: and if **anyone marries her that is divorced** *he* commits adultery.

Technical source text note: Although virtually every major source text has it, a small number of unreliable (sloppy) sources like *Codex Bezae* omit the last part of [Mat_5:32](#) (*and if anyone marries her that is divorced he commits adultery*)

Matthew 5 – Immutable Truths that Jesus Taught About Adultery

A Summary of what we just saw

(A) All Adultery Sends You to Hell, Unless You “Cut Off” The Adultery

- Adultery begins at the initiation of lust, not at the initiation of the physical act, ([Mat_5:27-28](#))
- All forms of adultery, even at the “lust stage,” will condemn one to hell unless a person rids their heart and life of it at whatever the cost.
- Jesus said the only way to escape eternal hell [γέενναν (*geennan*)] is to cut off the adultery ([Mat_5:27-30](#)) and when this is applied to marriage in Hebrew* (which Matthew was originally written in*), this usually means to divorce*.
[Mat_5:27-32](#); [19:16](#) & [Mat_19:18](#)/ [Mar_10:17](#) & [Mar_10:19](#)/ [Luk_18:18](#) & [Luk_18:20](#); Also see: [Exo_20:14](#)/ [Deu_5:18](#); [Lev_20:10](#); [Deu_22:22](#); [Pro_2:16-19](#); [6:23-33](#); [Jer_5:7-9](#); [29:21-23](#); [Eze_23:43-47](#); [Mal_3:5-6](#); [Mat_15:19](#); [Mar_7:21](#); [Rom_13:9-10](#); [1Co_6:9-10](#); [Gal_5:16-21](#); [Heb_13:4](#); [Jas_2:11-12](#); [2Pe_2:14-19](#) (etc.); [Rev_2:22-23](#)
- In divorce and remarriage, what is “adultery”? Whatever it is, we can be sure that we have to “cut it off” (even if that means divorcing** a second spouse) if we hope to be saved from the damnation of immorality ([Mat_5:29-30](#)) as Jesus said.

[* We cover the *Jewishness* and original Hebrew of Matthew in Chapter 3 of this book]

[** One important Hebrew term for ‘divorce’ is — כְּרִיּוּתִיּוּת (k’rīythūth), (see H3748 & H3772), which basically amounts to a document of “cutting,” as seen in passages such as [Deu_24:1-3](#); [Isa_50:1](#); [Jer_3:8](#) — “cutting off hands” to end adultery could also potentially include “cutting off (divorcing) adulterous spouses” by extension when considering the Jewish language and context]

(B) Divorce and Remarriage is Adultery

Having fully established that adultery sends one to eternal hell [$\gamma\epsilon\epsilon\nu\nu\alpha\nu$ (*geennan*)] at every stage ([Mat 5:27-28](#)), Jesus at once announces that divorce and remarriage is adultery, ([Mat 5:32](#)).

Matthew 5 – Some Basic, Undeniable Facts about What Jesus Said

- Although we still commonly teach that remarriage is only adultery for the guilty party, Jesus taught that someone is not guilty because of divorce, but they become guilty when they remarry *after divorce*. – This is a big difference! (Please chew on this and make sure you know the difference!)
- church People say that the guilty person commits another sin of adultery if they remarry, but Jesus clearly said that if an innocent person is divorced they become immoral when they remarry.
- It is clear that Jesus taught that whenever people issue a divorce that allows remarriage, this remarriage is actually committing adultery before God.
- Before Jesus came along everyone has always known that being with someone else is adultery, but it is Jesus' Words that say that this even includes those who have been –acceptably divorced.”
- We like to think that, although remarriage may be adultery in some cases, if you get a valid divorce then it is not adultery if you remarry, but Jesus very plainly says that even when you get a divorce that –allows remarriage,” remarriage is still adultery. – that is the point of His whole teaching!
- The theoretical success in lawfully divorcing and marrying another in societies eyes is still adultery in God's eyes: notice that the man has considered the marriage dissolved and over by divorcing her, and the woman has the concept that the marriage bond was loosed because she married another. It is in this scenario with this notion, where both the husband and wife have given up on the marriage and consider it to be effectually ended by divorce that Jesus comes along and says she commits adultery by marrying another. When everyone considers the marriage don and over with, and even the spouses mutually consider themselves to be lawfully remarried to others, Jesus demands that they are still one flesh with each other and are committing adultery with their second partners.
- Whether it is against one spouses consent, with mutual consent, or with legal consent, no amount of agreement on earth can change the verdict in heaven.
- No matter how many people declare that it is ok to break God's rules, adultery remains adultery until we stop the adulterous relationship

Matthew 5 – 4 Ways Men Become Guilty Concerning Adultery

This passage warns us against at least 4 ways that a man may become guilty of committing or causing adultery:

1. By simply committing it ([Mat 5:27](#)) – they already knew this from the Law of Moses ([Exo 20:14](#); [Lev 20:10](#); [Deu 5:18, 22-24](#); and also consider [Pro 6:32](#)), not to mention the fact that humans as a whole have known this in general from the times of Adam and Eve (as briefly documented in –[The Ancient Marriage Teaching](#)” at the beginning of this work)
2. Looking to lust after a woman ([Mat 5:28](#))
3. Divorcing a woman for anything other than prostitution [*or fornication*] ([Mat 5:32a](#), because it is assumed that she will remarry in [Mat 5:32b](#))
4. Marrying a woman who has been divorced ([Mat 5:32b](#))

Jesus clearly warns us that we will go to eternal hell [$\gamma\epsilon\epsilon\nu\nu\alpha\nu$ (*geennan*)] if we do not repent of committing these adulteries ([Mat 5:29-30](#)). If we consider all that is said here, it is clear that such guilt includes causing others to fall into such sins by extension (i.e. causing others to commit adultery by divorcing

them), and this dreadful guilt a person may have from causing others to sin is powerfully confirmed in [Mat 18:6-9](#). In confirming passages like this, it is clear that the one who causes others to sin is much more guilty than those who are tricked into it.‘

While this passage tells how a man may be found innocent or guilty before God concerning adultery, it does not specifically address how a woman may be found innocent and avoid guilt in these cases. Whether the need is to know how a woman may avoid causing men to lust ([Mat 5:27-29](#)) or how a woman may escape the adultery of remarriage herself ([Mat 5:31-32](#)), while these needs are covered in many other passages, neither of these needs are specifically addressed in this particular passage because the writers of Scripture are much more riveted on context than we are used to, including Jesus. In this case the context is the potential guilt of a man, not a woman, and we must adjust our values to theirs, especially when reading their sayings, if we will clearly, properly and reasonably understand what they are saying.

Matthew 5 – Some Ways Women Become Guilty Concerning Adultery

Notice the absolute and difficult implications of what Jesus says in verse 32:

- Women were culturally constrained to marry again after a divorce. It was extremely difficult for a woman to make it on her own in Biblical times (compare [Rth 1:9](#); [3:1-18](#)). This is why a husband would be the cause of the almost definite adultery of remarriage following his decision to divorce her. The fact that Jesus anticipated divorced women to generally become adulterous by remarriage is clearly shown by the Old Covenant passage He is referencing ([Deu 24:1-4](#)) as well as the second half of [Mat 5:32](#), which says, **“...and if anyone marries her that is divorced...”**
- If a man divorces his wife, he is the cause of her resulting adultery when she remarries, unless of course she was already guilty of prostitution/ ~~for~~nication.” The man would not be the cause in such a ~~prostitution~~” exception. A woman would have already been immoral in such a case as this; he would not have caused her to be immoral if she were already that way before He got a chance to divorce her.
- Notice that in **every scenario** that Jesus gives here, the woman is divorced and she commits adultery when she remarries. The exception is not a case where she is innocent of the adultery of remarriage, but an exception where the man is not guilty, since it is the only case where he is not also guilty for her immorality when she remarries.
- Since it is already clear that Jesus’ repeated focus in this passage is the potential guilt of the man (as seen in the ~~4~~ ways” summarized previously) it would be unreasonable to change this point in our theology about this passage by imposing an additional scenario upon Jesus’ teaching where the woman is held innocent after she is divorced, because this is never addressed by [Mat 5:31-32](#), and this is consistent with the passage from Deuteronomy which Jesus is quoting, since [Deu 24:1-4](#) does not address a case where the woman is not ~~de~~filed” by marrying another man. There is not one statement in all of these verses where Jesus describes a divorced woman remaining innocent when all is said and done (an ~~innocent~~ divorced woman” scenario is not specifically covered until [1Co 7:10-11](#) – where the woman remains single).
- **It is important to notice** that the initially innocent chaste wife, (which is primarily what Jesus is talking about in these verses) commits adultery upon remarriage even if her husband was the one more guilty and wicked in the process. Even if the husband married again and committed adultery against her (as seen in the case of [Mar 10:11](#), which is quoted later), Jesus still says without any exception, **“...and if anyone marries her that is divorced he commits adultery.”**
- **Please be certain to understand this:** Whether it is [Deu 24](#)’s ~~de~~filement” or [Mat 5](#)’s ~~adultery~~” warning, the only way a woman could ever be considered innocent before God would be to stay far away from this ~~marrying~~ another” posture that both passages describe after divorce. If a woman

wished to avoid the guilt and defilement that these passages describe, then her only option would be to completely avoid and flee from the various scenarios they address. But if we introduce an imagined scenario into our theology where a woman could remain in one or more of these remarriage scenarios and still go to heaven as a christian, then in the end we will have Jesus testifying against us as His enemy because He never said any such thing, and it is certain that we are wicked if we seek to undermine and change His eternal and immovable Words and Laws that He gave to us in order to accommodate and justify what He called ~~adultery~~.”

Matthew 5 – It is Clear and Certain that these Standards Apply to Everyone

(A) “Everyone” in Mat 5

Whether ~~lust-adultery~~,” or ~~remarriage-adultery~~,” these standards are applied to everyone (Mat_5:28, 32; Also compare Mat_19:9; Mar_10:11-12; Luk_16:18)

(B) “The Crowds” in Mat 5

Mat_7:28-29 CAB And...when Jesus finished these words, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, 29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not like the scribes.

Notice that these teachings against adultery were not just for Jesus’ disciples nor just the Pharisees, but they are unmistakably addressed to ~~everyone~~” with ~~“who soevers”~~ making up ~~the crowds~~” of ~~Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and from beyond the Jordan,~~” (Mat_4:25; and also see v. 14-17). These crowds are mentioned repeatedly throughout the Sermon on the Mount (Mat_4:25–5:1; 7:28-29). In Isa_9:1-2 and Mat_4:14-17, these crowds are said to have included the nations, which implies a somewhat random mix of various people and not just a particular group of people who *could handle* this teaching. This is important because some have tried to deny the obvious and weighty implications of this by irrationally saying that Jesus’ standards on marriage were only given to His disciples or somehow don’t apply to everyone for some other reason, but here we see clearly that at the very basis of Jesus’ teaching, divorce and remarriage is adultery no matter where you come from or what type of person you are.

Although Matthew particularly presents the details of his narrative specifically to the Jews, yet the Sermon on the Mount in its initial essence gave standards that are clearly taught and applied to everyone.”

Matthew 5 – The Seriousness of Adultery

As we have seen, Jesus shows the seriousness of visual, heart-adultery in this way in Matthew 5:

Mat_5:27-30 KJB You have heard that it was said to those of old, ~~“You shall not commit adultery.”~~ 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust toward her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and through *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell^{G1067} [γέενναν (*geennan*) – the second (eternal) hell (i.e. Rev2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8)]. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and through *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell^{G1067} . [γέενναν (*geennan*)]...

If this is the case with visual adultery wouldn’t you consider the physical act to be *at least* as bad? Indeed, visual adultery gains its potency here from the previously established prohibition of the physical act! And yes, no one can properly commit the physical act without adding it as a sin on top of a previous mental act. And if it is so that physical, and even visual adultery are sinful enough that they

send people to Hell, (as this verse reaffirms) unless they cut off that which causes them to be adulterers... if adultery is this condemned, then why do we think that we can avoid Hell-fire and get away with —justaying a little prayer” of so-called repentance without actually cutting off the sin and its cause? Truly such unreasoning —logic” is of the devil because he wants us to burn with him on that great day of condemnation (Mat_25:41; Rev_20:10-15)!

Pro_5:4-5 CAB but afterwards you will find her more bitter than gall, and sharper than a two-edged sword 5 For the feet of folly lead those who deal with her ~~down to the grave with death~~ [κετ ζαλάτνπ ειο τὸλ ῥ̄ ελ – lit. with death into the hell], and her steps are not established.

But we tell church goers that —afterward” when we say we are sorry and call ourselves —ehristians,” we will then find adulterous remarriage sweet and blessed by God! Never mind that Jesus called it adultery; and never mind Proverbs 5 through 7! We are the fools that scorn the wisdom of God in Proverbs, and the persecutors of everyone who seeks to turn us aside from our corporate immorality!

Pro_6:26-29 CAB [she] ...hunts for the precious souls of men. 27 Shall anyone bind fire in his bosom, and not burn his garments? 28 Or will anyone walk on coals of fire, and not burn his feet? 29 So is he that goes in to a married woman*; **he shall not be held guiltless**, neither anyone that touches her.

Important Greek Note: Although the MT uses slightly different words, saying, —his neighbor’s wife” (WEB), In the LXX, this is: —πλαῖθα ὕπαλ ξνλ” (*gunaika* ^{G1135} *hupandron* ~ ^{G5220}) – a woman under a man; This is the same terminology that is later used in Rom_7:2 in Greek to give warnings against adulterous remarriage: —παλ ξνο ^{G5220} γπλη ^{G1135}” (*hupandros gunē*) – They have slightly different grammars, but it is basically the same exact Greek terminology used in both passages.

Pro_6:32-33 CAB ...the adulterer through lack of understanding procures destruction to his soul. 33 He endures both pain and disgrace, and his reproach shall **never be wiped off**.

By using the word —adultery” it is obvious that Jesus, in establishing the New Covenant, was making illusions to the previously established teachings throughout the Old Covenant against adultery, including these passages from Proverbs (see Pro_6:32) to describe divorce and remarriage. If Jesus desired to define divorce and remarriage as some *other kind of immorality* He certainly could have used any number of different words to communicate this. But instead he used the word —adultery,” which is clearly a back reference to all of the Old Testament passages which condemned this immoral crime against lawful marriage.

If Jesus wanted to indicate that this immorality *broke the marriage bond* (as most Protestants claim), He could have chosen to communicate it this way. But by calling it —adultery,” He very clearly shows that the first marriages still intact despite the immorality, and links divorce and remarriage back to all of the other passages in the Old Testament which condemn this practice. Jesus casts scorn on the divorce which He now explicitly forbids by correcting and redefining the social acceptance of remarriage as being, in fact, adultery.

It is not reasonable to make out like Jesus is joking in this passage. When He calls it **adultery**, we should take these dreadful warnings against adultery **very seriously!** And if Jesus turns around and calls divorce and remarriage adultery, this should urgently grip our hearts with great zeal and godly fear so that we may immediately seek to get out and as far away as possible from what the Old Testament says about such a dangerous, immoral, and sexually defiling relationship! If we do not urgently flee from being with another person’s spouse, then it is clear from the Words of Jesus that great wrath from a just God and horrible damnation loom over our heads, ready to fall as a guillotine...

5. The Rest of Matthew and the Gospels Confirm this Strong Opposition Against Adulterous Remarriage

Matthew 19 – Divorce and Remarriage is Adultery

Note: We cover Mat_19:1-10 in much greater detail in Chapter 3

Mat_19:9 KJB And I say to you, any one^{G3739, G302} shall divorce^{G630} his wife, only^{G1508} for prostitution^{G4202} [i.e. fornication]. And *if he* shall marry another, *he* is committing adultery:^{G3429} and whoever marries her who is divorced^{G630} is committing adultery^{G3429}.

Things to Notice From Matthew 19

- The initially innocent, chaste wife commits adultery upon remarriage though her husband marries again. This is consistent with Matthew 5 (as seen previously).
- **Just like Matthew 5**, immediately following this teaching in Matthew 19, Jesus again reinforced the severity of committing adultery by clearly marking it as an issue of salvation. The rich young ruler asked Jesus...

Mat_19:16-18 CAB ...what good *thing* shall I **do** that I may have **eternal life**?" 17 So He said to him, "...if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." 18 [such as] ... **You shall not commit adultery**, ...

(Also in Mar_10:17-19; Luk_18:20)

We see that in both cases (Matthew 5 and 19) the warnings against adulterous remarriage are coupled close by with reinforcing passages that remind the reader that adultery sends a person to hell.

A Technical Note About Greek Texts

This last clause in Mat_19:9 that says, **“whoever marries her who is divorced is committing adultery,”** is preserved for us today by means of the *Byzantine Majority Text* (and naturally, the *Textus Receptus* and (generally) the *Caesarean Text*), *Codex Vaticanus*, the Latin *Vulgate*, and even the ancient *Peshito Syriac New Testament*, but not *Codex Sinaiticus*, *Codex Bezae* and *Codex Leicestrensis* [MS 69 – a *Caesarean Text*]. When even the Alexandrian text type *Codex Vaticanus* agrees with the majority of all texts of the New Testament in including this statement as being original, it probably is. (see **–GNT**” in the [Bibliography](#) for more). In addition to all of this, there are numerous quotes from the early church that repeatedly indicate that this saying is indeed in Matthew.

But whatever a person may say about source texts, this exact same phrase is preserved by virtually every authoritative version of the Greek New Testament (i.e. not counting *Codex Bezae*) in Mat_5:32 (as we just saw) and is repeated with similar expressions in Mar_10:11-12 and Luk_16:18 no matter what source text you use. Ultimately, one way or the other, the authenticity and truthfulness of the phrase is universally established no matter how you consider it, by the fact that virtually every reliable Greek witness agrees in Matthew 5, and this is confirmed again in Mark and Luke.

[Note: For now we are not addressing the fact that most English versions misrepresent this verse as though it allows remarriage. Especially since we cover these details at great length in Chapter 3, let it suffice to say for now that there is simply no support at all for the actual Greek words used by the majority of all English versions to say the exception allows remarriage: ι γ σ ε̅ ικ̅λ̅ ο̅τη̅δο̅ α̅λ̅ α̅πνι σ η̅ τη̅λ̅ γ̅π̅λ̅αι̅θα̅ α̅υ̅τ̅ν̅ κ̅η̅ ε̅π̅ι̅ π̅ν̅ξ̅λ̅ε̅ θ̅αι̅ γ̅α̅κ̅ σ̅η̅ α̅ι̅ ι̅ ε̅λ̅, κ̅νη̅ϖ̅ται̅ θ̅αι̅ ο̅ α̅πνι̅ ει̅ π̅κ̅ λ̅ε̅λ̅ γ̅α̅κ̅ σ̅ α̅ κ̅νη̅ϖ̅ται̅]

Mark 10 – Divorce and Remarriage Is Adultery

Mar_10:2-12 CAB And some Pharisees approached and asked Him, “Is it lawful for a husband to put away his wife?” testing Him. 3 But answering He said to them, “What did Moses command you?” 4 They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to put her away.” 5 And Jesus answered and said to them, “In view of your hardheartedness he wrote this commandment for you. 6 But from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female. 7 For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has united together, let not man separate.” 10 In the house His disciples also asked Him again concerning the same matter. 11 So He said to them, “Whoever should put away his wife and marry another commits adultery ^{G3429} against her. 12 And if a wife should put away her husband and be married to another, she commits adultery ^{G3429}.”

Notice that there is no exception here. And why is that?

Luke 16 – Divorce and Remarriage Is Adultery

Luk_16:18 CAB Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and everyone who marries a woman who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.

Again, no exception! Why is that?

So many pastors are content to write this passage off by saying that Matthew’s exception should be “implicitly understood” in this statement, but there is not a thing at all —implicit” which would allow an exception to remarry in the Words, “**Everyone** who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery.” The same things can also be said about Mark ten, First Corinthians seven, and Romans seven when it says things like, “while the husband is living, she will be called an adulteress if she becomes married to a different husband” (Rom_7:3). These are clearly absolute statements that realistically leave no room for an exception. All of the other passages clearly **do not** teach an implicit exception to remarry as we falsely accuse Matthew of teaching, but on the contrary, all of the other passages completely contradict our unstable understanding of Matthew’s exception!

6. The Epistles Agree with Jesus and Make it Absolutely Clear that Divorce and Remarriage is Adultery, Without Exception!

A Brief Summary of how Paul Taught Against Adulterous

Romans 7 – Only Death “Looses” (Ends) One Flesh, and Marrying Another Before this Makes a Woman An Adulteress

Rom_7:1-4 CAB Or do you not know, brothers (for I speak to those knowing the law), that the law rules over a man **as long as he lives**? 2 For the woman who is under a man has been bound by law to the living husband. But if the husband should die, she is released from the law of the husband. 3 So then, **while the husband is living, she will be called an adulteress** if she becomes married to a different husband; but if her husband should die, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, having become married to a different husband. 4 Therefore, my brothers, you also were

put to death to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, so that we might bear fruit to God.

There is still no exception. Are you noticing a very curious pattern here yet?

Does an Adulteress Commit A Onetime Act, or Repeated Acts of Adultery?

The Bible talks in some places about isolated, one-time acts of “committing adultery,” (example: [2Sa 11:1-4, 26-27; 12:13](#)) but Romans seven does not address a one-time act of the past but a state of being. It does not simply say that a remarried woman “committed adultery” when she remarried, but that she shall be called an **adulteress**.” This is who she is because of the sin she is presently committing, not merely a sin she has committed in the past. As others have also pointed out: If you say that such a woman (with or without claims of faith in Jesus) is not an adulteress or that she is even a Christian, then you are a liar ([Rom 3:4](#)) because the Bible has very clearly called her an adulteress here. It also clearly states how long her designation as an adulteress lasts – “as long as he lives” ([Rom 7:1 CAB](#))

The Nature of this Romans Seven “Law” – It was Planted in the Garden of Eden, and Reaffirmed in the New Covenant

What we read here in Romans 7:2-3, is —the law of marriage” as given in the Garden of Eden, ([Gen 2:21-25](#)), which is between two people, and it is compared with the Law of Moses, which is between God and many people. In teaching about the New Covenant, Paul uses the law of marriage as a basis for what he teaches, and this directs us back to Jesus’ teaching on marriage, as He was reestablishing the Marriage Law as it was —from the beginning” ([Mat 19:8/ Mar 10:5-9; Gen 2:21-25](#)).

This concept of “Law” in the Old and New Covenant specifically included the first 5 books of the Bible (Genesis through Deuteronomy) and sometimes even included the Psalms or even the Prophets (Compare: [Joh 15:25](#) with [Psa 35:19; 69:4; 109:3](#); and [1Co 14:21](#) with [Isa 28:11](#)). If we will look for a marriage “Law” as described here by [Rom 7:2-3](#), we will only find it in [Gen 2:21-25](#), which satisfies Paul’s reference to “Law” ([Rom 7:1-2](#)). I write all of this because some people have rashly thought that this was a reference to the Mosaic Law (specifically, Exodus through Deuteronomy), and is so not a “New Testament” command. But we can see that Romans chapter seven is rather at the **heart** of New Testament theology, especially because it points back to the same principal that Jesus did ([Mat 19:8/ Mar 10:5-9; Gen 2:21-25](#)) as it seeks to reestablish the marriage Law as it was, —from the beginning” (and this is exactly how the early Church received this epistle[®]).

Don’t Confuse The Parable With The Point – The Law of Marriage is *Different* than the Law of Moses!

Let’s make this very basic and clear:

- The Law of Moses (Exodus through Deuteronomy) clearly does not reestablish the marriage law, but accommodates its violation.
- Jesus and the Apostles reestablished the marriage Law, and this can clearly and consistently be seen here in Romans seven.
- Romans 7 does not reflect the Mosaic Law that accommodates hard hearts that break the law of marriage, but Romans 7 clearly supports the Law of marriage, which correlates with the teachings of Jesus and the rest of the Apostles, (unlike Moses’ Law).
- Romans 7 does not teach that the law of marriage “died along with the Law of Moses,” but that because the law of marriage endures, it is a fitting parable to show that we must die in order to be joined with Jesus and the New Covenant. **So don’t confuse the parable with the point here:** If the

marriage law was not still binding until death, then it would not have worked to illustrate that we have to die to performing the flesh-based righteousness of the Law of Moses (Heb 9:1-28, esp. v. 10) in order to be joined into the Spiritual righteousness and commands of Jesus. If you say that a spouse does not have to die in order to lawfully remarry (without adultery) then according to this parable, you are directly implying that you do not have to die to sin and the flesh and their posture under the law of Moses (1Ti 1:8-11) in order to be joined to Jesus, while Romans 7 clearly teaches that you necessarily **do** have to die in both cases (in the parable of marriage, and in the spiritual posture under the law of Moses) to be joined to another.

- Because the permanency of the marriage covenant was such a fundamental, embedded and absolute Law in the minds of original Christianity*, Paul was able to use it as a parable to prove that we have to die to ourselves and our sinful posture under the Law of Moses to be joined to Jesus.

[* Please note that these are verifiable Scriptural and historical facts I am referencing, and I have documented and or summarized much of this in the appendix resources entitled, –The Historical Church Teaching,” and –Extra Notes on Church History”]

First Corinthians 7 – Remain Unmarried: The Only Option After Divorce

Note: This entire passage is covered much more thoroughly in Chapter 4

1Co 7:10-11 CAB Now to those who have married I command, yet not I, but the Lord [commanded in Mat 19:6]: A wife is not to be separated from her husband-- 11 and even if ~~she does separate~~ [separation happens to her – The Greek is in the –Passive Voice”], let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband—and a husband is not to divorce his wife.

No exception yet.

First Corinthians 7 – Only Death “Looses” (Ends) One Flesh

Note: This entire passage is covered much more thoroughly in Chapter 4

1Co 7:39 CAB A wife has been bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband also dies, she is free [ἐὶ ἐπὶ ζῆα – i.e. she is a loosed person] to be married to whom she desires, only in the Lord.

7. A Summary of Some of the Main Divorce And Remarriage Passages, and “the Missing Exception Clause”

Why is the exception clause missing in all of the other New Testament passages outside of Matthew? After now having also considered the two cases in First Corinthians seven, this makes at least 5 times in the New Testament outside of Matthew where the exception clause is strangely missing in this hard-core teaching against divorce and remarriage! The rest of the New Testament definitely makes the standards look like they have no exception at all, but if that were the case, what could Jesus possibly be referring to in Matthew? Could it help by looking at the Greek and the Scriptural and historical background?

In any case, I hope you will be honest to admit that even on a surface level, after considering all these passages it looks like at least basically remarriage while your first spouse is still alive is adultery, and while we may need some help looking closer at the details to understand the specific implications of the exception for divorce in Matthew, yet the majority message strongly rings loud and clear even in English throughout all of these seven New Testament passages: **divorce and remarriage is adultery!**

8. The Basics About Repentance from Adulterous Remarriage

Religious vs. Biblical Repentance

Now that we have established from the Bible that divorce and remarriage is in fact, adultery, a person will often ask, “If a remarried person repents, then aren’t they forgiven and no longer an adulterer?” I would answer this with another question: What does it **really** (Biblically) mean to repent of an adulterous remarriage?

(1) If you mean the same thing that most modern church goers mean when they talk about “repenting,” then your answer is **no**,” because God has promised never to forgive that type of “repentance.” God is not a liar, and He will not declare someone forgiven of sin if they continue in it:

Exo_20:7; 23:7b; 34:7/ Num_14:18; Pro_28:13; 17:15; 24:24-26; Isa_1:11-15, 19-20; Eze_18:4c, 13, 20, 30; Mal_2:13-14

(2) If you mean “Repentance” as in what the Bible **actually** teaches, then your answer is **yes**,” because God has said that He is abundantly merciful to forgive those who depart from sin:

Pro_28:13; 1Ki_8:35-36/ 2Ch_6:26-27; Psa_37:27; Isa_1:16-19; Eze_18:5, 9, 21-23, 27-28, 30-32; Hos_14:1-3; Amo_5:15; Rom_6:12-13; Eph_4:28; 1Pe_3:11

(3) If you don’t realize that there is a vast difference between the two things that are both being called “repentance,” then you more than all people need to read what is being written here!

What Is Real “Repentance”

Most church people wrongly teach that if someone divorces and remarries and then later they say a little prayer and “repent” of it, then God will forgive them and their second marriage can and should continue on. This is consistent with the typical modern christian idea that “repentance” simply means to say “I’m sorry” regardless of whether or not a person keeps on doing the bad things they have done. This “repentance” is a religious creation, not a Biblical Truth. – This belief neglects the fact that Biblical “repentance” means to stop doing what you are doing, turn around, and go the other direction.

If someone Truly “repents of smoking,” then they don’t continue to smoke, repenting of lying means that a person stops lying, and if someone “repents of adultery,” then they don’t continue committing adultery. If a person came up and punched you in the stomach and then said that they repented of it only to continue doing it every five seconds, then they have not repented of a thing, (and I’m sure you would agree). Again, what if I said that I repented of stealing \$100 from you, only to keep the money and not pay you back? You would emphatically say that I had not truly repented. And I ask: what is more valuable? Taking \$100 of another person’s money, or taking another person’s own wife? And how is it that we have all become so perverted beyond all reason and conscientiousness that we do not even think it is continuing to sin when we have a man continue to sleep with another man’s wife? We so desperately need real repentance if we will have any hope of salvation!

But all of this unreal absurdity is due to **religious repentance**, which is consistently a cheap and easy process of quickly saying you are sorry, with no real conditions or consequences involved, but Biblical repentance always demands that you actually acknowledge truth, and flee from the unbearable and eternal wrath of God’s judgment by actually forsaking sin (ex. [Heb_6:18](#)). Because of these very basic realities and the clear declarations of the Scriptures, we can know for sure that if those who are

remarried after a divorce don't truly repent by ending their adulterous relationship, then both are destined for condemnation as a sure promise from God.

Please notice that nowhere in the Bible does it ask you to treat adultery as some special type of irreconcilable sin, but it does tell us to treat sin like sin (including adulterous remarriage). This simply means that whether it is the sin of lying or the sin of remarriage-adultery, both lifestyles are promised to condemn one to hell, (Ex. [1Co_6:9-10](#); [Rev_21:8](#)) until and unless one Truly repents of such a life style so as to live in it no longer.

John the Baptist said that people should, "produce fruits worthy of repentance" ([Luk_3:8-140 CAB](#)) by turning away from what they were doing wrong. And when he confronted this issue of divorce and remarriage, he said to the king who was in a divorce and remarriage relationship, "It is not lawful for you to have her!" ([Mat_14:4 CAB](#); and see [Mar_6:18](#) and compare [Luk_16:16-18](#)). We see that we don't just need to repent about our sins, but we need to actually repent from them! But this idea has almost been lost completely in most churches having been drowned by false doctrines that boast, "Nobody is perfect!" and "All you have to do is say you're sorry." But "repentance" without an altering of actions away from sin is the very thing that will condemn the visible so-called church of today to hell forever, unless she learns to **Truly repent**:

[Luk_13:1-5 WEB](#) Now there were some present at the same time who told him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. **2** Jesus answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered such things? **3** I tell you, no, but, unless you repent, you will all perish in the same way. **4** Or those eighteen, on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them; do you think that they were worse offenders than all the men who dwell in Jerusalem? **5** I tell you, no, but, unless you repent, you will all perish in the same way."

Deu 29 – You Can't Make Yourself Forgiven Apart From True Repentance

Many who continue living in sin have read this and do just like it says in Deuteronomy:

[Deu_29:19-21 CAB](#) And it shall be if one shall hear the words of this curse, and **shall flatter himself in his heart**, saying, Let good happen to me, **for I will walk in the error of my heart**, [Refusing to repent and obey the Bible]... **20** **God shall by no means be willing to pardon him**, but then the wrath of the Lord and His jealousy shall flame out against that man; and all the curses of this covenant shall attach themselves to him, which are written in this book, and **the Lord shall blot out his name** from under heaven. **21** And the Lord shall separate that man for evil...

Let us see to it that we do not "bless ourselves" and refuse to repent and be like the one described in these verses. We don't make up the rules here, God does. If you continue in an adulterous second marriage then you can't "bless yourself" and suddenly make that relationship OK. You have to Truly repent like God has always demanded that people do whenever they are found to be living in sin.

You Can't Continue To Sin and Go To Heaven

If you continue to sin, then you have no True repentance or salvation

Jesus Says

[Luk_6:43](#) For a good tree does not produce bad fruit, nor does a bad tree produce good fruit.

[Mat_3:10](#) And now also the ax is laid at the root of the trees, so that every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

[Luk_6:46](#) Why do you call me, "lord, lord," and don't do the things which I say?

Joh_14:15 If you love Me, keep my commands... 23 ...If anyone loves Me, he will obey my words... 24
He who does not love me will not obey my words.

The Bible Also Says

1Jn_2:4 He who says, “I have come to know him,” but does not keep His commands is a liar, and the Truth is not in him.

1Jn_3:6-10 Whoever remains in Him does not continue to sin. Whoever continues to sin has not seen Him, or known Him. 7 Little children, don’t let anyone deceive you: he that does what is right is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 He that continues to sin is of the devil; because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. For this reason the Son of God was revealed, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whoever is born of God does not continue to sin; for His seed remains in him: and he cannot go on sinning, because he is born of God. 10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are revealed: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God...

Maintaining a Remarriage After Divorce Is Continuing to Sin Because Jesus Called it “Adultery”

What is the actual Question here?

Is the adultery of remarriage permanent for as long as the remarriage continues?

Often in this issue people get confused from the beginning about what is actually being discussed.

Because it is not good to forfeit understanding in this way, let us seek to establish some ground work and make the real question clear here so that confusion does not happen: The following progressive chart assumes that the person in question is essentially obeying Jesus in every other way possible, and that the only matter of sin and morality in question is divorce and remarriage...

Moral Choices and Consequences

Stage	Moral Choices and or Events	The Question	Result/ Consequence
1	Divorce from first marriage →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
2	Single after divorce →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
3	Actively interested in marrying a second person →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
4	Engaged to second marriage partner →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
5	Wedding Ceremony (Official –Remarriage”) →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
6	1 st Night of intimacy →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
7	2 nd Night of intimacy →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
8	3 rd Night of intimacy →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
9	Etc. →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
10	Divorce second marriage partner →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
11a	Return to first marriage partner →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?
11b	Or first marriage partner dies while in 2 nd marriage →	Adultery? →	Heaven or Hell?

Note 1: If you earnestly desire the answers to the questions in this chart then search throughout this book, because there are solid answers that God has given us within the Scriptures.

Note 2: For simplicity, this chart intentionally does not take into account the fact that a large percentage of divorce and remarriage relationships and interests begin before the first marriage is rejected.

So the main question about repenting of adultery is: At what point is divorce and remarriage adultery, and how long does it continue to be adultery if it was wrong to remarry in the first place? If it was wrong to enter into a marriage what would it take to be cleared of this sin?

Anyone with the slightest reasonableness to them will have to admit that Jesus was at least including the first act of intimacy in an adulterous remarriage (–Stage 6” shown previously). Intimacy is explicitly reserved for marriage, and the essence of violating that strict reservation is called –adultery” when it is a sin against a valid marriage partner. Nothing else is more specific, and of the fullest essence in describing this sinful act of adultery, other than sexual intimacy outside of a valid, existing marriage.

And why is this remarriage intimacy bad?

[Mat_5:32](#) ...whoever **MARRIES** her who is divorced commits **ADULTERY** [also see [Mat_19:9](#); [Mar_10:11-12](#); [Luk_16:18](#)]

We see that Jesus specifies that the marriage to –**her who is divorced**” results in committing adultery. We can also see that a sexual intimacy outside of lawful marriage speaks most directly to this –adultery” which Jesus mentions. Because of this, we should agree with Jesus and urgently declare that the continued intimacy within divorce and remarriage continues to be defiling and immoral, because no one can commit adultery with someone they are lawfully married to (see [Heb_13:4](#) and also [1Co_7:2-5](#)) unless, truly, there is fault found in the entire bases of the marriage to begin with, and it is not actually lawful. If there is fault found with the marriage to begin with, then none of the acts of

intimacy that follow can ever be truly counted moral. We know Jesus has found fault with the marriage to begin with if He calls it adultery.

Things to Notice from Mat 5

- The adultery that Jesus references speaks directly of a marriage that God has rejected on the basis of a previous valid marriage covenant
- By this it has been shown that the divorce did not actually (morally) free the spouse to lawfully marry another
- It should go without saying that all acts of intimacy that follow this invalid marriage are immoral
- The ceremony that pretended to justify this adulterous intimacy and call it “good” in the sight of God (the remarriage), was in fact bad, and was declared a adultery by Jesus

So Should we Advise people to Continue Such Relationships?

If we will first at least admit the first act is bad, and not good (which should be clear to everyone by the word, “adultery”) we know this because Jesus has first disregarded and totally set aside the remarriage and the social agreement as a whole which said that this relationship was “right.” Jesus has indeed declared the remarriage, including the remarriage wedding ceremony, bad, sinful and immoral. If the marriage covenants themselves do not stand, then neither will any justification of continuing the relationship.

If Jesus has declared the first act of intimacy along with the remarriage covenant as a whole wrong, then so is the second, third, and fourth act, and every other act of intimacy that follows. Jesus speaks of the sexual intimacy of this union as “adultery” due to the invalidation of the remarriage agreement, and so should we, no matter how long it endures or how frequently it is repeated. When Jesus comes back, He will judge us by the Word He spoke before He ascended, not with the religious fiction that has been promoted in the mean time ([Joh_12:48](#)).

We Have Got to Start Taking Repeated Acts of Adultery Seriously!

After the realization that a remarriage is perpetual adultery, will we say that it continues to be until she says a little prayer saying “I’m sorry” without insisting that she fulfill the Scripture tenderly and mercifully given to the adulteress: “...go, and sin no more” ([Joh_8:11](#))?

Is this “repentance” without turning from sin the repentance Jesus requires? Isn’t this the false repentance we’ve already discussed which is modern, westernized and religious, and not Biblical?

If it is clear to you now, that *at least* the first act of sexual intimacy in marriage after divorce is sin, then what are we to say about *the second, the third* and so on? Does it proceed to evolve into a valid moral marriage? What other sin is there that you can think of that becomes “good” after repeated use? Does lying, cheating, stealing, murdering, or any other sin become good after prolonged usage? Do other sins get “Cand-Fathered-In”? As some people ask, “At what point does it stop being adultery?” And can you think of any other sin that you can “repent of” without stopping it? Is there any sin in the whole Bible that can be compared with the standard protestant assumption about the adultery of remarriage, where you can keep stolen property and still claim that you have repented and are on your way to heaven?

These are inconsistent assumptions that have been taken for granted too long! It’s time someone called the bluff on this, and called the church to repentance!

After a third or fourth night with a prostitute, does the relationship become “sanctified?” Will we now council fallen church members that they should seek to spend the rest of their life with the women that they fall into immoral relationships with? May be this is the advice of those who think that adultery stops being adultery after some subjective number of adulteries.

But we know for certain that this is not the practice we ought to teach people to follow, because Jesus said those ending Words to the woman caught in adultery:

“...go, and sin no more” ([Joh_8:11](#); and compare [Joh_5:14](#))

Please notice here, that if “Adultery,” or even, “Sexual immorality” had broken the marriage bond then wouldn’t Jesus have said that the woman should stay with the “newly establish” relationship with the man she had just committed adultery with?

If the first act was sin, and the second would not have been, then why would Jesus direct her away from this relationship by saying “...go, and sin no more”? It is clear from these Words that Jesus considered that it would be equally immoral if this woman engaged in future sexual contact with the adultery she had just been caught in. By saying “~~sin~~ no more” that means that doing the same action repeatedly would be repeated sin. If the second act were not equally evil in the eyes of God, then Jesus could have said, “From now on go and stay with your new relationship that was founded by committing adultery with them.” But isn’t this the logic of those who tell those in adulterous remarriages to “~~Stay~~ in this relationship, and try to make this one work”? Again we say: If Jesus said the first act were adultery, then it is already clear that Jesus wants all who follow Him to go and sin no more.

The application should be clear now: If Jesus says that divorce and remarriage is adultery then why do we tell the woman in such a relationship to stay in it when Jesus tells the woman caught in adultery “...go, and sin no more”? If Jesus said “~~sin~~ no more” why do we instead tell people if they do the same act again and again it will not actually be sin?? This has got to be the most opposite and contradictory thing that we could ever tell anyone who was in an adulterous remarriage! Do you see how ridiculous we have become? Even though Jesus disregarded the remarriage by calling it adultery, we stubbornly refuse to comply with His Words and we instead go about hyping up the “new marriage agreement” as though it were a valid agreement that we should stick to. It is pure insanity to claim to love Jesus and then go around behind Him and contradict all the sobering and serious Words He left us with to warn us against the eternal wrath of God in the lake of fire for living in adultery ([Mat_5:27-32](#))!

Jesus has shown us by absolutely clear example that adulterers must “...go, and sin no more,” and he unmistakably included divorce and remarriage in this by calling it adultery. If you disagree with Jesus calling it adultery and demanding the couple to stop being together then you are a liar and need to repent and become a real Christian who follows and reverently obeys Jesus instead of arguing against His Laws. We have no more time to play games like you’re a Christian if you hate and rebel against His Words.

Jesus Called It Adultery and Ascended into Heaven! *Anathema to Anyone Who Tries to Change This!**

If the last thing that we heard from Jesus is that it was adultery, who are we to decide it is no longer adultery after Jesus spoke, settled the matter, and ascended into heaven? But if it is the marriage or the extension of it by continuing the relationship, it is already clear both of them are equally immoral and wrong, and lead straight to hell ([Pro_5:4-5](#)).

How will we escape if we say that divorce and remarriage relationships can be moral relationships when the marriage itself is opposed by Jesus and called “adultery”? If the marriage is called adultery, it is because the relationship that happens in this context is dreadfully immoral. If we call divorce and remarriage anything other than what Jesus calls it, then we are in terrifying danger!

That which Jesus left us with is what we are required to live by, or else be thrown into hell. If Jesus called it adultery and left it that way, anyone who comes along and calls it something else is a rebel and a lawless perverter of the faithful and reliable Words of Jesus.

[* Note: the Greek word *Anathema* means lit. *to arrange up*; fig. *to (completely) give (a person) up* or “*devote*” something (to God), esp. for utter burning and destruction. – this is the way the Old Testament (LXX) used this word, and this concept is briefly imported into the New Testament in a few key passages where a Church is to utterly reject and “excommunicate” a heretic by handing them over to Satan. For more on this see the Bible study entitled, “Judging The Church” on www.TrueConnection.org]

Repentance Pragmatics

Whether it was through divorce and remarriage or some other immoral situation, if you were with my wife and asked me what you should do, I would demand that you immediately get away from her and no longer touch or speak to her. And because the Scriptures say that we ought to love our neighbor as ourselves, it is only right that we act justly toward other people spouses, and it is a foundational requirement before God that we flee from lust for our lives, just as the Scriptures have commanded and charged us (ex. [2Ti 2:22](#)).

We all have things in our lives that we know are simply not optional: falling off a cliff, lighting ourselves on fire, starving to death, and other similar things which are life-threatening. So many people make excuses as though they cannot find a way out to repent from adulterous remarriage, but although I hurt for these people deeply, yet I know that the real problem is usually not how to properly go about repenting, but it is in the foundational need to acknowledge truth, and consider adultery *a life or death situation*.

Jesus said that adultery would send your entire body to hell ([Mat 5:27-32](#)). It is better to cut off your hand and plucked out your eye, than to continue to allow anything in your life that is adultery! Jesus confirmed to you that it was this serious. If you take Him seriously then you know that your soul is dangling over hell and the threat of your **entire destruction** is at hand if you do not do whatever it takes to get out of adulterous remarriage. The central complication is not knowing “pragmatics” of how to go about these things, but knowing that you must do whatever it takes to flee from having your soul damned and cursed by Jesus. As I said to one person in this situation, “Once you believe that it is that serious, **you will jump out of that house!**” and “If you ever come to that point, then call me up quickly.”

How to Repent of Adultery

So many people seem to struggle with “~~how~~” to repent of adulterous remarriage, but these same people do not seem to struggle with determining what to do in parallel cases of other sins. If we struggle with “~~how~~” to repent of adulterous remarriage, we have first got to make sure that this is not simply an issue of not taking Jesus seriously. If it is sin as Jesus said it was, then we generally already know what to do with sin and we should not pretend that divorce and remarriage adultery is somehow different from what we should do in other such serious cases.

We Already Know How to Repent Adultery, If We Are Honest

An over-simplified Chart to show How Simple Repentance is

Sin	Repentance	Forgiveness
Murder	<u>Stop Murdering</u> →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beg God for cleansing! • Seek out forgiveness and reconciliation from people who were hurt by the sin • Believe Jesus! • Be Free from Sin! • “Go and sin no more”
Stealing	<u>Stop stealing and return what you stole</u> →	
Homosexuality	<u>Stop & Get out of homosexual relationship</u> →	
Conventional Adultery	<u>Stop & Get out of adulterous relationship</u> →	
Remarriage Adultery	[what belongs here?] →	

Critical Questions

We have got to stop, get honest, and ask ourselves the basic and critical questions:

(1) How many times is visual adultery, adultery? ([Mat_5:27-30](#))

Answer: as many times as you look lustfully

(2) How many times is adulterous remarriage, adultery? ([Mat_5:31-32](#))

Answer: as many times as you engage in remarriage

(3) What do we have to do to repent of visual adultery? ([Mat_5:27-30](#); compare: [Mat_18:7-9](#))

Answer: Stop looking, seek cleansing (or else pluck out your eye(s)!)

(4) What do we have to do to repent of adulterous remarriage? ([Mat_5:31-32](#))

Answer: ...[what belongs here?]...

To a greater degree than almost anything done before in history with any other sin, the modern church has almost unanimously agreed to stop calling people to repent of adulterous remarriage.

May we hear the Word of the Lord in our day and in our generation, and repent.

God Positively Judges Adulterers

The Bible does not say that God forgets that the sin of adultery is adultery, but that He judges the adulterer:

[Heb_13:4](#) CAB Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and **adulterers** **God will judge.**

Remarriage, while the first spouse is alive, is not honorable because Jesus calls it adultery, ([Mat_5:32](#); [19:9](#); [Mar_10:11-12](#); [Luk_16:18](#)). If you are ever going to repent of adulterous remarriage, you have got to come to terms with the fact that it cannot be forgiven and forgotten if you continue in it. God does not forget sins that you keep doing right in front of His face! When Jesus called divorce and remarriage adultery He distinguished it from lawful marriage which is called “honorable.” He promised you here

that He will judge people who continue being adulterers by remaining in adultery. You have got to take Him seriously that He will damn everyone who remains in adulterous remarriage!

Choose This Day Whose Testimony You Will Believe!

We have seen in Malachi (Mal 2:14) that the Lord is the witness of the original marriage covenant (that is, the wife of their youth), but we should also realize that because of this, He has said that He is also the witness against all who commit adultery and violate such covenants!

Jer 29:23 CAB because of the iniquity which they wrought in Israel, and *because they committed adultery* [ἐκνήθησαν – Imperfect Tense (on-going action): this is actually: *were committing adultery* (see RMAC: V-IMI-3P)] with the wives of their fellow citizens, and spoke a word* in My name, which **I did not command them**... and I **am witness**, says the Lord.

[* MT says, “lying words” (KJV), but the NT strongly approves of the LXX version of Jeremiah]

I come across people over and over again who remain in their remarriage but say that they have “repented” of adultery and think that the devil can no longer bring this up against them, but the problem is that they have God as their witness testifying against them that they are adulterers, and this is because He is also the witness of the first marriage covenant (as we have seen in Malachi). And because they refuse to come into forgiveness on God’s terms of repentance and forsaking sin, God will witness against their adultery and witness for the marriage He sealed! People who are claiming “forgiveness” from adultery without leaving adulterous remarriages are as those in Jeremiah 29:

Jer 29:23 CAB ...they... committed adultery... and **spoke a word** in My name, which I did **not command** them...

God never said that He would forgive anyone who continues in sin, no matter what religious ceremonies that they may observe. But contrary to this, today’s pastors give promises of forgiveness from God without any regard for Biblical repentance, to which God says, “~~I~~ did not command them [this].”

If we are ever going to understand what the Bible commands us to do about repenting of divorce and remarriage, then we need to first understand that there are at least two primary views about this sin that we can choose from...

Church Person vs. Jesus on Remarriage & Intimacy

Who do you agree with?	Remarriage	Sexual Intimacy	Destination
Average church Person	Because this is a valid marriage...	Therefore, this is good, clean and moral. So... →	Heaven
Jesus	Because this is NOT a valid marriage...	Therefore, this is immoral (“ adultery ”). So... →	Hell

9. Distinguishing Sins

All Sins are Not “Created Equal”

There is a really bad, wide spread roomer that says, –All sin is equal in God’s eyes,” (based out of distorting [Jas 2:10-11](#)). Is this conclusion *really* Biblical? Not at all! The Bible repeatedly and clearly teaches that the greater the sin, the greater the potential condemnation if not forgiven through godly repentance:

[Deu 21:22; 22:25, 28-29; 25:2; Eze 16:52; Mat 7:3-5; 10:14-15; 11:21-24; 12:31-32, 41; 23:23-24; Mar 6:11; Luk 7:41; 10:10-16; 11:32; 12:10; 47-48; Joh 19:11; Heb 10:26; Jas 3:1; 2Pe 2:20-22; 1Jn 5:16-18](#)

Jesus showed that not all sins were equal by comparing some to –gnats” and others to –camels,” ([Mat 23:23-24](#)) and also some to –specks” and others to –logs,” ([Mat 7:3-5](#)). In this same light, we must observe that some sins are pointed out with more urgency than others, as sins that definitely condemn us to hell. Among the most damnable sins mentioned in the Bible is adultery, as we will continue to see...

Condemned Sins

Remember that **adultery**, just like **fornication**, **homosexuality**, **lying**, **stealing**, **getting drunk** and everything like this, is **specifically** listed as sin that will condemn people to eternal Hell if they live in it and do not truly repent by leaving the sin, ([1Co 6:9-11; Gal 5:18-21; Eph 5:3-7; 1Ti 1:9-10; Rev 21:8](#)).

[1Co 6:9-11](#) **CAB** Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived**. Neither **fornicators**... **nor adulterers**... **10** ...will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** And such **were** some of you!...

[Eph 5:3-12](#) **CAB** But fornication [[πνξλε α](#)] and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints [[γ νη](#) – holy ones (notice what Paul calls real Christians here!)]; **4** neither **wickedness** [[αισρξ τεο](#) – **shame**], nor foolish talk [[κσξ νι νγ α](#) – lit. *fool-words-ness*] or coarse jesting [[εϋτξ απει α](#) – lit. *well-turned-ness*; i.e. the witty skill of turning the words to make people laugh (in a crude context)], which are not proper, but rather thanksgiving [[εϋραξηστ α](#) – lit. *good favor* (esp. to God)]. **5** For this you know, that **no fornicator** [[π ξλνο](#)], **or unclean person**, nor covetous person, who is an idolater, **has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ** [[του χριστου](#) – the anointed one] **and God**. **6** **Let no one deceive you with empty** [or *vain/ “worthless”*] **words** [[θελνιο ι γνηδ](#), *for **because of** [[η ...γ ξ](#) – because through] **these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience**. **7** Therefore do not be [[γ λεσζε](#) – become] **participants with them**. **8** For you **were** once darkness, but **now** you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light-- **9** for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth, **10** proving what is well-pleasing to the Lord. **11** And have no partnership [[σπθνησλεε](#) – sharing/ reciprocation together] with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them* [[ει γπετε](#) – i.e. speak words ([ι γ](#)) to establish the guilt of those who sin]. **12** For it is shameful [[αισρξ λ](#) – same basic word as v. 4] **even to speak** [[ι γηλ](#) – same root as v. 11] of those things being done by them in secret.

Note: It is interesting how this immorality and –uncleanness” is contrasted with lawful marriage in the last part of this same chapter: [Eph 5:22-33](#). And in which category ([Eph 5:3-12](#) or [Eph 5:22-33](#)) did Jesus and Paul put divorce and remarriage in when they called it adultery?

Did you notice the descriptive word “were” in first Corinthians six and Ephesians five? This means that they were not still these things when Paul wrote this letter to them (that is, he says “now you are light in the Lord”). It notes that the specific list of lifestyle-sins was indicative of the past and no longer intersected their lives. It means that they had repented of such things and did not live in them any longer. If one of them committed fornication every weekend with a prostitute, then such a one had stopped doing this to live for Jesus. And if one was remarried after being divorced, they stopped their adulterous relationship, to establish a good relationship with God. Otherwise they would continue being fornicators or adulterers, according to Scripture, as long as their first spouse lived, ([Rom 7:2-3](#)) and real Christianity has never taught that you could continue to be in any such sins and go to heaven, and this passage does not say that they “are” guilty of these things, but that they used to be guilty of them in the past.

If it was so that any of those at the Church of Corinth were slipping from their repentance back into these life-styles (like the example in the previous chapter: [1Co 5:1-13](#)), Paul soberly warns them to put such people out of the Church, and we are assured that anyone who continues in sin will by no means go to heaven, in the words, “the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

I hope that you can plainly see that in [1Co 6:9-11](#) (as we just saw) that the Bible shows that both fornication and adultery are punished by eternal Hell. It is note-worthy that this warning came right after Paul told them not to associate with anyone who continued in sin and claimed to be a Christian, as he was specifically addressing an immoral “marriage,” ([1Co 5:1-13](#), [5:9 – 6:10](#)).

If by any means we are still at the point where we think that people can live in these sins and still go to heaven we of all people need to repent right now, and stop playing filthy and ridiculous religious games with the Bible and take God serious when He marks out sins that He says will definitely condemn people to hell. Jesus made sure we knew that divorce and remarriage fit on this list when He called it “adultery” and no amount of religious garbage will be able to extinguish this sober warning.

10. How to Face Ignorant Adultery

A Basic Fact that All real Christians Know: Truth is NOT about trying to find what seems to make sense and be fair for everyone, but about finding out what is **actually true** from the mouth of God and submitting ourselves accordingly. If you have any rational hope of inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven, then you will know that the question of whether or not a person is committing adultery is never determined by what will give us a nice sounding answer that make sense to everyone, but about seeking and finding what God has actually declared to be adultery. Once we find that standard, it is our reasonable responsibility to do whatever God may help us do to escape ourselves and help others escape this wrath and guilt.

Because of these very basic facts that all real Christians know, **the main question here** is: Does God ever say that immorality is not immoral as long as a person does not know it is immoral? If that was true, can you explain to me how that would work if I went to a typical high school or college and told everyone that they were not actually committing fornication yet because they probably do not know it is wrong? I hope you perceive that only overt heretics would say such things! But let’s ask this same question in a different way...

Is Ignorant Adultery Still Adultery?

Strangely, as much as this title seems to answer itself, I have found that most church people do not know the answer to this question

Unfortunately, even in this day and age of so much available ~~knowledge~~ it is easy for people to go their whole lives, commit sin in ignorance, and die in it. This issue of divorce and remarriage is no exception, but is often even more unknown than other sinful life styles because of the great efforts of liberal thinkers to stomp it out with their teachings. But even if we do finally come to a point where we agree with Jesus that adulterous remarriage is adultery, we still seem to trip over the most basic and foundational questions:

If you die in sin without knowing it, is it still sin?

But instead of denying and running away from Biblical truth as so many do, let us first establish a Biblical mindset and then fully embrace all that the Bible says about this sinful life style of adulterous remarriage:

Biblical Fact: Ignorant Sin Exists – If you Don't Believe, Repent!

It is certain that there is a such thing as sinning in ignorance according to the Bible:

Gen_12:10-20; 20:2-18; 26:6-11; Lev_4:1-3, 13-15, 22-23, 27-28; [5:15-19](#); Num_15:22-29; Psa_19:12; Isa_5:13-15; 9:16; Hos_4:6; Mat_18:5-9/ Mar_9:42-48/ Luk_17:1-2; Act_14:16; 17:29-30; Heb_9:7, 11; 7:24-25; 10:26-31. Also compare Gen_8:22; Psa_51:5; 58:3 with Isa_7:15-16.

[Lev_5:15-19](#) CAB The soul which shall be really **unconscious** [MT says, “commits a trespass” (WEB)], and **shall sin unwillingly** [MT: “sins through ignorance” (MKJV)] in any of the holy things of the Lord, shall even bring to the Lord for **his transgression** [MT: “his trespass offering” (WEB)], a ram of the flock without blemish, valued according to shekels of silver according to the shekel of the sanctuary, for **his transgression in which he transgressed** [MT: “a trespass offering” (WEB)]. 16 And **he shall make compensation** for that in which he has **sinned** in the holy things; and he shall add the fifth part to it, and give it to the priest; and the priest shall make atonement for him with the **ram of transgression** [MT: “ram of the trespass offering” (WEB)], and... [it] shall be forgiven him. 17 And the soul **which shall sin**, and **do one thing against** any of the commandments of the Lord, **which it is not right to do** [MT: which He “has commanded not to be done”], **and has not known it**, and **shall have transgressed, and shall have contracted guilt**, [MT: “though he didn’t know it, yet he is guilty, and shall bear his iniquity” (WEB)] 18 he shall even bring a ram without blemish from the flock, *valued* at a price of silver [MT: “according to your estimation” (WEB)] **for his transgression** [MT: “for a trespass offering” (WEB)] to the priest; and the priest shall make atonement for **his trespass of ignorance wherein he ignorantly trespassed** [MT: “him concerning the thing in which he sinned...” (WEB)], **and he knew it not**; and it shall be **forgiven him**. 19 For **he has surely been guilty of transgression** [MT: “It is a trespass offering. He is certainly guilty” (WEB)] before the Lord.

[**Technical source text note:** Although it seems generally safest to use the LXX in this case (which is represented by CAB here) I have also included MT readings (as represented by WEB and MKJV); (For more, see the online version of our Bibliography under, “Finding the Old Testament”)]

I find it amazing how many church people (who should know better) blindly deny what this passage clearly teaches! In fact, in my experience I have met far more overtly worldly people who already know that you could sin without knowing it than church people, because church people seem to always believe the religious myth that God cannot hold you guilty if you do not know it is wrong!

Ignorance Means Less Punishment, Not Immunity

The Bible teaches that sins done in ignorance receive a lesser punishment than those done by people who know better, but they still get punished:

[Luk_12:47-48](#) CAB And that servant who knew his master's ^[θπεξ vπ – lit. lord's] will, and did not get ready or do according to his will, shall be beaten *with many blows*. 48 But he who did not know, yet did things worthy of *blows*, shall be beaten *with few*. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be demanded; and to whom much has been entrusted, of him they will ask much more. And just as there are different levels of Hell now, there will be greater and lesser levels of damnation for eternity:

[Mat_11:24](#) CAB But I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

Also see: [Mat 11:20-24](#); [Luk 10:10-16](#)

We can safely see from this that though ignorant sin is still sin, it is counted as a lesser sin than the same actions done with knowledge of its sinfulness. We see that people who sin knowingly will bear the hottest wrath of damnation, while those who didn't know will receive the lesser punishment. This principal has been accurately summarized this way by some: *The greater the revelation, the greater the responsibility and potential Judgment. The lesser the revelation, the lesser the responsibility and Judgment*. And the reverse is also True concerning rewards, ([Mat_13:11-12](#); [25:14-30](#)/ [Luk_19:12-27](#); [Mar_4:23-25](#)), and for this reason Jesus said,

[Luk_8:18](#) WEB Be careful therefore how you hear. For whoever has, to him will be given; and whoever doesn't have, from him will be taken away even that which he thinks he has. And He says,

[Mar_4:24](#) CAB ... *more* will be added to you who hear.

So also, the greater the revelation, the greater the potential reward. But as for punishment and ignorant sin, what we see from all of this, is that though ignorance calls for a lighter punishment, sin done in ignorance still calls for punishment in the Bible (i.e. [Luk_12:47-48](#)).

Punishing Ignorant Sin is in Accordance with the Divine Standard

As we have seen previously and can see in a moment, it is a consistent attribute that God has revealed to us about Himself, that He punishes ignorant sin. And I note all of this here to give a partial but sufficient understanding of the justice of God relative to sins done in ignorance compared to those done with knowledge.

Some seem to think that God would never punish a person for errors done without knowing it, but they who say this oppose God's Eternal Word which unmistakably says He does! Those who do this will pass away but God's Word, The Eternal Standard, will endure through judgment, and will come upon the people who thought to protest it by implying that God had no right to punish those who sinned ignorantly.

In most cases of ignorance however, the saying may be true which says, —You are ignorant because you ignore-it.” (See these verses for the punishment of such people: [Pro_1:7](#), [20-33](#); [2:1-5](#), [9-11](#), [22](#); [5:11-14](#); [Zec_7:11-14](#); [Joh_3:19](#)).

If you will be honest with yourself, others, and the Scriptures, then you will know that the nature of God's justice demands the punishment of sins committed with or without knowledge, even though this is not in accordance with initial, default, natural, human morals.

There is an absolute statement that transcends ignorance, or any other excuse we may conjure up to give, and is appropriate here:

1Co_6:9-10 CAB ... Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators^{G4205} [π ξλνη(πόμοι) – a male prostitute/ fig. fornicator (specifically, with a female prostitute as in **1Co_6:15-18**)], nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals^{G733} [ἀξσελνθνίται (arsenokoitai) – the –giver” of the crime], nor sodomites^{G3120} [και αθνι (malakói) – lit. a masculine form of –soft”; fig. the –receiver” of the crime], **10** nor covetous, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor abusive people, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

If you choose to think that any fornicator, adulterer, homosexual or anyone else that lives in sins like this will somehow go to heaven because they were ignorant of their sin, then you missed this Scripture – **–Do not be deceived”** was the command, and it was there for an absolute unmistakable command that you should have obeyed a long time ago! If you disobey this command and choose to let your own heart slouch into believing that these people will somehow go to heaven anyway even though it is clear that God said they would not, then your –damnation is just” (**Rom_3:8**) for hating the Scriptures, spurning their authority over your life, and violating this clear and straightforward command to **–not be deceived.”**

Gen 12, 20, 26, and Mal 2 – The Bible Specifically Teaches that God Punishes Ignorant Divorce and Ignorant Remarriage Adultery

Ignorant Remarriage Adultery and the Ignorant Violation of God’s One Flesh Covenant is no Exception When it comes to Sinning Ignorantly

Whether with or without knowledge of it, the Bible allows no exception about certain sins that will condemn you to hell if you continue doing them, and this specifically includes adultery, (**1Co_6:9-11**; **Gal_5:18-21**; **Eph_5:3-7**; **1Ti_1:9-10**; **Rev_21:8**).

The examples of punishing ignorant adultery in Scripture are extremely clear. There is no excuse for denying the fact of ignorant adultery after considering the following examples:

Gen_12:11-20 CAB And it came to pass when Abram approached Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, I know that you are a beautiful woman. **12** It shall come to pass then, that when the Egyptians shall see you, that they shall say, This is his wife, and they shall kill me, but they shall keep you alive. **13** Say, therefore, I am his sister, that it may be well with me on account of you, and my soul shall live because of you. **14** And it came to pass when Abram entered into Egypt — the Egyptians having seen his wife that she was very beautiful — **15** that the princes of Pharaoh saw her, and praised her to Pharaoh, and brought her into Pharaoh's house. **16** And they treated Abram well on her account, and he had sheep, calves, donkeys, male and female servants, mules, and camels. **17** And God afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great and severe afflictions, because of Sarai, Abram's wife. **18** And Pharaoh, having called Abram, said, What is this you have done to me, that you did not tell me that she was your wife? **19** Why then did you say, She is my sister? And I took her for a wife to myself; and now, behold, your wife is before you, take her and go quickly away. **20** And Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning Abram, to join in sending him forward, and his wife, and all that he had.

Did you notice that Pharaoh suffered punishment for ignorant sin? But the story does not fully end here...

Gen_20:2-18 CAB And Abraham said concerning [πεξι] Sarah his wife, She is my sister, **for he feared to say** [ῶτι – that], **She is my wife, lest at any time the men of the city should kill him for her sake** [“for her sake” – ὄτι] [not in MT here, but MT & LXX include this saying in **Gen_12:11-13**; **26:7**]. So [ε] Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took [εἰ αβελ] Sarah [i.e. Abimelech began a marriage by –taking” (εἰ αβελ) Sara into his house]. **3** And *God came **to** [εἰσηι ζελ ο ζεοο

πεξόο – the God came into (and) toward] Abimelech by night in his sleep, and said, **Behold, you'll die** [MT: –you are a dead man” (WEB); (compare v. 7)] for [πεξι] the woman whom you have taken [ἐι αβεο], for **she has lived with a husband** [σπλωθεπιτα ἄλ ξι – lit. *cohabited with a man*, i.e. she has already been lawfully –taken” into another man’s cohabitation; MT: –for she is a man’s^{H1167} [lit. *master’s*] wife^{H1166} [lit. *mastered (woman)*]” (KJV [with insertions]) – for both LXX & MT this is fig. *married*] **4** But Abimelech had not touched* her [* ἥσανν – same Greek as Pro 6:29; 1Co 7:1 (& same as v. 6 here); MT simply says, –come near” (WEB), but agrees with LXX in v. 6], and he said, Lord, will You destroy an **ignorantly sinning** and [ἀγλνν λ – ignorantly –sinning” is implied by context (& said in v. 9), but not actually said here; neither *ignorance* nor *sin* is in MT here, but both are implied in what follows, including the –sin” in v. 6, 9, & also 16)] just nation? **5** Did he not say to me [κνηειπελ], She is my sister, and she, even [καί – and] she herself said, He is my brother? With [ἐλ – in] a *pure [θαζαξῆ – clean; MT: –integrity of my” (WEB)] heart and in the *righteousness [MT: –innocence” (WEB)] of my hands have I done this. **6** And God said to him in [θαζ] his sleep, **Yes, I** [Κἀγὼ – and I] knew that you did this **with a pure** [θαζαξῆ; MT: –in the integrity of your” (WEB)] **heart**, and I spared you, so **that you should not sin** [καξτεῖλ – (compare v. 4, 9, 16)] against [εἰο – lit. *into/ to*] Me, **therefore** [ἐλεθελ τνύτνπ – fig. *on account of this*] I did not let you touch [ἄσασζ αη (same as v. 4)] her. **7** But now return [ἀπό νο – lit. *give away*; fig. *give over (to)*; by usage: *repay/ give again*] the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and *he* shall pray for [πεξι] you, and you shall live; but if you restore her not, know that you and all yours shall die [compare v. 3]. **8** And Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called [ἐθαί εσελ] all his servants [παῖ αο – lit. *boys*; fig. *male servants*], and he spoke [ἐλα εσελ] all these words [ρήκατα – i.e. *spoken words*] in [εἰο – into] their ears, and all the men [ἄλξξ σπν η] feared exceedingly. **9** And Abimelech called [ἐθαί εσελ] Abraham and said [εἶπελ] to him, What is this that you have done to us? *Have we [κῆ τη – this is actually a negative, rhetorical question (i.e. *we have not done this have we?*); MT says, –How have I” (WEB)] sinned [ἠκάξτνκελ (compare v. 4, 6 and also 16)] against [εἰο – lit. *into/ to*] you, that you have brought [ἐπιγαγεο] upon [ἐπ] me and upon [ἐπι] my kingdom a great sin [καξτίαλ]? **You have done** [ἐξγνλ – you have worked] to me a deed, which [ὁ – the one/ –that”] no one ought to do. **10** And Abimelech said to Abraham, What have you **seen in me** [ἐλη ὠλ lit. *perceived in* → ἐλνξ σ – –to envisage” (ALS p. 195)] that you have done this? **11** And Abraham said [εἶπελ], **Why** [because (MT & LXX)] **I said** [εἶπα γάξ], Surely [ἄξῆ^{G686} – i.e. *evidently/ fig. based on what I saw*, “consequently,” *I must conclude and understand that* (same as Mat 7:20; Rom 7:21; 8:1; 1Co 5:10; 7:14; 15:14; Gal 3:7)] **there is not the worship of God** [ζενσέβεηα – God-reverence] in this place, and they will slay me *because of [ἐλεθελ] my wife. **12** For truly she is my sister **by my father** [ἐθ πατζόο – out (of) father], but not **by my mother** [ἐθ κετζόο – out (of) mother], *and she became my wife [ἐγελήζε ἐ κνηειο γπλαῖθα – but she became [or was *begotten*] into my woman/ –wife”; –into” (εἰο) is the same Greek expression used in Gen 2:24; Mat 19:5; Mar 10:8; 1Co 6:16 (compare v. 17); Eph 5:31]. **13** And it came to pass [ἐγέλετν] when God brought me forth [ἐμῆγαγέλ κε – lead me out] out [ἐθ] of [* MT: –eased me to wander from” (WEB)] the house of my father, that I said to her, **This righteousness** [Σαυτέλ τῆλ ηθηγσύλελ – this (is) the righteousness (or *justice*); MT: –kindness” (WEB)] you shall perform to [ἐπ – upon] me, in [εἰο – into] every place into which we may enter [εἰεἰ ζσκε λ], **say of me** [εἰδὸλ ἐκὲ ὄτη – say (of) me, that,], He is my brother. **14** And Abimelech took a **thousand pieces of silver, and** [not in the MT here, but included in v. 16] sheep, and calves [MT: –oxen” (WEB)], and servants [παῖ αο – lit. *boys*], and maid servants [πανῖσθαο – lit. *girls*], and gave [ἐσθελ] them to Abraham, and he returned [ἀπέσθελ] Sarah his wife to him. **15** And Abimelech said to Abraham [not in MT], Behold [I v ὅ], my land is before you, dwell [θατυῖθεη – lit. *house down*] wherever it may please you. **16** And to [τη] ἐ Sarah he said, Behold [I v ὅ], I have given [ἐσθα] your brother a thousand pieces of silver [this is in the LXX & MT], *those shall be to you for the price of your countenance [τα τα ἔσταη σηεἰο τηκῆλ τν πεξνσῶπνπ σπν – lit. *these will be (unto) you into (εἰς) the value (or honor; fig. price), (of) the toward-vision (fig. countenance), (of) you; – i.e. I am paying your “brother” a huge fine for having looked at the beauty of your face [perhaps, without a veil?] when I took you into “the King’s harem” (Gen 20:2-3);], and to all the women [πάσαηθ] with you [MT Hebrew is hard to represent in English: –Behold, it is for you a covering of the eyes to all that are with you. In front of all you are vindicated” (WEB); many people disagree on how to represent this: KJV (like Darby, Bishops, Geneva Bible, and some others) says, –thus she was reproved”; YLT: –by all this she is reasoned with”], and **speak the truth in all things** [not in MT]. **17** And [ἐ] Abraham prayed [πεξνσεύματν] to [πεξόο] God, and God healed [ιάσατν] Abimelech, and his wife, and his women servants [πανῖσθαο – lit. *girls*], and they bore children [ἔτεθνλ]. **18** Because [ὄτη] the Lord had closed up [σπγθι εἰσλ σπλέθι εησελ – in closing up, had closed up (an intensification) – i.e. *had completely closed up*] **all the wombs** [ἐμσελ πᾶσαλ κῆτζαλ – (the) outside (of) every womb] of the house of Abimelech, **because of** [ἐλεθελ] Sarah, Abraham’s wife.*

Also see: [Gen 12:10-20](#); [Gen 26:6-11](#)

- We see that despite the king's ignorance ([Gen 20:2, 5](#); and compare [Gen 12:18](#)), and integrity ([Gen 20:6](#)) God said that he was "a dead man" ([Gen 20:3, 7b](#)) for even going the direction of adultery ([Gen 20:2](#); and compare with [Mat 5:27-30](#); [Gen 12:15](#)).
- Though God spared Abimelech because of the ignorance of his error, ([Gen 20:6b, 17](#); compare [Gen 12:19](#)) and did not completely hold his sin against him, ([Gen 20:6c](#)) God still punished the king to a lesser degree by closing his wives wombs ([Gen 20:18](#); and compare [Gen 12:17](#) – quoted in a moment). (In this, Scripture reaffirms that ignorant sin is punished less than willful sin – but it is still punished).
- Though uniquely and mercifully spared from the sin, the sentence for this ignorant sin was clearly **death** ([Gen 20:3, 7b](#)). And later Abraham's son Isaac did the exact same thing, to the exact same king Abimelech:

[Gen 26:1 CAB](#) And there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine, which was in the time of Abraham; and Isaac went to Abimelech the king of the Philistines to Gerar.

[Gen 26:6-11 CAB](#) And Isaac dwelt in Gerar. **7** And the men of the place questioned him concerning Rebecca his wife, and he said, She is my sister (for he feared to say, She is my wife, lest at any time the men of the place should kill him because of Rebecca, because she was beautiful). **8** And he remained there a long time, and Abimelech the king of Gerar leaned to look through the window, and saw Isaac sporting with Rebecca his wife. **9** And Abimelech called Isaac, and said to him, Is she then your wife? Why have you said, She is my sister? And Isaac said to him, *I did so*, for I said, Lest at any time I should die on her account. **10** And Abimelech said to him, Why have you done this to us? One of my kindred might soon have lain with your wife, and you would have brought a **sin of ignorance** [MT: "guilt" (WEB)] upon us. **11** And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, Every man that touches this man and his wife shall be liable to death.

- Abimelech very clearly recognized that ignorant adultery still makes people guilty! How sad that this pagan king knew more about guilt and righteousness than so many in church today that don't even believe in ignorant sin! Abimelech apparently knew this previously, but he had surely learned this all-the-more-so after his (previous) threatening encounter with God. It is a shame that Abimelech, an evidently otherwise ungodly king, ([Gen 20:15](#); [21:34](#)) learned that ignorant adultery brought guilt, but most who claim to believe Jesus, (a much fuller revelation of God) still don't understand this concept. It's sad that this pagan king understood more about marriage than the average church-goer and Pastor today!
- May God likewise have mercy on others who unknowingly commit adultery by marrying other people's wives, ([Rom 7:1-4](#)) especially when it is pretended not to be sin via a legal divorce. May He stop relationships before the participants are required to burn forever for their sin. May He also work on your heart to be willing to be that warning mouth-piece to those perishing all around you, even those going to church every Sunday!

Do You Remember the Shocking Statements Made through Malachi?

During a time when it was known to be legal according to God's law to divorce and remarry, there was a shocking statement of Judgment that God still gave through Malachi to those who had done so as we have read previously. Though they were ignorant of a higher standard concerning divorce and remarriage, God still held them to it:

Reminders from Malachi Chapter 2

v. 13

Mal_2:13a – God is angry with them despite the fact that they –covered [LXX: lit. would cover] with tears the altar of the Lord, and with weeping and groaning” (CAB)

Mal_2:13b – God resolutely refuses to honor or receive their desperate prayers, sacrifices and pleas for help, but instead...

v. 14

Mal_2:14a – When they ask **–Why?**” [LXX: “Ελεθελ τιλνο – lit. on account of what?] He solemnly declares...

Mal_2:14b – **–Because** the Lord has borne witness between you and the wife of your youth...” (CAB)

Mal_2:14c – And although they had divorced their wives, still God says...

Mal_2:14d – **–. . . she is your companion, *and the wife of your covenant.**” (WEB) [LXX: θαι γπλι] ηζηθεο σνπ – lit. and woman of your covenant]

v. 15

Mal_2:15a – God takes full credit for making it this way

Things that Malachi 2 Teaches us About Ignorant Sin

- The Law had allowed divorce and remarriage through Moses (Deu_24:1-4) so that they had no conscious reason why they couldn’t take advantage of it.
- Despite the permission given in the Law, God still punished them for divorcing their wives (Mal_2:11, 13) even though many of their wives would have certainly married others (Deu_24:2).
- The word, **–Why?**” that they asked God in Mal_2:14 directly indicates that they did not know why they were being punished.
- As we have already said: **–Their ignorance of the severity of the covenant that they made (Mal_2:14) had no effect at all to nullify its punishment** when violated (Mal_2:13, 15-16). Despite the fact that they –covered [LXX: lit. would cover] with tears the altar of the Lord, and with weeping and groaning” (Mal_2:13 CAB) God still did not listen to them (Mal_2:13) because of their divorce (Mal_2:14, 16)”

Ultimately, God Spares Faithful People From Ignorant Sin – So Ignorance is No Excuse!

Applications about Ignorant Adultery

If committing adultery in ignorance will still be harshly punished, (because this is the nature of all ignorant sins) then how much worse will it be for those who do it knowingly? If those in the world will be condemned for their immorality, won’t those in the church suffer worse damnation when they knowingly commit the worst sexual sin of adultery?

Ultimately, ignorance is never an excuse for sin, because if you had –cried-out-for,” (Pro_2:3) sought, (Pro_2:4; Mat_7:8) and prayed for understanding in righteousness, (Jas_1:5) then we have the promise from God that He would have answered, not leaving you ignorant, but would have gladly given you what you had asked, (Psa_81:10; Pro_2:1-5, 9-11, 20; Mat_7:7-12/ Luk_11:5-13; Joh_14:13-15; 15:7; 1:16; Jas_1:5-6; also see: 1Ki_3:6-15/ 2Ch_1:7-12):

Mat_7:8 CAB For everyone that asks receives, and he that seeks finds, and to him that knocks, it shall be opened.

So we see that if we would truly ask God, He has promised to give us the necessary knowledge to be clear of ignorant sin, and because of this, no one is really innocent whenever they continue in sin. This

applies to all sins done in ignorance, even ignorant adultery. Let us repent of our rash and unbiblical philosophies of saying that God won't punish ignorant sin. Let us instead be zealous to ask God for truth and knowledge, lest we also fall in our ignorance and find ourselves crushed under just and unbearable guilt and condemnation for living in sin, and let us proclaim the truth far and wide so others don't likewise perish in ignorance.

11. A Few Basic Principles That Demand Repentance from Adulterous Remarriage

The Law of Non-contradiction – God Does Not Change His Mind

It is amazing to me the number of church people, especially pastors, who defend inconsistent assumptions about adulterous marriages. Many seem to think that after a remarriage (which God says is adulterous) that God will somehow **forget** that He had declared it adulterous, and would then proceed to **contradict** Himself and decide that the second marriage, was in fact, valid and should be maintained, honored, and kept as binding.

It is one thing (that is bad enough) if we will be inconsistent and double-minded, but will we also presume it upon God to be so? We ought not to do this! If Jesus said that it is adultery He meant what He said and He does not change! Remember that it says, —. I am the Lord your God, and I change not... (Mal_3:6 CAB),” and —Jesus Christ [χριστός – anointed one] is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” (Heb_13:8 CAB); and also, —. shall He say and not perform? Shall He speak and not keep [it]...” (Num_23:19 CAB); But incredibly, we find it within ourselves to presume that Jesus will not follow through with His Words when He calls divorce and remarriage adultery!

If Jesus said that it was adultery when a couple remarried, then He will not change His mind later after they have been married, or have had children, and then say —OK. Now that you're already remarried it's no longer sin.” God will not do this with a remarriage any more than He will do it with a homosexual or thief. —So then...God...now...commands all men everywhere to repent,” (Act_17:30 CAB).

Our Awareness of the Sinfulness of “Fornication” Testifies Against Us

How would you react if I, claiming to be an ambassador for Christ, went and slept with someone that I was not married to every night? If you have any sense of righteousness, you would be appalled! But what if I argued, —It was only fornication the first time, or first couple of times we were together, but now it's ok in God's sight. God wouldn't want me to break up my commitment with this prostitute. She says that she's now pregnant!” I hope this argument sounds ridiculous to you, but this is the very thing that we do when we say that adulterous marriages somehow completely metamorphosize from adultery in to valid moral marriages.

It does not matter how many times or with what intensity you —get saved” or claim to —repent,” that prostitute on the street that you slept with will not suddenly become your wife, and neither will an adulterous remarriage!

This teaching is hard for us to see and accept. We ask ourselves, —Does a second marriage *really* remain adultery? What if they are sorry that they initiated it, but feel obliged to continue with their marriage because of their commitments?” But we wish to classify the second marriage as though it fit into a **different** category than if I went out every night and committed fornication, because there is nothing solid in our minds to hold a remarriage relationship to the label of —adultery,” as Jesus called it,

but if we had reasonably held the Bible as something solid in our minds, the true Words of Jesus would have been solid enough for us to act upon:

- We usually have a wedding certificate (a piece of paper) showing couples to be married
- We do not have a counter-certificate calling remarriages –Adultery,” except that we do have the Bible which does this
- We generally consider that a man is not legitimately married with his girlfriend if he cohabits with her, but we think that a remarried couple is legitimately married when the only difference which sways our decision is a piece of paper from the government
- The Bible calls both of these situations different forms of sexual immorality, but we agree with the government over the Bible when it comes to remarriage
- We prove that we believe the governments paperwork above the handy work of God, because we are more convinced that wedding certificates make legitimate marriages than what the Bible says, and we let these pieces of paper outrank God when He declares them to be adulterous

If we still call adulterous remarriage a lawful relationship before God, then our failure is not simply in interpreting the bible properly, but it is in not actually taking the Words of God seriously when He calls remarriage adultery.

The Root and the Branches – Are We Talking Holiness or Unholiness Here?

Let us believe that the principal shown in this Scripture is True:

[Rom_11:16](#) **KJV** For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump [the rest of the fruit] is also... and if the **root** be holy, so are the branches.

And so also the reverse of this is even Truer: *If the root is unholy, so are the branches*. If a marriage is in fact, adultery, then –so are the branches” that come from that marriage. The root in this case is an adulterous remarriage, and the –branches” are all that come from that relationship. All of it is Holy or defiled based on the –root of the matter.” The root that is adulterous, will by no means become a valid moral marriage as long as the first spouse is alive.

[Gen_1:11-12](#) **CAB** And God said, Let the earth bring forth the herb of grass bearing seed according to its kind and according to its likeness, and the fruit tree bearing fruit whose seed is in it, according to its kind on the earth, and it was so. **12** And the earth brought forth the herb of grass-bearing seed according to its kind and according to its likeness, and the fruit tree bearing fruit whose seed is in it, according to its kind on the earth; and God saw that it was good.

God reinforces this again in verse **29** and says similar things about the animals in verses **24-25**. We see that whether it is herbs or fruit trees, each plant produces fruit –according to its kind” and this capacity of reproducing according to its own nature is because each plant’s –seed is in it.” It contains in its own nature the ability to reproduce its own nature. Interestingly enough, as we have previously read, God says this principal also extends to Spiritual things:

[Rom_11:16](#) **KJV** For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump [the rest of the fruit] is also holy: and if the **root** be holy, so are the branches.

Note: We know that this case is a spiritual application because the whole chapter is about the salvation of people, especially in the verses surrounding this statement - [Rom_11:14-31](#)

And we have also already read previously that, —. a good tree does not produce rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree produce good fruit,” (Luk_6:43 CAB).

Seeing that these things also apply spiritually, we know whether it is a plant, a man, or the spirituality of a person, one can only reproduce within their own nature and kind. And just as a holy root makes holy branches, even more so, unholy roots make unholy branches that are defiled:

Hag 2:11-14 CAB 11 (2:12) Thus says the Lord Almighty; Inquire now of the priest *concerning* the law, saying, 12 (2:13) If a man should take holy meat in the fold of his garment, and the fold of his garment should touch bread, or stew, or wine, or oil, or any food, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. 13 (2:14) And Haggai said, If a defiled person who is unclean by reason of a dead body, touch any of these, shall it be defiled? And the priests answered and said, It shall be defiled. 14 (2:15) And Haggai answered and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before Me, says the Lord; and so are all the works of their hands...

[Technical note: the extra references in this passage (ex. -(2:12)”) simply indicate that this passage is found in a different location in the LXX, while the content is basically the same]

But many harden their heart through unbelief when reading Hag 2:11-14 and say that this principal —passed away with the Old Testament.” However we should remember this very same principal is also clearly taught in the New Testament by the saying,

1Co_5:6/ Gal_5:9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump

Also see: Mat_16:6-12

What does all of this mean? It means that many things are more readily made unholy by one defiling thing than one unholy thing is made holy by a thousand holy things. One defiling thing infectiously spreads defilement throughout a whole group of people more than many people could ever purify one defiled thing. But even more so, holiness is what is special, and pollution is what is common to all. — This is a very basic Scriptural concept that we usually miss in English from typically not fully representing words like —θηλ σ” (*koinoō*), G2840, (as seen in, for example, Rev 21:27). If any man will clean himself by faith in the truth of Jesus in order to approach God, he will become a friend of God. But if any man treats the honor of God lightly, he will easily pollute himself with —“dittle” laxity (i.e. 1Co_5:6/ Gal_5:9) and become hateful before God (Tit 3:3).

God has declared the bases and foundational root of a second marriage after divorce to be adultery: —. **he who marries her when she is divorced commits adultery**, (Mat_19:9 WEB).” Please be honest and agree with the Scriptures that teach that there is no way that any of the —branches” which proceed and are generated out of this unholy relationship will be anything other than that of its very own filthy nature of adultery. This is what the Scriptures have consistently taught from the —Genesis” of creating plants to the spiritual proclamation of holiness most fulfilled throughout the New Testament. If God takes holiness so seriously that He will withdraw Himself away from a man who engages in the unholiness of wicked **worldliness***, how much more will He reject a person who continues to live with another person’s spouse!?

Heb_12:14-17 KJV Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without [ρξιο] which **no man shall see the Lord**: 15 **Looking diligently** [ἐπισθπν λτεο – i.e. especially pertaining to the overseers/ —pastors,” (compare G1984)] **lest** any man fail of the grace [ρξ ηπο – favor] of God; **lest** any **root** of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby **many be defiled**; 16 **lest** there *be* **any fornicator** [π ξλνο], or **profane person** [β βει νο – i.e.

someone who is filthy and abominable to God], as Esau... 17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected...

(Did you notice how God tied all of the things we just talked about together into this one passage?)

[* For more on this see the Bible study entitled, “The Woes of Worldliness” on www.TrueConnection.org]

12. A Few Grammatical and Contextual Principles That Demand Repentance from Adulterous Remarriage

The Present Tense and Continual Context of “Adultery” in Greek

In a number of places in the Bible about marriage, there are some grammatical details in the original Greek that confirm to us that a continued remarriage continues to be adultery.

Luk_16:18 CAB Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery^{G3431} [κνηρπειη- Present Tense, Active Voice, Indicative Mood: *is committing adultery*]; and everyone who marries a woman who is divorced from her husband commits adultery^{G3431} [κνηρπειη- *is committing adultery* (same as previous)].

In this passage, the word “adultery” in Greek [κνηρπειη (*moicheuei*)] is in the *Present Tense*. This tense does not **always** speak about continual action (i.e. technically speaking: it can possibly mean a “punctiliar” act when presented in the “Indicative Mood”), but continual action is the primary sense of the tense, and this is the way that the *Present Tense* is applied repeatedly within the Greek of the passages on marriage.

We should not have to particularly know that the word “adultery” is in the *Present Tense* before we would be willing to believe that the adultery is continual, because as we said earlier, we have no right to change what Jesus called it after He declared it adultery and ascended into Heaven*. But it is a confirming detail here to find this reality compounded: not only did Jesus call it adultery and ascend unto the Father*, but He left us this charge in the *Present Tense* with a clearly reaffirming context of continual action lest anyone come behind Him and think they had the right to change His declaration after He seemed to be gone* from their presence.

[* Compare, for example: Psa_68:18/ Eph_4:8-10; Joh_14:2-4; Joh_14:12; Joh_14:18; Joh_14:27-28; Joh_16:5-10; Luk_24:51-53; Heb_4:14; (also see Joh_16:16-22; 1Pe_1:8)]

A Very Simplified Overview of Some Greek Grammar Considerations

One word can bear a lot of grammatical weight in Greek, and each word’s grammatical qualities can express many things such as:

- **When** an action is, or was, or will be done
- **Who** or what is doing the action
- **Who** or what it is being **done to**
- **How many** people or things are doing the action
- **How real** the action is (theoretical, wished, stated as fact, or commanded, etc.)
- **What kind** of action or event it is (such as “**durative**” – an ongoing event, or “**punctiliar**,” – a one-time event)

These qualities and many more can be determined by the Greek Grammar (especially when dealing with action verbs), and are seen by considering things like the –Tense,” –Voice,” –Mood,” –Number,” and –Person.” With these factors constantly being applied throughout the Bible, Greek is a lot more specific than English and many other languages. The *Present Tense* is one of these specific Greek Grammar qualities, and it primarily represents the repeated or habitual continual action of present time. The *Present Tense* is primarily not something you –did” once (that is, *punctiliar action*) or even something you –were doing” (repeatedly), but the *Present Tense* is primarily what you **are doing** (presently and repeatedly), as in the word –adultery,” in the saying, –**Everyone who divorces his wife, and marries another, is committing adultery.**”

Using the *Present Tense* is like saying, –I am working on getting my college degree.” We could also use the *Present Tense* to say things like, –whoever litters is doing humanity a disservice.” We see that even in English the present tense can be used to speak of a student continually working on getting a degree, but it can also speak of a one-time act of littering. Although it can be used for both repeated action and a one-time action, it is abundantly clear from the context which one is intended: it is clear that the littering person is described as littering once in this case, but it is also clear that the student is repeatedly working on an on-going bases because we all know from the context that this situation describes going to school on a continual basis. It is clear that until you graduate, you do not stop –working on getting a degree” and it is equally clear from Jesus’ Words that you do not stop –committing adultery” until you stop being in the adulterous marriage, because **being** in a relationship **in the Present tense is not a one-time action of the past.**

The Context of Continual Action is Even Clearer than the Grammar

Some try to argue against addressing the grammatical aspect of these things by claiming that the *Present Tense* does not imply continuous action when talking about remarriage, since the *Present Tense* can possibly mean a –punctiliar” (one-time) action in the –Indicative Mood” (as in the example, –whoever litters is doing humanity a disservice”), but this ignores the abundantly clear context of continually **being** in a remarriage: The clear descriptions of continual action can even be seen in English by the context of being in a remarriage relationship, and this specifies the use of the *Present Tense* in Greek. Beyond these basic examples, we also have the epistles which mark this as continual sin in even clearer ways that cannot be grammatically confused in any way:

Rom_7:2-3 CAB For the woman who is under a man has been bound by law to the **living husband**. But if the husband should die, she is released from the law of the husband. **3** So then, **while the husband is living, she will be called an adulteress** if she becomes *married* to a different husband; but if her husband should die, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, having become *married* to a different husband.

With Romans seven also describing a continual action of adultery in remarriage, it is certain that this is the same continual action that Jesus indicates with the *Present Tense* in passages like Luke 16. Because of this, however many theoretical excuses our modern theologians may come up with to ignore the *Present Tense* in Luke 16, and even reverse it by insisting that it is a onetime act, all of these doubts and excuses are blown away by the Apostle Paul’s take on Jesus’ Words when he describes the adultery as so continual, that it defines her as actually being an adulteress.

When Paul uses a noun (what type of person the woman is) rather than simply discussing action verbs, there is no possibility of only doing a –punctiliar” one-time action, because we are not talking about action verbs, but nouns and this defines the very nature of what she is. Communicating the nature of what someone is (by using a noun) definitely addresses repeated action, and we already know this by

simple examples: (1) A mailman (a noun) delivers mail (action verbs) on a regular and repeated basis. (2) A home owner (a noun) continues owning a home for as long as he owns a home (a continual action verb), and (3) we know that an adulteress (a noun) continues committing adultery (action verbs) as long as she keeps sexually interacting with men outside of her lawful marriage – If we say that these examples do not keep doing these things then we are playing games because we all know that repeating these actions on a regular bases makes these titles applicable to people, and the only real way to stop being defined by these titles is to stop doing these repeated actions that define us in these ways! If Paul clearly said she was an adulteress after being remarried, then we know that she is continually having filthy and adulterous sexual interactions with men outside of her lawful marriage, and it will keep being this way until she breaks off all sexual interaction with all other men besides her **lawful** husband.

We know that (following John the Baptist's example) Jesus proclaimed these marriage teachings as a pillar for establishing the New Covenant ([Mat_5:31-32](#)), and whether it was first by hearing the message from others, comparing what was written in some of the Gospels, some particular Divine revelation, or a combination of some or all of these things, Paul heard these teachings that Jesus gave and understood from them that remarriage adultery was a repeated action within remarriage, and this is exactly what Paul teaches in Romans 7 as if it were also already understood by the Church at Rome to be this way. From the way that Paul talks to the Church at Rome, it looks like they had certainly read passages from the Gospels or else heard the preaching of the Apostles themselves, and also understood that remarriage adultery was continual, because Paul said, —. I speak to those knowing the law” ([Rom_7:1 CAB](#)), and —. For the woman who is under a man has been bound by law...” ([Rom_7:1-2 CAB](#)).

We may indeed now here of theologians these days having the nerve to contradict the significance of what Jesus communicated in these things, but it is only a moment before we can turn around and see Paul shaming their interpretation by saying that the sin is continual, no matter what they may do to theorize it away.

The fact that most modern theologians say that it is not continual is irrelevant in light of the fact that Paul says it is. It goes without saying for Christians that Paul was wiser by God's Spirit than all of these philosophers and their speculative guesses combined, and ultimately, no real Christian can take their word over the words of Paul, because we know that Paul's words were not simply his own words, but that they are for us unto this day, the Words of God. Paul is in the Bible. They are not. It does not make any sense for us to believe them above what the Apostle Paul said.

So from this passage in Romans 7 it is clear that Paul understood Jesus' use of the *Present Tense* as continual action. I thank God for Paul's reiteration of Jesus' Words, because it greatly helps us with this question wherever there may be any doubts!

You do not need an education in grammar to see the continual implications of Romans seven. It clearly says, —she shall be called an adulteress...” This is not speaking of a one-time action of the past, but it is describing a life style of —durative,” on-going sin that affects what she is called (—an adulteress”) and it clearly says how long this lasts (—as long as he lives”). This is clearly continuous. Do you see that from the grammatical implications in Greek (as in Luke 16) to the very clear application of this truth (as in Romans 7), the Bible continually describes the action of adultery to be continual within remarriage?

Especially because of passages like Romans 7, church people are without excuse if they choose to believe that the adultery of remaining in a remarriage somehow —stops” before the first spouse stops living. The technical implications of Greek grammar are strongly reinforced by the clear and plain context of Scripture, and this is so particularly clear in some passages that it is even reflected in English.

13. Confronting and Condemning the Hypocritical Excuses to Not Repent of Adultery

The False Accusation of Teaching “Unforgivable Divorce”

For a long time an unreasonable myth has been widely circulated among the modern church that accuses people who stand against adulterous remarriage of teaching that divorce is an “unforgivable sin.” When the modern church falsely accuses those who oppose adulterous remarriage of calling divorce an unforgivable sin, this is what I call, “The False Accusation of Teaching Unforgivable Divorce.”

As one who reasons with plain words and rational considerations, I am crying out and appealing for some sanity, justice, and reasonableness here! It seems that wherever there are people who teach against adulterous remarriage nearly every time they turn around they are being falsely accused of teaching something that has nothing to do with what they are saying. This wide-spread myth that “people are teaching unforgivable divorce” has no basis in reality and it is high time that the church repented of this irrational speculation and cheap slander.

Some Basic Facts and Considerations About The False Accusation

- More or less everyone in churches today knows that both divorce and adultery can be forgiven
- There are essentially no major groups or teachings out there trying to defend marriage by saying divorce is an unforgivable sin
- For the most part there is no one out there actually believing that “divorce and or remarriage is an unforgivable sin.” There are however people out there falsely accusing other people of saying that “divorce and or remarriage is an unforgivable sin” – And this is what I call, “The False Accusation of Teaching Unforgivable Divorce”
- The overwhelming majority of all church goers goes beyond “extending forgiveness for divorce” and also defends remaining in a remarriage. They not only believe that adultery is forgivable, but they also want to promote people remaining in remarriage
- A significant portion of this “overwhelming majority” propagates “The False Accusation of Teaching Unforgivable Divorce,” either (A) out of confusion, and or (B) to scare people away from standing against divorce and remarriage, and or (C) to slander those who already stand against adulterous remarriage
- It is high time someone set the record straight:
- **The widespread myth that says that, “There are people teaching that divorce and or remarriage is an unforgivable sin” is a hoax!**

When it comes to this teaching about divorce and remarriage, the issue is not:

Whether or not divorce and or adultery can be forgiven

But the only real issue is:

Whether or not remaining in a remarriage is remaining in adultery

From that point the Bible is extremely clear:

Gal_5:19-21 CAB Now the works of the flesh are manifest [$\nu\alpha\lambda\epsilon\acute{\xi}\alpha$ (*phanera*) – made visible by light], which are: **adultery**... 21 ...which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The False Accusation – in Action

It seems like there are so many people I deal with in churches who promote confusion in this area by acting like they are defending the church from a doctrine that says —“divorce is an unforgivable sin,” and most of the time they try to do this by keeping everything focused on —“divorce,” rather than addressing adulterous remarriage. They hype up the obvious fact that a divorce is a one-time act in the past that God is willing to forgive, and after focusing on divorce, they then turn around and make those standing against remaining in adulterous remarriage as though they are attacking divorced people and not forgiving them for their one-time act of divorce. If someone is actually opposing continuing in adulterous remarriage why would you accuse him of saying that —“one-time act of divorce in a person’s past is an unforgivable sin”? When people sin against rationality in this way, this is called a —“straw-man argument,” and this is an unlawful practice for those who are saved unto a sound mind that loves truth.

Focusing on divorce as though it were the core issue here is a senseless and unreasoning distraction because NO ONE is arguing that a one-time act of divorce in a person’s past is a continual sin in their present life-style. And if NO ONE is actually preaching against (repentant) divorced people in the first place, then why do people keep repeating —“The False Accusation of Teaching Unforgivable Divorce,” when the issue of adulterous remarriage comes up? It is only out of unsoundness and deception that these things are continuously brought up and repeated, to raise the defenses of the weak-minded against believing what the Bible says about adulterous remarriage. It is only a decoy and distraction to deceive and lure the shallow minds of the masses of people away from the real issue, lest they consider it and choose to believe what is right and be saved out of the wickedness of this sinful age.

Classroom Analogy – The Foolish Distraction of the False Accusation

If we will have understanding, these things are a lot like a classroom:

A teacher labors diligently to benefit their class and focuses the atmosphere of the classroom as much as they can to transmit an important concept so that the students will learn and do well on the coming exam. But this is wickedly and disrespectfully opposed by the —“class clown” who raises his hand, not to ask an important question pertaining to the lesson, but only to present a distracting comment to get the class off task and relieve himself from learning things with some foolishness and laughter that is bound up in his heart.

The main difference here with this teaching about marriage is that there is so much more at stake if we are deceptively distracted away from learning the truth about God’s call for us to repent of adulterous remarriage in the modern church! If God said divorce and remarriage is adultery, then it is sinful and wicked for us to make like the class clown and only focus on —“divorce” as though God were being unreasonable and unwilling to forgive a one-time act.

We should beware of the coming exam on Judgment Day, because if we were distracted by the unsound voice and as a result we promote remaining in adulterous remarriage by saying, —“god will forgive divorce” then we have failed to heed the Word of the Lord in the Scriptures about divorce and remarriage, and there is no reason that we should expect to pass the coming exam if we have wickedly promoted adultery because of our lack of learning truth.

Hos 4:6 WEB My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you...

There are moral consequences to being irrational and unsound in this issue, and there is eternal danger if we go along with ~~—~~The False Accusation of Teaching Unforgivable Divorce.“”

Not the Unforgivable Sin, but the Unrepentant Sin

We ought not to insult God by accusing Him of lacking mercy in His marriage teaching as though it spoke of divorce as an unforgivable sin, when in fact, it is we ourselves that are unrepentant sinners who are unwilling to leave our sin to be reconciled to Him. The conflict here is not about God holding an unforgivable sin against us, but it is about us holding on to unrepentant sin against Him. God has always waited patiently for us, faithfully willing to make reconciliation with us, and it is we who are unwilling to come and make things right with Him because we are unwilling to come to terms with our life styles of sin and break our league with His enemies.

I Warn Everyone Everywhere: This is What It Means and This is What it Looks Like to Remain in Adulterous Remarriage

If we are offended at God’s marriage teaching we ought not to accuse Him of not forgiving divorced people. But we should instead consider that whenever there is an adulterous remarriage, it is not simply that God has seen a person commit a one-time act of sin, but that the Holy and perfect eyes of the infinite God are looking down in anger upon the constant sins committed against His face. And while we are busied about trying to dismiss the idea of an ~~—~~unforgivable sin” of divorce, God’s perfect and holy eyes behold the adulterous remarriage, where day after day profane kisses are exchanged and filthy embraces are celebrated, and night after night a man sleeps with another man’s wife or a woman sleeps with another woman’s husband. A man keeps stolen property in his own house that belongs to his neighbor and commits filthy defilement upon her and cheapens her unto complete destruction in abominations and dirty immoralities without end.

We live in a day where it is common and legal for a man to steal his neighbor’s wife and make her his own full time adulteress, and yet this is acceptable in modern society? Yes, and the adultery does not cease, nor does the sin relent from before them, because the unlawful lusts of their hearts continue, repeatedly being committed over and over, and Him who is perfect sits in heaven, and does not forget their crimes, but their sins stack up to the sky.

God takes sexual sins as the most personally insulting crimes against Him, because our sexuality directly represents the image of our relationship to Himself. And if we have so greatly violated this image with adultery, we should fear the impending application of the justice of God, because who knows the Day and the time when He may immediately pour out His full wrath and consume all those who sin against Him in an instant. But though we should take sober and corrective warning while we still have a chance, knowing that this vengeance is a terrible thing to fall into, in the mean time, for the time being, His heart is kept back from this Justice time and time again by His incomprehensible and everlasting mercy.

But we, as beggarly, weak, and despicable humans ought not to try His patience by continuing in such sin, because there is a Day of Wrath coming where His mercy is no longer accessible for those who have not been saved from their sins, and if our day of death comes in the mean time it is certain that we have nothing to look forward to except the fear and dread of the fiery Judgment to come, where fierce wrath will be poured out:

2Th 1:7-9 CAB ...at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His mighty angels, **8** in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the

gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall pay a penalty—eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might,

In that day no one will be able to make any excuses at all for continuing in and promoting adulterous remarriage. All of the theoretical reasons why we thought that we could change the Gospel that Jesus left with us, and continue in steeling and keeping other people's spouses, all of these excuses will melt away when we see Himself in person and the flames of fiery Judgment in His eyes. No excuse will suffice when we perish from before Him for telling others in His absence that it was ok to not obey the commands and laws He left for us when He was here with us in person on earth! We will not do well with Him at his return if we have been rebellious against Him in His absence, and if we have defiled marriage throughout our time while on earth, then it is certain that we will be rejected from the marriage feast in the clouds of the sky when He comes in glory to marry His glorious bride and pour out unbearable and terrifying wrath upon His enemies below.

14. The Law of Moses vs. Remarriage Repentance? – First We Need to Go Over Some Basics

What Does The Law of Moses Show us About Repentance from Remarriage? – First We Need to Go Over Some Basics About the Law...

After seeing God's New Covenant Law for marriage and the revolutionary call for repentance from adulterous remarriage, we now need to back track a bit here and more thoroughly understand the Law of Moses in general and its updates into the New Covenant before moving on to more challenging truth about God's extreme call to exalt one flesh marriage.

God Related to the Israelites' Flesh From a Distance

We see that God, in His unsearchable wisdom approached a lost, evil-hearted, and internally unclean nation and sought to relate to them. Since there was nothing in common spiritually for God to relate to [National Israel](#) directly, He enacted laws that would address and govern their flesh unto a physical cleanliness so that He might at least enter into a covenant with them based on their flesh from a distance.

The Distance from God's Presence on the Mountain

Can you hear the "distance" in God's voice in this passage?

[Exo_19:11-13](#) **CAB** And let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the Lord will descend upon Mount Sinai before all the people. ¹² And you shall separate the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves that you go not up into the mountain, nor touch any part of it: whoever touches the mountain shall surely die. ¹³ A hand shall not touch it, for *everyone that touches* shall be stoned with stones or shot through with a dart, whether beast or man, it shall not live... (also [Exo_19:23](#))

These rules were not so for God's friend Moses ([Exo_19:3](#); [Exo_19:10](#); [Exo_19:14](#); [Exo_19:21](#); [Exo_19:24-25](#)), and this —distance" under the Old Covenant is also contrasted with the life now given to all of those under the New Covenant in [Heb_12:18-29](#).

The Distance from God's Presence in the Tabernacle

We see this same –distance” for those fleshly recipients of the Old Covenant in describing the Holiest part of the tabernacle, since it separated God from the people with a thick veil:

Heb.9:8 CAB the Holy Spirit signifying this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet revealed while the first tabernacle was still standing,

Again this is contrasted with what Jesus accomplished for His followers with the Words:

Heb.10:19-22 CAB Therefore, brothers, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies having been washed with clean water.

So we see that there is a striking contrast when God entered into the flesh-based covenant under Moses when compared with the *closeness* that was brought in by the spiritual working of the New Covenant under Jesus. If we seek to reestablish the distance of a flesh-based covenant, then it is clear and obvious that we do not like God at all (no matter how sincere or zealous we make ourselves out to be) since we clearly despise the closeness that Jesus accomplished to bring us to God in the spirit. If we seek to set aside what Jesus accomplished to return to opposing God in our flesh, then we have a sure damnation marked out for us, especially if we try to cast other people away from God in this manner:

Gal.5:2-4 CAB Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised [i.e. take on the initiating mark of the Mosaic Law in your flesh], Christ [ρξηστωσ – anointed one] will profit you nothing. 3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who are justified by law; you have fallen from grace.
(also **Gal.5:12**)

First the Flesh, and Then Adaptations For Its Sin

The rules of the flesh-based relationship themselves that God set up to relate to the unsaved Israelites are not the problem, (since these fleshly, physical pictures still speak as parables to us unto this day) but the problem is more so in the fact that, having a covenant based on flesh, by its very nature already embraces the fact that the recipients of such a covenant are indeed lost, and because of this the laws are necessarily adapted to relate to those lost, sinful, hearts who would continually disobey him, and this is a **very big** problem indeed for the pitiful people who must receive a law, however Divine it is, which will never clean their hearts or demand or enable them to change unto real, internal righteousness.

Heb.10:1 CAB For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the image itself of the things, can never with the same sacrifices, which they offer continually every year, make those approaching perfect.

Heb.7:19 CAB For the law made nothing perfect; but there *is* the bringing in of a better hope...*

[* **Technical Translational note:** this verse can be very challenging to represent in English, and I am currently working on a translation for it]

The Spiritual Solution is the True Solution

All of this conflict over God's righteous standards and a people who refuse to do what is right is finally solved in the marvelous making of a New Covenant where people, die to the flesh, get a new heart, with the Law inscribed on tablets of heart by God's Spirit (2Co_3:3), and actually love and obey God in spirit and in truth.

Once the flesh-based covenant produced the Messiah and gave Him Israelite flesh, the initial aim of this covenant was fulfilled in the body of Jesus, the Savior of Israel, and then also of World. As the majority of the book of Galatians says, this is because the promise that would overtake and fulfill this flesh-based covenant says:

Gen_22:18 CAB And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

Gal_3:16 CAB Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises spoken. He does not say, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to your Seed, who is Christ.

And now that the promises have come in Jesus, it will continue in this way as a Spiritual Covenant, especially until the time that this spiritual covenant climaxes when even concerning the physical nation He says:

Rom_11:26 CAB And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

[For more on this, see the Bible study entitled, Love Israel on www.TrueConnection.org]

Because of this great fulfillment in Jesus, there is no more agreement available for God to relate to sinful hard-hearted people by means of fleshly cleanliness and adaptations to accommodate sinful hearts, but now there is one proclaimed everywhere that sinful people must actually repent from the heart, become clean in the spirit, and no longer spurn relating to a holy God. This is because Jesus said:

Joh_4:23 CAB But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

Don't Misapply the Old Covenant Against the Flesh of New People

So, if we take this first, flesh-based agreement out again, as is, and try to apply it in the same way to people under a new, spiritual relationship where God's people now actually love God, God is understandably insulted and offended at this (as seen in books like Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Hebrews, and others). But if we take out this covenant and testify against those still in the hard hearted disobedience against God's rules, then this is fully appropriate and reasonable:

1Ti_1:8-10 CAB But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, **9** knowing this: that the law is not laid down for the righteous, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for killers of fathers and killers of mothers, for murderers, **10** for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is opposed to sound doctrine,

We can clearly see that the Law is “good” if it is used in the right way (as applied to unsaved and wicked people), and that the Law is “lacking” if applied in the wrong way to saved people. If you have found that your life style fits these descriptions of sin, then truly, the Law of Moses is for you. This also shows that you are lost and without Jesus, and in as much as you stand in these sins, you stand under Moses’ Law and in need of the salvation of Jesus to bring you into truth.

As it is, the Law of Moses lacks the ability to govern saved people (in that, it was never even really designed for this in the first place) and because of this, for all those who hope to now be justified by faith in Jesus God has “found fault” with the applications of such laws when applied out of the context of hard-hearted and lost people living in sin.

And the only way that God’s Old Covenant Law for lost people can now be given to those saved people under the New Covenant, is by greater Laws that are fulfilled and practiced in truth, since they are no longer flesh-based. If we want to follow Jesus, we must look to the new and fulfilled Law of Christ, which always surpasses from the heart that which Moses simply required from their flesh. When explicitly fulfilling these laws in the Sermon on the Mount ([Mat 5:17-20](#), etc.) Jesus specifically updated the law of divorce and remarriage ([Mat 5:27-32](#)). If we do not follow Jesus in this update, then we of all people are most guilty and bitterly condemned ([Heb 10:28-31](#)).

So then, here is what we have in Moses’ Law...

- (1) From the beginning...the two will become into one flesh (Genesis)
- (2) But since you are hard-hearted, we are suffering your divorces for now (Exodus-Deuteronomy)

Tell me: What is the fulfillment of this for saved people?

Is it:

- (1) From the beginning...the two will become into one flesh (Genesis)
- (2) But since we are still hard-hearted, we are going to divorce from the heart from now on (and where would this be in the New Testament?)

or is it rather:

- (1) From the beginning...the two will become into one flesh (Genesis)
- (2) And now that we have a changed heart by being saved from sin we can now obey God and no longer divorce our wives (as described all throughout the New Testament)

First, We have No Right to Judge the Law of Moses

We have seen that Deuteronomy 24 was given through Moses as opposed to the essence of the New Covenant which was given through Jesus. But it is not as though because *Moses* wrote the Mosaic divorce Laws, that they are sinful, unspiritual ([Rom 7:14](#)), or unscriptural. So many have misunderstood and mis-taught such things as though there were something bad or sub-divine about the teaching in Deuteronomy 24. This is wrong. We do not need to blaspheme Moses here to establish Jesus! If they seem to be saying contradictory things to us, it is because we have ignorantly pitted them against each other in our minds because of our shortsightedness. As the Scriptures say about themselves:

[Heb 5:11-12 CAB](#) ...we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become sluggish in hearing. **12** For indeed, although you ought to be teachers by this time, again you have need *for someone* to teach you what are the elements of the beginning of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

We ought to be humble, rational and honest, and repent of our blindness rather than projecting our faults onto those who ought to be our heroes, as though they had a conflict with each other and needed our brilliant and insightful minds to come along and help them straighten things out. When are we ever going to learn to be sound in the faith and cease from blaspheming? Our analytical skills, presumptuous intellectual confidence, and boastful —“theological training” have only brought us more damnation the more we open our mouth. This is our pitiful state as long as we think we have the right to sit as judges over the law:

Jas 4:10-11 CAB Be humbled before the Lord, and He will exalt you. **11** ...And if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

Rather than rashly blaspheming the patriarchs, we ought to wait and seek God for understanding before asserting any conclusions. I would exhort that we can begin gaining understanding in this area by observing that just as certain commands are now specifically associated with Jesus (**1Co_7:10**), or even Paul (**1Co_7:12**) so also were many commands specifically associated with Moses, including Deuteronomy 24:1-4. If any of us are Christians in any sense of the word, we already know that these commands were actual commands from God and not just the personal opinions of those whom God sent us:

1Th_2:13 CAB Because of this we also give thanks to God unceasingly, so that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you received not the word of men, but just as it truly is, the word of God, which also is at work in you who believe.

1Th_4:2 CAB you know what commandments we gave you **through the Lord Jesus**.

2Th_3:4 CAB And we trust in the Lord concerning you, that the things which we command to you, you are both doing, and will do *them*.
(also **2Th_3:6**)

If we have any awareness of what it means to be a Christian and believe the Bible, then we know that these things are commandments from God through these men that He sent us. It is the same way with the Law of Moses. The only difference between Moses and Paul in this case is not their (imagined) —interpersonal disagreement,” on a few doctrinal points, but rather, the nature and extent of each of their audience specifications to which they were particularly assigned.

The Law is Not Sin

In seeking to firmly establish a fresh, and new, New Testament truth, we ought to all the more zealously affirm that the update given to us for this covenant in no way degrades the Holy and Divine Law of Moses, as though we were to say that the Law was sin:

Rom_7:7 WEB What shall we say then? Is the law sin? May it never be! [[-καὶ γὰρ ληνητὸν (mé genoito) – i.e. fig. may it never be even thought of that way]] However, I wouldn't have known sin, except through the law. For I wouldn't have known coveting [[or -lust" (επιζητησῶ)],] unless the law had said, —You shall not covet.” And he says again (from personal experience, having been raised a Jew):

Rom_7:10-12 CAB And the commandment, which *was* to *bring* life, I found to *bring* death. **11** For **sin**, taking opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it, killed me. **12** Therefore **the law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy and righteous and good**.

So we see that it is sin in people that is bad, not Moses or the Law he gave. And we also, if we have obedient faith, we know that the entire Law of Moses is as much Scripture as any other portion found in the Bible, because we must firmly assert and proclaim:

[2Ti_3:16](#) CAB **All** Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

So we must not say that the Law is sin, or that it is uninspired because it was done through Moses and now it is not continued in the same manner under the New Covenant. Certainly –All Scripture” initially includes the Old Testament as a basis before even establishing the New Testament, and this most directly affirms the Law of Moses, including Deuteronomy 24. In fact, the Law of Moses is at the very bedrock of what it means to be Scripture, and it, as the first five books of the Bible, defines the rest of the Bible, as Scripture for us!

But when wicked people attempt to apply the fleshly righteousness of this Law (which was given to a fleshly and evil-hearted nation), and its accommodations for sin to a (New) covenant that necessarily saves people from the flesh, sin and the wages of Hell, this is when God has now –found fault” with their (mis) application of this old covenant relationship, being out of context and unsuitable for the new use:

Hebrews 8 Says The People Are the Problem, Not The Law!

God says that He “found fault” with the sinful people, not with Moses or with the very Law itself

Technical note: I have added [RMAC](#) grammar tags in the following passage along with the Greek in key instances to help the informed reader follow the details (see [RMAC](#) in the [Bibliography](#) for more)

Speaking of Jesus it says:

[Heb_8:6-13](#) WEB But now he has obtained a more excellent ministry, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better [θεξε ττυλ ο (kreittonos) – stronger/ mightier] covenant, which has been enacted [λελνκνζ τεταη (nenomothētai) – Law” (nomo) + –arrange” (–thei” from –hithēmi” (G5087)) – placed as law/ legislated (as in v. 10)] on better [θεξε ττυλ (kreittonos) – stronger/ mightier] promises. [7](#) For if that first...* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. [8](#) For finding fault with them [απτηο P-DPM (autois) – that is, –them” (plural), as in the people], he said, —Behold, the days come,” says the Lord, —That I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; [9](#) Not according to the covenant that **I made** with their fathers [πατξασηλ N-DPM απτολ P-GPM – Slightly different grammar, but still plural, and still the exact same word], In the day that I took them [απτηο P-APM – plural] by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; For they [απτηη P-NPM – plural] didn’t continue in my covenant, And I disregarded them [απτολ P-GPM – plural],” says the Lord. [10](#) —For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days,” says the Lord; —I will put [η νδο – lit. be giving] my laws into their mind, I will also write [επιγξςσ – write upon] them on [επι – upon] their heart. I will be to them a God, And they will be to me a people. [11](#) They will not teach every man his fellow citizen, Every man his brother, saying, Know [γλωζη ginōthi] the Lord, ‘ For all will know [ει σν πο (eidēsusi) – perceive/ look at (which implicitly results in knowledge); (totally different word than before)] me, From the least of them to the greatest of them. [12](#) For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness [α ιθηαη N-DPF απτολ P-GPM – Plural]. I will remember their sins and lawless deeds no more.” [13](#) In that he says, —A new covenant,” he has made the first old. But that which is becoming old and grows aged is near to vanishing away.

[Verse 7: * Many English versions add the word, –covenant” to this as well, but this is not in any Greek manuscript.]

We see that in God –finding fault,” it is not that God –found fault” with His own Words or even Moses in establishing the Old Covenant, but this –fault” was based on the disobedience of the rebellious recipients (i.e. –them” in v. 8) of the Mosaic Covenant:

(1) Moses is Commended

God is so far from accusing Moses of doing wrong in making the Law, that, on the contrary, in this same book he says:

Heb_3:2 CAB ...as Moses also was faithful in all His house.

Heb_3:5 CAB And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony...

(2) God is the Author

We also see that God takes full credit for the first covenant given through Moses by the words:

Heb_8:9a CAB not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers...

And

Heb_8:9b CAB ...Because they did not persevere in My covenant...

(3) It was the Mosaic Covenant

We see that this is speaking of the Mosaic Covenant because He says:

Heb_8:9b CAB ...in the day when I took their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt...

(4) The People were the Problem

We see that the problem in the covenant agreement was not from the “legislative” end of it (God through Moses) but the “fault” is clearly within the aspect of those who disobeyed it:

Heb_8:8-9c CAB For finding fault with them he said 9 ...Because they did not persevere in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD.

It is as though God is saying, –I am finding a serious problem in this (bilateral) covenant relationship we agreed to be in, because you are not relating to me at all in your disobedience! Therefore I am going to set up a renewed covenant relationship that actually requires you to love me and have my laws written on your heart.” – This is what He says in Hosea and many other places:

Hos_2:17-20 CAB And I will take away the names of Baalam out of her mouth, and their names shall be remembered no more at all. 18 And I will make for them in that day a covenant with the wild beasts of the field, and with the birds of the sky... 19 And I will betroth you to Myself forever; yea, I will betroth you to Myself in righteousness, and in judgment, and in mercy, and in tender compassions; 20 and I will betroth you to Myself in faithfulness: and you shall know the Lord.

So we see from these passages that God found fault with –them” (that is the children of Israel) and not Himself or Moses, and as a result of the fault He found in –them” He determined and proclaimed through the mouth of His prophets to make a New Covenant that would actually make them free from their sin to serve Him in truth.

The point: If we say that there is anything “lacking” in Deuteronomy 24 which cannot continue in the same way under the New Covenant (as Hebrews teaches in general, and Jesus teaches specifically) then it is because it reflects the aspect of the disobedient people it governed, not some blasphemous “deficiency of God” or “deficiency of Moses” imagination, since it is already certain that God Himself gave the children of Israel this perfect Scripture.

As Jesus points out (Mat 19:4-6): Moses had already transmitted to Israel in the book of Genesis the fact that God made the two become into One flesh (Gen 2:18; Gen 2:20-25) and this shows us that Moses was a “One Flesh” advocate too, but then after this we see the record that Moses wrote Deu 24:1-4 according to their hard hearts, but contrary to what God, Moses, and Jesus all wanted. No one has sinned in all of this except the people who sinned to the point that this accommodation was necessary. And although all of this is clear enough, it is yet clearer that Jesus commanded that it would no longer be this way for God’s people who would follow Him now in truth.

We should see from all of this that the Scriptures are altogether perfect in recording for us how God accommodated the sin in people’s hearts, and they are also altogether faithful and clear in explaining to us why we cannot do this anymore in this age under this covenant.

What Does this Mosaic Marriage Law Show Us?

We have seen that the Law given to Israel, is not ultimately “good” just because it partly tells us what God wants, but it is more so “god” in the sense that it also gives us a testimony about the types of laws God does not want, by recording for us the sins that God accommodated for the sinful people who received the Law of Moses along with its accommodations for sin.

And we have already quoted this Scripture:

Rom 7:7 WEB What shall we say then? Is the law sin? May it never be! [~~ἢ~~ γ λ νητῷ (*mé genoito*) – i.e. may it never be even thought of that way] However, I wouldn’t have known sin, except through the law. For I wouldn’t have known coveting [or “lust” (ἐπιζητησά), unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.”]

From this and many other Scriptures in this section, we have seen that Moses’ Law testifies against people in its prohibitions of some sins (such as the Ten Commandments), and in its reluctant accommodations for others. In both cases the Law consistently shows us what sin is. And especially because Jesus plainly declared that the Mosaic Divorce Laws were accommodations for sin, it is by this very fact that the Law lets us know what sin is: It is as some have noted; that one cannot take up the guidelines of Deuteronomy 24:1-4, without also admitting that they are those hard-hearted (unsaved) people that it was designed for. One cannot appropriate this law for the hard-hearted without also admitting one’s own hard-heartedness. And because we have seen that real Christians have laid a hold of a mightier hope in Jesus, it says a lot for those (many) teachers who want to insistently maintain Moses’ divorce laws for church people today! – They “are convicted by the law as transgressors,” (Jas 2:9-12 CAB), and they are compelled to take up again the law of transgressors.

15. The Divine and the Mosaic Aspects of the Law of Moses Both Proclaim Truth to Us About Remarriage!

We have seen that Jesus said that Moses made particular accommodations for the hard hearts of the Israelites who were divorcing their wives, and the climax and culmination of this accommodation was

the command that a woman could not return to her first spouse if she had been remarried after the divorce. Now let us also consider the essence and nature behind this accommodation, and why such an accommodation would have taken place to begin with. – In all of this, let’s really get down to how Moses’ Law relates to Marriage and the New Covenant!

God’s Special Friend Moses

Moses was God’s special friend (see [Num_12:1-16](#), especially verses [6-9](#), and [Exo_33:11](#)). Especially from the beginning of God’s —bming-bush” relationship with Moses, God repeatedly made Himself —vulnerable” to the petitions and persuasions of Moses. If you question my wording, then please, just read and believe these passages and compare them to what I am referring to here:

[Gen_32:29](#) and [Jdg_13:17-18](#) with [Exo_3:13-14](#); and also see: [Exo_4:1-3](#), [10-15](#); [32:9-14](#); [33:1-3](#), [11-23](#); [Num_11:11-17](#); [12:6-9](#); [16:20-24](#), [28-33](#), [44-46](#); [Deu_9:13-14](#), [18-20](#)

[Exo_33:1-3](#) CAB And the Lord said to Moses... **2** ...I will send at the same time My angel before your face... **3** ...**I will not go up with you**, because you are a stiff-necked people, lest I consume you by the way.

[Exo_33:12-15](#) CAB And Moses said to the Lord, See, You say to me, Lead on this people... **13** If then I have found favor in Your sight, **reveal Yourself to me, that I may evidently see You**; that I may find favor in Your sight, and **that I may know** that this great nation *is* Your people. **14** And He said, I Myself **will go** before [MT: —My presence will go with” (WEB)] you, and give you rest. **15** Then he said to Him, If You go not up with **us** Yourself, do not bring **me** up from here.

So we see that God made special addendums, exceptions and even reversals **to His own pronouncements** for Moses’ sake when legislating the Old Covenant for the children of Israel. These are extreme statements, but I can’t honestly avoid them because they are right there in the Bible. By reading these things, you would have to admit that this is a special behavior that specifically applied to Moses.

In light of these Scriptures and these considerations showing the special and amazing relationship Moses had, one can only wonder in amazement over all of the things that were going on behind the doors of the tent when Moses went in to talk with God and decide what the laws and decrees would be for the children of Israel. Can you imagine being an Israelite in that situation at that time and saying to your family, friends and neighbors something like, —wonder when Moses is going to come out of the tent” and —wonder what God and Moses have decided for us today” (see [Exo_33:8-11](#))?

I am dumfounded over the fact that Moses *knew God*. I am overwhelmed that God would let a human play a part in deciding Divine commands for a people. But it is in this amazing reality that we receive the Old Testament and its laws passed down to us today.

The Point: Because Moses had a special relationship with God, it was within Moses’ prerogative to make special and even Divine accommodations for the sake of the hard hearts which could not keep a higher standard of righteousness beyond what the flesh could accept and observe.

“Of Moses”

Parts of the Law are specifically and particularly ascribed to the Lord Himself, (such as [Exo_20:1](#) etc., [Exo_40:1](#) etc., [Lev_1:1](#) etc., [Num_1:1](#) etc., [Deu_1:3](#); [2:1](#), and many other places). These are straightforward orations that God declared to Moses to write down. But out of God’s creative and

sovereign genius, He also loves to ordain and use people in His legislation process. This is where we get certain parts of the Law of Moses from.

Because of God's special behavior toward Moses, not only were certain parts of the Law expounded and explained as Divine instruction for the children of Israel but quite often there are very basic and fundamental aspects of the entire Old Covenant that God issued for Israel simply through what Moses wrote down under Divine inspiration, just like Jesus Himself laid down the New Testament. This makes The Old Covenant a very actively –Mosaic” covenant, especially when God was not giving straightforward orations. In addition to the audible declarations that God gave to Moses, Moses' divinely inspired writings often founded the very basis of the Old Covenant like Jesus' Words did for the New.

Moses was directly or indirectly responsible for many of the commands given in the Law, having functioned as the executive partner with God Himself over the Nation of Israel. Even by ascribing the title –The Law of Moses” to the Old Testament Law, the Bible directly attributes a strong mosaic overtone, by calling it –of Moses.” This is almost just as we might name a book by its author, except God's name (as a –eo-author”) is well known and understood in this case.

The Point: We should consider the Mosaic significance of Deuteronomy 24, because Jesus specifically tells us that it is out of this aspect that an accommodation was made allowing divorce and remarriage, and forbidding reconciliation.

[Mat 19:8 KJV](#) Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives...

Jesus is a Prophet Like Moses

In addition to these Mosaic implications we have mentioned concerning the Old Covenant, the New Testament also repeatedly compares Moses' prophetic executive role with Jesus' place in establishing the New Covenant:

[Joh 1:17 CAB](#) For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came to be through Jesus Christ.

Do you see the comparison and contrast between the Old Covenant through Moses, and the New Covenant through Jesus? Both of these figures served as co-executor for one of the two major covenants given by God the Father, for specific time periods, with different purposes, and both partnered with God Himself in unparalleled cooperative efforts. And why should we be surprised to find Jesus particularly paralleled with Moses in establishing Covenants when there is an even more basic and fundamental theme throughout the Bible that consistently compares and parallels Jesus and His calling with Moses?

Birth

In both cases, kings decreed the mass killing of babies which would have killed both Moses and Jesus soon after they were born, but both were saved from death to fulfill prophecy and grow up to become leaders and deliverers to save God's people: [Exo 1:15-16, 22](#); [2:1-10](#); [Act 7:19-21](#); [Heb 11:23](#); [Mat 1:21](#); [Mat 2:1-18](#); [Rev 12:4-5](#)

Prophet

A Prophet Like Moses: [Deu 18:15, 18-19](#); [Act 3:22-23](#); [7:37](#)

Priest

Priest must be a Levite: [2Ch_11:14](#); [13:9](#); [1Ki_12:30-31](#); [Heb_7:5](#)

Moses was a Levite: [Exo_4:14](#)

Moses associated with priests: [Deu_27:9](#);

But Jesus is Priest according to Melchizedek: [Psa_110:4](#); [Heb_5:1-11](#); [6:20](#); [7:1-28](#); [8:1-6](#)

Priest alone offers sacrifice (and Incense):

[Exo_30:8](#); [Num_16:40](#); [1Sa_2:28](#); [1Ch_6:49](#); [23:13](#); [2Ch_26:16-18](#); [Luk_1:9](#);

Moses offered: [Exo_40:18](#), [25](#), [27](#), [31-32](#);

Jesus offers: [Heb_8:1-6](#); [9:11-15](#); (also see [Rom_12:1](#); [Php_2:17](#); [2Ti_4:6](#));

Moses built tabernacle: [Exo_35:5](#) – [Exo_40](#) (compare [Heb_8:2](#))

Jesus builds the Temple: [Zec_6:11-14](#); (compare [2Sa_7:12-13](#); [1Ch_17:12-13](#); [22:10](#); [28:10](#) – and note the reapplication with Jesus in this double prophecy); [Mat_16:18](#); [Eph_2:20-22](#); [Heb_3:3-4](#); [1Pe_2:4-5](#); (and compare [1Co_3:9](#))

King

Kingly Moses: [Deu_33:4-5](#);

Jesus as King: [Mat_27:11](#); [Joh_18:37](#)

King/Priest prophecy: [Zec_6:11-14](#)

Also see: [Heb_3:1-6](#)

Joshua/ Jesus

In addition to all of these parallels with Moses and God's Son Jesus, Moses' main disciple was also named Jesus (long before the Son of God came to earth). Although we usually represent Moses' main disciple as "Joshua" in English, it is still the same name as Jesus in both of the original languages:

Hebrew (OT): [יְהוֹשֻׁעַ](#) – *y^ehōshūa'* (or *yēshū'a* for short), (H3091)

Greek (OT & NT): [Ἰησοῦς](#) - *iēsoús* (G2424)

English: Both "Joshua" and "Jesus"

God Said to Moses:

[Deu_18:18](#) **CAB** I will raise up to them a Prophet from among their brethren, like you; and I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them as I shall command Him.

Moses Said to the People:

[Deu_18:15](#) **CAB** The Lord your God shall raise up to you a Prophet from among your brethren, like me; Him shall you hear,

The New Testament shows that this prophecy is speaking about Jesus Christ: [Act_3:22-23](#); [7:37](#)

Note: Although it goes without saying that Jesus is God the Son, the profound mystery here is not *just* that Jesus is God, but that He was also so true of an actual man that He had a particular calling from God the Father that was paralleled with the man Moses. This is the point where the mystery is so profound that it is baffling.

So, just as Jesus is called "The Second Adam" in His redemptive work for mankind ([Rom_5:14](#); [1Co_15:21-22](#), [44-49](#)), so also He is described as "The Second Moses" ([Deu_18:15](#); [Act_3:22-26](#); [7:37](#); if you will) in His executive work for establishing the New Covenant. While Moses was the first of this

first] **husband who sent her away** [same as v. 1] **shall not be able to return** [ἐπαλαστέζω – lit. turn again upon/ return upon] **and take her to himself for a wife**, after she has been defiled [κετ τὸ κηῶζήλαη ἀτίλ – lit. after the defilement of her (i.e. after her remarriage)]; **because it** [ὅτι – lit. that] is an abomination before the Lord your God, and you shall not defile [κηῶεῖτε] the land which the Lord your God gives you to inherit.

Technical Source Text Notes for Deu_24

v. 2 – At least one DSS document (4QDeut^a) agrees with the LXX in not having the specification, **–When she is departed out of his house...**” (Deu 24:2 WEB). However, another DSS document (4QDeut^{k2}) includes this specification along with the MT.

v. 3 – 4QDeut^{k2} adds, **–to be his wife”** (DSS Bible)

Things to Notice Concerning Deu 24

- The entire essence of the Mosaic divorce and remarriage law is summed up in 4 verses: Deu 24:1-4
- We should notice that all of the Biblical references that follow this passage in the Bible hinge on these 4 verses when referring to the Mosaic Law of divorce and remarriage
- In Jer 3:1-2 God very clearly specified that **–after she has been defiled”** is a reference to the defilement of remarriage.

Suffering Divorce and Divorce Certificates, Not Legislating Them!

- Many readers, (including most notoriously, the majority of the Pharisees) have usually understood this passage to be **actively** telling men that they should give divorce certificates whenever they divorced their wives, as though God personally gave these things as requirements of His perfect justice to the people. But Jesus very directly confronts and corrects this teaching and tells us that Moses was **not actively** legislating divorce and or divorce certificates, but **passively –suffering”** this wicked practice of hard-hearted divorce as a whole that was **already happening** on a regular basis (Mat 19:7-8). It is obvious in the Bible that divorce was already a *de facto social norm* which Moses mentions repeatedly in passing, as though everyone already knew about this vile practice long before the writing of Deuteronomy 24: Lev 21:14; Lev 22:13; Num 30:9
- The Pharisees (at some point*) described the permission to divorce as an active legislation from God through Moses, but Jesus said that this was simply an accommodation for their hard hearts (* compare Mat 19:7-8; Mar 10:3-4)
- If we share the idea that was originally given to us through the Pharisees and we disagree with Jesus’ correction, then this is a terrifying posture to be in
- (As seen later) God specifically and repeatedly attributes this law to Moses’ accommodation of their wickedness, not to God’s proactive preference for what was right
- Again, if we agree with the Pharisees initial statement and not Jesus teaching, then we need to first back up and decide whether or not we want to be Christians, instead of playing liberal games along with the hypocrites

The reasons for hardhearted divorce had already been summarized in a very simple way:

Deu 21:14 CAB And it shall be **if you do not delight in her**, you shall send her out free...

Moses was governing hard hearts that were incapable of keeping a standard that required purified hearts and salvation from sin. There is no way you are going to tell lost people that they all have to honor one flesh and keep the pattern of permanent, life-long marriage as taught in the garden, so there must be this accommodation for the fact that they are going to divorce their wives no matter what you

tell them. They are lost and hate righteousness. You cannot give them laws that require them to love and fear God in their relationships with each other, especially in marriage. But in disregarding the Love of God, to one degree or the other, the Pharisees tended to somewhat think of the divorce permission as God's idea of justice, but Jesus said that it was only an accommodation for their hard hearts, and such hearts and the accommodations for them would no longer be acceptable for the New Covenant.

17. God's Call to Return To The First Spouse

After **truly** repenting away from adulterous remarriage, should one return to the first spouse seeking reconciliation? How could this be possible if it was forbidden in *Deu_24*? – are these questions directly addressed in the Bible?

Jesus' Amendment of Deuteronomy 24 (Specifically Verses 1-2)

The most simple way to initially answer the question over possibly returning to the first spouse is to simply read **and actually believe** what Jesus already clearly and directly told us about Moses' teaching.

It is important to notice that the specific issue that Jesus dealt with in all of the divorce passages in the Gospels, was the Mosaic Law of Divorce and Remarriage (*Deu_24:1-4*). In Matthew Chapter five and nineteen Jesus specifically makes verses 1-2 of Deuteronomy 24 inapplicable for the New Covenant standard of marriage:

Mat_5:31-32 **KJB** **It has been said**, [referring to *Deu24:1-2*] _Whoever puts away his wife, let him give her a divorce certificate' *32* **But I say to you**, That whoever divorces his wife, except for a report of prostitution [i.e. *fornication*], causes her to commit adultery: and whoever marries her that is divorced commits adultery.

Mat_19:8-9 **CAB** He said to them, **–Moses**, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted [or *–suffered*] you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it has not been thus. *9* And I say to you...

Jesus made the reason behind giving Deuteronomy 24 absolutely clear: **Hardness of heart!** If Deuteronomy 24 was written for hard hearts as Jesus said, doesn't that mean that it was not written for those with soft hearts? Because of this it is clear that this law does not pertain to governing those whose hearts have been made soft by the life accomplished by Jesus.

Jesus amended Moses' marriage laws, and made it clear that the expectations in Deuteronomy 24 would not represent the practice of the New Covenant, since they instead represented a concession for unsaved hardness of heart under Moses that Jesus' followers were now forbidden to have. In Jesus, we have both Moses' accommodation for divorce and the hardness that causes it, put away from us.

For those of us who *actually believe* the Scriptures we just reviewed, with such a direct and clear update of this law it is clear enough for us to see that returning to the first spouse has been opened unto us, but there are still more Scriptures for us to embrace that clearly confirm this.

Jeremiah 3 – The Lord's Amendment of Deuteronomy 24

We have seen an amazing amendment in Matthew five and nineteen, but interestingly enough this same pattern can be seen in Jeremiah chapter three directly amending all four verses of the Mosaic divorce concession:

Jer 3:1-2, 7, 12, 14, 20, 22 (CAB)

v. 1-2 If a man **put away** [ἐξαποστειλήν – *sends out and away*] his wife, and she depart [ἀπέλθῃ] from [ἀπ’] him, and become another man’s, shall she return to him anymore? Shall not that woman be utterly defiled?

[referring to Deu24:2-4] But you have **played the harlot** [ἐμπετόελεπασα – lit. (*intensely*) *done out prostitution*; same root (*porneia*) as Mat 5:32 and 19:9] with many shepherds, and have returned to Me, says the Lord. **2** Lift up your eyes *and look* straight ahead, and see where you have not been utterly defiled. You have sat for them by the wayside as a deserted crow, and have defiled the land with your fornications [lit. *prostitutions*] and your wickedness... [as in Deu24:4; Lev 19:29; Deu23:17-18]

v. 6-9 And the Lord said to me ...Have you seen what things the house of Israel has done to Me? They have **gone on** [ἐπορεύθησαν] every high mountain, and under every shady tree, and have committed fornication [ἐπόρευουσιν] there. **7** And I said after she had committed all these acts of fornication [πνεύλα σαη– lit. *prostitution*] , Turn again to Me. Yet she returned not... **8** And I saw that (for all the sins of which she was convicted, wherein the house of Israel committed adultery, and I put her away, and gave into her hands a certificate of divorce) yet faithless Judah feared not, but went and also committed fornication herself. **9** And her fornication was nothing accounted of; and she committed adultery with wood and stone.

v. 12 Go and read these words toward the north, and you shall say, Return to Me, O house of Israel, says the Lord; and I will not set My face against you: for I am merciful, says the Lord, and I will not be angry with you forever...

v. 14 Turn, you children that have revolted, says the Lord; for I will rule over you. And I will take you, one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you in to Zion [that is, Jerusalem]...

v. 20 But as a wife acts treacherously against her husband, so has the house of Israel dealt treacherously against Me, says the Lord...

v. 22 Turn, you children that are given to turning, and I will heal your bruises...

[**Technical Source Text Note:** *The DSS, NT and LXX on Jeremiah:* Tragically, DSS Jeremiah does not have chapter 3, because it is at the beginning of the scrolls, and was more subject to deterioration than the rest of the text, and because of this, the first few chapters were lost as a result; But despite this, it looks like we mostly have the most authoritative (and complete) version of Jeremiah in the LXX, because from what we do have from the DSS, there are at least 2 documents (out of the 6 Hebrew versions of Jeremiah discovered) which mostly support the Greek text we have in the LXX and this is strongly approved by the NT from Greek. (For more, see the online version of our Bibliography under, “Finding the Old Testament”)]

Return! – God’s Clear Proclamation Through Jeremiah!

At the end of this passage we find that Israel had departed from God. In verse 20, dealing –“treacherously” is a term that means that she departed from Him as it is basically used in the following passages (in the Masoretic Text): [Mal 2:11, 14-16](#). Chronologically, the scene is set because –“a wife left her husband,” and in the end of verse one, God calls her idolatry –“prostitution” [i.e. *fornication during betrothal*] and equates this defilement as the same type of thing that a wife marrying a second husband does in Deuteronomy. It is very important to notice here, that when God sees spiritual prostitution (idolatry) He without hesitation immediately remembers the remarriage in [Deuteronomy 24](#): –“And if she should go away and be married to another man.” ([Deu 24:2 CAB](#)).

At the beginning of verse one in Jeremiah, this is very clearly a reference to [Deu 24:2-4](#), the Mosaic law of divorce and remarriage. It is very clear from everything that follows that God does not intend for Israel, His bride, to do according to what was demanded by Deuteronomy 24 after a wife was remarried. Instead, though Deuteronomy 24 had said —don’t return,” God now says repeatedly and emphatically, –Return!”:

This is a repeated and emphasized theme throughout the Bible, especially in Jeremiah:

Jer 2:24; 3:1, 7, 12-14, 22; 4:1; 5:3; 8:4-6; 9:5 (LXX); (12:15); 15:19; 23:14; (:22); 24:7; (30:18); 21 (LXX); 31:18; 21;

Other examples throughout Scripture: Deu 4:29-31; Hos 2:7; 3:5; 5:4 (especially LXX); 6:1; 12:6 (especially LXX); 14:1-4; 7 (especially LXX); Joe 2:12; Isa 31:6; 44:22; 55:6-9; Eze 33:11; Zec 1:3; Luk 15:16-24

I have personally met numerous pastors who have had the nerve to disagree with Jeremiah chapter three, and insist that a woman going out and committing prostitution is not the same as the remarriage that Moses describes in Deuteronomy chapter 24. But when church people get this obstinate, this is where we have to back up again and ask the basic questions all over again: we need to first make the foundational decision whether we think that the Scriptures have the sovereign authority and jurisdiction over our lives to define morality for us to submit under, or if we think we're more spiritual and have better insight than the Scriptures. If God teaches that the random, treacherous, defiling prostitution in Jeremiah three is equivalent to the remarriage after divorce described in Deuteronomy 24, (Jer 3:1-2) and then we turn around and say that this is an "unfair comparison," then it is clear that we are not Christians, because we are those who do not believe in the Scriptures.

Non-Christian "Christians" often say that this is not a fair comparison with divorce and remarriage because in Israel's case they never truly belonged to the idols in as much as Jews legitimately belong to God and are supposed to worship the one true God, but this is exactly the point: the "marriage picture" is being used to describe the illegitimacy of being with a second husband. Because it is immoral in the physical realm, this is exactly why God uses it as a picture to describe the perversion of idolatry in the spiritual realm. If divorce and remarriage was not inherently defiling and immoral, then God would not keep repeatedly using it as a picture for paganism (as He also does again in places like Hosea). You cannot say, "this paganism you're now practicing is just as filthy and abominable as the remarriage was in Deuteronomy 24," unless you first really hated the remarriage going on in Deuteronomy 24.

In addition to all of this, it is really important for us to consider that Jesus teaches that the woman in Deuteronomy 24 was initially innocent when she received a divorce from her hard hearted husband (i.e. Jesus said the man was the one who was guilty of hard heartedness when the divorce happened, not the woman, and the woman only becomes guilty when she marries another), while the defiled woman in Jeremiah three is a woman who sins up front by treacherously departing from her husband to be with other men. In both of these cases, whether initially innocent or guilty, **God says she is defiled when she remarries**. This is extremely important because it is the exact same thing that Jesus says in the repeated saying, "whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." Whether it is the Old Testament or the very Words of Jesus Himself, God shows us without any question that it is not the details surrounding the divorce which determines the moral nature of the remarriage, but despite the context of guilt (Jer 3) or the context of innocence (Deu 24) in being divorced, it is the remarriage itself which inherently constitutes the immoral defilement of adultery for the divorced spouse who marries another.

A Notable Textual Variation – The “They Say” in the Current Hebrew of Jeremiah 3

The passage we previously quoted from Jeremiah is translated from the Greek Old Testament, (the "Greek Septuagint" or "LXX"). If we look at a Hebrew-based translation, it reads like this:

Jer 3:1 **KJV** They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD.

The words —“They say” are not in the Greek Old Testament (LXX) or the Syriac version, but they are in the current standard Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the —Masoretic Text” (MT), and naturally the Latin Vulgate as well (since it is from 405 AD, and mostly follows the Hebrew). But as a summary of all of this, out of the many ancient copies of the Old Testament that we have, some of the oldest ones do not have the words —“They say,” such as the Greek Septuagint (the Greek Old Testament, LXX). Because of this, it looks like the words in the current Hebrew text, the Masoretic Text, are an additional enunciation of what was already originally there by usage and implication.

The Significance of this Variation in Jeremiah 3

Some have used the absence of these words in some texts to make unfounded assumptions about Jeremiah three in opposition to the things previously discussed. But an honest rational consideration shows us no matter what copy of the Old Testament you use, this reference in the beginning of Jeremiah three is clearly referring to Deuteronomy 24 which God contrasts with the actual cry of His own heart. This contrast can clearly be seen no matter what ancient source text you use. With or without the words —“They say” God is still contrasting what He is saying with what —“they” (or what Moses) said (just as He does in [Mat 5:31-32](#)). We can see that there is still a contrast with the Deuteronomy quote, with or without the words —“They say.”

Jesus & Jeremiah 3 – Notice the Change!

We see here that, even before Jesus preached on marriage, the Lord had already amended the latter part of Deu 24, (specifically verses 2-4)! In light of these two amendments, it is clear that God repeatedly attributed the entire divorce text of Deuteronomy 24, as specifically coming through Moses for unsaved people who lives were already committed to sin, and not for those who follow Jesus! In both of the cases of change (Matt 5, 19 and Jer 3) God employs the exact same methodology:

1. He says it is Moses who gave the command, and, 2. That He now declares otherwise!

Jer 3: —shall she return...?” (v. 1) [yet] —.Return to me...” (v. 12)

Mat 5: —.it has been said... But I say to you...” (v. 31-32)

Mar 10: —Moses... wrote you this commandment...” (v. 4-5)/ **Mat 19:** —But I say to you...” (v. 9)

Hos 2, Isa 50, & Jer 3 – The Prophecy of Return, Even After The Officialness of God’s Divorce Certificate!

Please carefully and deeply consider the following events and how God acted, and how this proves that, no matter how official and final the divorce, returning to the first is still truly righteous!

Hos 2:2 CAB ...I will remove her fornication out of My presence, and her adultery from between her breasts...

[Note: This passage is discussed further in the next point]

Jer 3:8 CAB And I saw that (for all the sins of which she was convicted, wherein the house of Israel committed adultery, and I put her away, and gave into her hands a certificate of divorce)...

Isa 50:1 CAB Thus says the Lord, **Of what kind** [ποιων] is your mother’s **bill of divorcement** [τὸ βιβλίον τῶ ἀποστασίου], **by which I put her away** [ᾧ ἐξαιέσταιλα αὐτήν]? Or to which debtor have I sold you? Behold,

you are sold for your sins, and for your **iniquities** [ἀνομίαις – lawlessness-es] have I put your mother away [ἐξαπέστειλα].

And again later God says...

Isa 59:2 CAB But rather [ἀλλ.], your **iniquities** [μαρτήματα – sins] separate between [δυσιστῶσιν ἅν μέσον] you and God...

Important Notes about Isa 50 and Jer 3 vs. The Filthy and Mindless Apostasy of Today's Pastor's and Theologians

- From the beginning the devil has continually contradicted what God says and questioned the truthfulness of His Words.
- In these passages we just read, it is clear that God does not deny or question the fact that He truly did give a divorce certificate, but insists that He truly did, and yet He still calls her back after her remarriage.
- Numerous heretics in churches today make God out to be lying in these passages, and insist that He instead did not in fact give Israel a divorce certificate (even though He clearly said He did).
- Both **Isa 50:1** as well as **Jer 3:8** (as we just quoted) clearly declare that God Gave Israel a divorce certificate, and even put it in her hand, but countless wicked pastors and apostate church goers obstinately insist that God did not actually give her a divorce certificate because He took her back.
- Many heretics deny God's divorce certificate which He said He gave, because Israel's return clearly suggests that such heretics no longer have a refuge in Deu 24 to justify remaining in the hardness of divorce and remarriage.
- If God says that He **did** give Israel a (lawful, official) divorce certificate and you say He did not, then you are clearly a liar and have nothing to do with Jesus and Biblical Christianity. Rebellion will send you to hell, and disagreeing with God's Words will torment your soul forever, no matter how professional you seem to be in your (apostate) christianity.

And what do church leaders say about this today? – In one of my earlier English study bibles, I remember being shocked, dumbfounded, disgusted, and appalled to find and read the following words concerning Isaiah 50:

-50:1 Though the Lord had put away Israel, as a husband might put away a wife, it was for only a short period of exile (see 54:5–7; 62:4) and not permanently. Permanent exile would have required a **certificate of divorce** (see Deut. 24:1–4) If the Lord had issued one, He could not have taken Israel back (see Deut. 24:1–4; Jer. 3:1, 8).”

[Commentary on Isaiah 50:1, p. 1193, From *The Nelson Study Bible*, copyright © 1997 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.]

[Note: Ironically, it is almost equally baffling that they contradict this in their note on Jer 3:8 (p. 1228)]

Please pause and carefully consider these words we have just quoted from *The Nelson Study Bible*. Did you notice that they are directly suggesting that God **did not** give Israel a divorce certificate? Please do not be mindless and shallow concerning this important consideration – both Isaiah and Jeremiah said that God **did give a divorce certificate**, but *The Nelson Study Bible* (when commentating on Isaiah 50:1) indicate that He **did not**. – It should trouble you deeply to know that this quote is representative of many church leaders and theologians today.

So for all clarity, let's review:

(1) What does God say?

Isa_50:1 CAB Thus says the Lord...your mother's bill of divorcement **by which I put her away**... for your **iniquities** [ἀνομίας – lawlessness-es] have I put your mother away [ἐξέστειλα].

Jer_3:8 CAB And I saw that (for all the sins of which she was convicted, wherein the house of Israel committed adultery, and I put her away, **and gave into her hands a certificate of divorce**)...

It is clear that it is in this light –an official divorce certificate– which God calls His people back to Himself, **in contrast** to what Deuteronomy 24 said.

(2) What does The Nelson Study Bible say?

–Permanent exile would have required a **certificate of divorce**... If the Lord had issued one, He could not have taken Israel back” (underlines added)

Source: same as before

This quote from *The Nelson Study Bible* is a straightforward denial of plain facts. God says **He did** in fact give Israel a divorce certificate, but numerous theologians choose to believe and say that **He didn't**. This is one very simplistic and clear example of what modern christianity constantly does with all of its theology, and how it does things like promoting the idea that divorce and remarriage is not adultery like the New Testament clearly teaches it is. God says one thing and they choose to say the opposite, and this is how nearly all heresy works today in the modern church. Such church leaders have nothing to do with believing and obeying the monotheistic faith of Abraham and Jesus, but in the establishment of pagan religions that know nothing of submitting under the authoritative proclamation of the Scriptures. – is that the god or gods you are willing to serve?

In Matthew 19 and Mark 10 Jesus clearly agrees with Isaiah 50 and Jeremiah 3 where God contrasts the truest righteousness which He practices and demands with the wickedness and hardness permitted under the Law of Moses, but today's wicked church leaders defy Jesus and contradict Isaiah and Jeremiah, acting like God was in fact rather under Deuteronomy 24 right along with the sinful nation it was written for!

This is not an academic or linguistic difficulty or mystery which we are dealing with from the Scriptures, but this is a heart full of lawlessness in foolhardiness that doesn't care about anything God says. It comes right from the cesspool of rebellious christianity!

This is a bitter, bitter fool-hearty apostasy! It is overt and in broad daylight that today's pastors and theologians are claiming to be Christians and directly lying against Holy Scripture! This is a mindless and perverted game they are playing with people's souls, and you will be one who reverences Satan if you follow them! Anathema to the heretics! It is time this fool-hearty rebellion is confronted! There is no excuse for mindlessly disagreeing with God and putting it in print as a christian commentary of the Bible!

Instead of submitting under the authority of God's clear declaration to amend Deuteronomy 24 and to call his lawful wife back to Himself, today's church people want to defend sin and ignore God's testimony against the flesh and their wicked and unsubmitive hearts which continually lust to defend divorce and remarriage at any and every cost, even if they have to call God a liar to do it!

Those who approve of divorce and remarriage have nothing to do with God who demands actual repentance from sin, and those who forbid a remarried spouse to return to their first spouse on the basis of Deuteronomy 24 care nothing about the authority of Him who now calls us to a higher standard, and even lived out this reconciliation by the same truth which He now calls us to follow by faith.

Hosea's Prophecy of Return and Amendment of Deuteronomy 24

At the heart of this prophecy about the culmination of the New Covenant and [the ultimate salvation of Israel](#)* is a profound and inescapable picture of returning to the first spouse! Just as it is said in Jeremiah, after Israel had been utterly **defiled** in idolatry Hosea also depicts her salvation as returning to her first husband.‘

[* for more on [the ultimate salvation of Israel](#)” see the Bible study entitled [“Love Israel”](#) on [www.TrueConnection.org](#)]

Hosea – The Initial Sad State of Things

Hos 2:2 CAB Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not My wife, and I am not her husband: and I will remove her fornication out of My presence, and her adultery from between her breasts:

Although she is not actively ~~His~~” because of her idolatry, God still says she commits ~~adultery~~” against Him! It is clear from this that it does not matter what you call a spouse, even if they are no longer called ~~your husband~~” or ~~your wife~~,” if they have been lawfully joined to you at some point in the past, you still commit adultery if you are with another person in their life time!

Hos 6:7 CAB But they [Judah and Israel/ ~~Ephraim~~” (Hos 5:8-15)] are as a man transgressing a covenant.

Even though this made God socially not her husband,‘ yet still God says she is committing adultery against Him, **and breaking a ‘one flesh’ covenant**, as though she is still lawfully His.

Hos 3:1 CAB And the Lord said to me, Go yet, and love a woman that **loves evil things** [MT says, ~~beloved of her friend, yet~~” (KJV)], an **adulteress**, even as the Lord loves the children of Israel, and they have respect to strange gods, and love cakes of dried grapes.

Hos 4:1-2 CAB Hear the word of the Lord, you children of Israel: for the Lord *has* a controversy [θεξις/controversy i.e. a legal charge calling for justice/ righteousness] with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. **2** Cursing, and lying, and murder, and theft, and **adultery** bound in the land...

This equally describes the same sad state of things today in the modern church. If things go as they have gone, no one will ever see anything wrong with the immorality that is rampant in nearly every church house, but did you notice that if ~~truth~~” and the ~~knowledge of God~~” ever comes ~~in the land~~” (**Hos 4:1**) then ~~lying~~” will be confronted, and we, like Hosea, will cry along with God over the ~~adultery~~ [that is] bound in the land,” (**Hos 4:2**).

The mention of a legal ~~controversy~~” means that they had settled in their immoral posture and did not consider it to be wrong and unjust. I beg you as a reader, take God’s side of the ~~controversy~~” that the ~~adultery~~” (**Hos 4:1**) is not just! I beg you as a reader, ~~Hear the word of the Lord~~” (**Hos 4:1**) as Hosea says, even unto us today:

Hos 7:4 CAB They are **all adulterers**, as an oven glowing with flame for hot baking, on account of the kneading of the dough, until it is leavened.

2Pe 2:13-14 CAB ...reveling in their deceptions while they feast with you, **14** having eyes full of adultery and unable to cease from sin...

Rev 2:22-23 CAB Behold, I am casting her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, if they do not repent of her works. 23 I will kill her children by death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

Luk 16:15, 18 CAB And He said to them, —You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. Because that which is exalted among men is an abomination before God... 18 Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and everyone who marries a woman who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.

Hosea – God’s Promised Redemption

Hos 2:7 CAB ...and she shall say, **I will go, and return to my former husband**; for it was better with me *before* than it is now.

Hos 2:16-20 CAB And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord, *that* **she shall call Me, My husband*** [lit. *my man* (fig. *husband*)], and shall no longer call me Baalam* [i.e. —master” (fig. *husband*)]. 17 And I will take away the names of Baalam* [i.e. —masters” (fig. for her (*other*) *husbands*) – the title now being used for idolatry] out of her mouth, and their names [i.e. those treacherously called *Baalam*] shall be remembered no more at all. 18 And I will make for them in that day a covenant with the wild beasts of the field, and with the birds of the sky... 19 And **I will betroth you** to Myself forever; yea, **I will betroth you** to Myself in righteousness, and in judgment, and in mercy, and in tender compassions; 20 and **I will betroth you** to Myself in faithfulness: **and you shall know the Lord**.

Hos 2:23 CAB And I will...love her that was not loved, and will say to that which was not My people, You are My people; and they shall say, You are the Lord my God. (compare also v. 21-23 with the rest of Hos_1 & 2)

Hos 3:5 CAB And afterward shall the children of Israel return, and shall seek the Lord their God, **and David** their king; and shall be amazed at the Lord and at His goodness in the latter days.

Note: At this point David has long been dead, and the New Testament (along with traditional Judaism) understands this title as a reference to the Messiah (the anointed one) who is —the son of David” and rightful heir to the throne for all of Israel. – this is ultimately a promise of their reconciliation with Jesus, their rightful husband and God, and it is He who renews their betrothal!

Hos 6:1 CAB In their affliction they will seek Me early, saying, Let us go, and **return** to the Lord our God...

Oh, that we too would hear the word of the Lord, agree with God’s legal charge against us, repent of adultery, and return to God!

Linguistic Clarifier – “Baalam”

When speaking Hebrew, —Baalam” is a form of *-ba’ălîy*,” which is one of the ways to say —husband” and had been originally properly ascribed to God by the children of Israel. But later —Baalam” came to be used more specifically and frequently as a term for worshiping particular pagan gods, just like the other nations had used it, which now even the Israelites were worshiping in this way. Now Israel was so messed up that they were transposing God’s position as their proper husband with a name that had now come to be commonly used for idolatry (—Baalam”), and God no longer wanted to be associated

and confused with this mixed up filthiness so He insisted on a more basic expression: just call me your man from now on so you will not be able to even say that name you used for idolatry anymore.⁴ [(1) –Master"/ –Baalim" = בַּאֲלִים " (ba'āly), (H1180) in Hebrew, and –βααλ μί" (baalim) in Greek; (2) –Man"/ –Husband" = אִישׁ " ('ysh), (H376) in Hebrew, and (we might say, *more specifically*) –Θ ἀνάξ κνυ" (ho anēr mou) in Greek].

Note: We went over some of these terms in Chapter one under, [–The Lawful Result of One Flesh – Marriage is Cohabitation in The Bible](#)

Hosea Says the Same Thing as Jeremiah

Notice that just like it is said in Jeremiah, in Hosea God again links remarriage with Israel's idolatress remarriage unto –Baalim" (that is, the god she was calling her ~~master~~"/ husband). The saying, –I will go, and return to my former husband" (Hos 2:7 CAB) is a definite opposition against the other ~~–husbands~~" she had remarried,⁴ and it is God Himself who caused her to have such yearnings, since He completely fulfills this saying in the establishing of a New Covenant with her, in her ultimate and final redemption when she would know God.

It is because she (~~–Gomer~~"/ ~~–Israel~~"") went out and committed idolatry by committing herself to demons, and considering herself married⁴ to them, that God has to reestablish His lawful betrothal with her (see Hos 2:19-20). Remember that Jeremiah had already linked being with another man in prostitution as morally the same thing as the remarriage in Deuteronomy 24 (Jer 3:1-2). Hosea also does this by describing her prostitution and the fact that she considers her (unlawful) ~~–lovers~~" to be her ~~–husbands~~."

But again, we would like to insist that this is different than divorce and remarriage, because we think that we can be saved⁴ while remaining in an adulterous remarriage, but we are being mindless if we even suggest such a thing in light of Hosea, because when the woman leaves her other men and returns to God, this is her salvation! There is no way a relationship of adultery can ever be sanctified, because no matter what you do to idolatry, relating to demons will always be evil! Adulterous remarriage cannot become clean anymore than the spiritual parallel of idolatry can become moral. Neither idolatry nor adultery can ever become a good thing, because both are the same thing in their own particular realms. We must leave these sins to live.

While we are tripping over our own confusion and thinking that this must not be a perfect parable of marriage in Hosea because we think a person does not have to leave their adulterous marriage in order to be reconciled to God, God stands faithfully testifying loud and clear: remaining in remarriage is the picture of remaining in idolatry. In both cases we need to repent and return to our lawful creator in order to be saved! If you do not leave the adulterous remarriage and seek the possible reconciliation of any lawful spouses, then you will remain in the bed of adultery and continue as lost as idolatress Israel was!

A Repeated Heart Expression

If God is indeed the same yesterday today and forever (Heb 13:8) then it is perfectly consistent of Him to repeatedly express His heart in this way, even if He temporarily allows sin until the time that all things are complete for the New Covenant. As distinct from God's heart and desire, The Law was never designed for those going to Heaven. Nevertheless, God continually shows us His heart in the Old Testament to give us a different fulfilled way that actually leads us to life in the midst of ~~–carnal commandments~~" (Heb 7:16). This causes those with faith under the Old Covenant to anticipate the greatness found in the New Covenant (see Gal 3:23-25).

David's example continually expresses this to us (as seen shortly). And why not? David is said to be a man according to God's own heart, (1Sa 16:3, 7, 13-14; 13:14; Act 13:22). In this kind of expression from God through the prophet, God shows us that despite divorces, the first wife remains married to the first husband, even though this was not previously enforced by the carnal commandments of the

Law of Moses that were adapted for the hard nature (as Irenaeus said around 180 AD) of the stubborn Israelites to which it was given.

Malachi 2's Amendment of the Mosaic Divorce And Remarriage Permission

In Malachi we already saw God expressing His heart after they divorced...

In Malachi, —Why” was God angry with them, and for what reason was He refusing to accept their sacrifices??

Mal 2:14b – “Because the Lord has borne witness between you and the wife of your youth...” (CAB)

Mal 2:14c – And although they had divorced their wives, still God says...

Mal 2:14d – “... she is your companion, *and the wife of your covenant.” (WEB) [LXX: *θαι γπλη̄ η̄μζήθεο σνπ* – lit. *and woman of your covenant*]

Mal 2:15c – Because of this, they are to guard their own spirits and not divorce the wife of their youth (their first wife)

And Despite what Moses permitted:

Mal 2:16a – God opposes their divorce

And...

Mal 2:16c – Says again to guard their own spirits and not divorce

Please tell me honestly: Does Deuteronomy 24 command us not to divorce the wife of our youth? Doesn't Deuteronomy 24 clearly allow her to go and become another man's wife? If all of this is so, and as Deuteronomy 24 says, she cannot return after this permission is carried out, why then does Malachi say so boldly:

Mal 2:14d – “... she is your companion, *and the wife of your covenant.” (WEB) [LXX: *θαι γπλη̄ η̄μζήθεο σνπ* – lit. *and woman of your covenant*]

Even with the very woman who has gone and become another man's wife under the permission of Deuteronomy 24, God says to the husband that divorced her, she is YOUR wife. God repeatedly shows us His concern for the first wife and the first marriage covenant, despite whatever remarriages had taken place. God turns His eyes compassionately toward the divorced wife implying that she ought not to be separate from her husband, even after the husband had cast her off. God was indignant and unrelenting with the husband (Mal 2:13-14) though the husband was within the permission of Moses. This is a **very different** idea than that which is tolerated by Moses' permissiveness in Deu 24:1-4. In all of this, do you see that even Malachi had a hand through God in amending the Mosaic Divorce Permission?

Though Moses permitted divorce and remarriage through their hardness, Malachi condemned it openly by God, showing that a greater righteousness was required from their heart than Moses had restricted upon their flesh. They had somewhat conformed to the fleshly commands and restrictions of Moses, but they had altogether offended the righteous heart of God in their treatment of their helpless divorced wives.

Malachi shows us that the righteousness which God requires is not fully met under the Law of Moses (as said in Rom 8:3-4). And because this is specifically in the context of marriage, he foretells prophetically, and shows us clearly, that a higher level of obedience and Love, and even reconciliation, is called for in marriage when God Himself comes down to bring us His New Covenant.

We know for sure from Malachi that Jesus would come and address marriage to fulfill God's heart on the matter. God shows us through Malachi that it would not be permissive in tolerating hard hearts as the Law of Moses was, but the fact that God cherishes the first wife and would not accept their prayers attempting to repent in Malachi 2 implies, and even foreshadows, a call to reconciliation for the upcoming New Covenant:

[Mal_2:14-16](#) - The message from God that prioritizes the permanency of the first wife

[Mal_3:1-2](#) - The coming of the messengers (Jesus and John the Baptist)

[Mal_3:5](#) - The harsh message against adultery

18. 2Sa 3 – David's Example: He Returned to the First

In addition to the many examples mentioned previously, we also have David's example of returning to his first wife after she had been remarried: [2Sa_3:14-16](#) (quoted later).

We Must Continually Submit to the Examples Given to us in the Bible

Unlike the absurd modern culture that we live in today, in New Testament times they consistently understood that the stories in the Old Testament were given to us to teach us truth that we should imitate.

[Heb_6:12](#) **CAB** ...but *become* imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

But instead, today we always want to take it upon ourselves that we have some kind of right to cross-examine God's Words rather than submitting to them, including the stories and examples of righteous people who did things that we do not agree with. This is why, for example, many preachers today think they sometimes have a right to challenge the character and actions of people like Lot or Moses (see [Gen_19:4-8](#); [Exo_2:11-15](#)), while the New Testament clearly calls them "righteous," (see [2Pe_2:7-9](#); [Heb_11:24-27](#); and compare [Jdg_19:22](#)). Now why is it that we are so foolish today that we think that we have a place to correct the Old and the New Covenant and say that Lot was somehow *not* righteous? But we should have reverently and fearfully submitted to their example so that we would not find ourselves opposing God!

And instead of submitting to the Scriptures we puff ourselves up in the seats of judges:

[Jas_4:10-11](#) **CAB** Be humbled before the Lord, and He will exalt you. **11** ...And if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

So let us take warning with a rational and basic, reasonable response of submission, with fear to the examples laid out for us in the Scriptures.

If you, without any experience, walked off the street into a church and opened up the Bible and read the stories of all the Patriarchs, then it would be common sense that these stories and examples were teaching you righteousness that you were expected to imitate and live by. And for us today, if we have any experience reading the Bible we have no excuse; someone shouldn't even have to tell us that the righteous people in the Bible were righteous. For example, even the Pharisees all knew that David was righteous when Jesus cited him as a proof of what was true, while we today simply look at the actions that don't make sense to us and conclude that such people must have been making mistakes at these points. But Jesus could not have appealed to the actions of David as a righteous standard to confront the false doctrine of the Pharisees if it had not already been commonly established amongst everyone

that David's actions were indeed righteous, and a higher standard than the current theological consensus. Even evil people in Jesus' day knew that if the Bible gives us examples we should receive them as faithful witnesses unless the Bible clearly states that this is when they messed up (and this is clearly proven in the Scriptures within the following paragraphs).

It is a sad day when the Pharisees of old had more integrity to honor the patriarchs of truth than our greatest theologians strutting about today!

If we will be real (Biblical) Christians then we will perk up whenever we are given a story in the Bible that seems to confound our sense of what is right. We must fight ourselves and resist the foolish rebellion that is bound up in our heart, so that we can desperately search for the truth that is being hinted to us without impatiently violating its authority upon our lives when our understanding is delayed.

David Did Something that We do not Agree with

David did an intriguing thing and left us a profound example by breaking up his first wife's second marriage and returning her to himself contrary to the prohibition Moses had given in Deuteronomy chapter 24 on the basis of defilement. But this can almost certainly not be understood without first coming to terms with a much more profound and pervading principle throughout the Old and New Testaments relating to Christ, David, and the Law of Moses.

David and Jesus' Example About Sacrifice and Offering

David repeatedly shows God's heart to be different from the Law of Moses throughout many of the examples that he left us in his life stories and writings in the Psalms. David even does this in his repentance from adultery and murder by saying:

[Psa_51:16-17](#) CAB For if You desired sacrifice, I would have given *it*; You will not take pleasure in whole burnt offerings. 17 Sacrifice to God is a broken spirit; a broken and humbled heart God will not despise.

And previously David says so mysteriously and prophetically:

[Psa_40:6-10](#) CAB Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; but a body You have prepared for me [i.e. God really and ultimately designated the cross for forgiveness]; whole burnt offering and *sacrifice* for sin You did not require. 7 Then I said, Behold, I have come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, 8 I desired to do Your will, O my God, and Your law in the midst of my heart [this is not the nature of the flesh-based law of Moses!]. 9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo! I will not refrain my lips; O Lord, You know my righteousness [David seems to be sharing some great and wonderful secret with God!]. 10 I have not hid Your truth within my heart, and I have declared Your salvation [David even directly refers to the salvation that would come by Jesus]; I have not hid Your mercy and Your truth from the great congregation.

And Jesus had this exact same attitude which is used as a key to understanding and defining the New Covenant:

[Heb_10:5-9](#) CAB Therefore, when He [Christ] entered into the world, He said: –Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. 6 In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You had no pleasure. 7 Then I said, Behold, I have come—In the volume of the book it is written of Me—To do Your will, O God. 8 Earlier saying, –Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and *sacrifices* for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the

law), 9 then He has said, –Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first in order that He may establish the second.

Wait a minute... That was David writing in the Psalms, but when Hebrews quotes it, it calls these Jesus’ Words! How would you like it if you were writing in a prayer journal or writing a song and the Bible turned around and called it what Jesus Himself said when He came into the world and clothed Himself in human flesh?!

So we see in some great profound way, that both David and Jesus had the same unified attitude about sacrifice and offering that was different and greater than the Mosaic Law concerning this practice!

David and Jesus’ Example About The Sabbath

Jesus used David’s –law breaking,” (eating the Temple’s –show bread,” 1Sa_21:3-6) as justification for His –law breaking,” (picking and eating kernels of corn/wheat [στρπo - stachus] on the Sabbath, Mat_12:1-8). Jesus said that the bread that David ate, –. was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, except only for the priests,” (Mat_12:4 CAB), And He used this to justify picking food on the Sabbath. And again in another place it says that Jesus, –. had broken the Sabbath...” (Joh_5:18 KJV).

Jesus used David’s spiritual example above the Law of Moses to show what was **Truly** righteous for the New Covenant!

Jesus Repeatedly Approves of David’s Authoritative and Prophetic Examples

So we see in these selected examples, how David and Jesus especially reflect God’s heart, which is not found in the Mosaic Law, and is at times like these cases, seemingly contrary to it. There are **many** of these cases where David and Jesus both reveal a hidden way of God that was not previously known by the Law. Compare these many references:

Exo_21:14, 23-25; Lev_24:17-21; Num_35:30-34; Deu_19:10-13; 22:22; Jdg_1:6-7; 1Sa_15:33 with 2Sa_11:3-4, 14-17, 21c, 24; 12:13; Psa_51:14; Mat_5:38-39; Joh_8:3-4, 10-11

Also see the pervading theme of relating Jesus to David, (especially with the phrase –the Son of David”):

Isa_9:7; 11:1-4; Jer_23:5; Eze_34:23-24; Amo_9:11; Mat_1:1-17; 9:27; 12:22-23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9, 15; 22:42-46; Mar_10:47-48; 12:35-37; Luk_1:69; 18:37-39; Joh_7:41-42; Act_13:22-23

So we have seen that Jesus endorsed David’s example about Sacrifice and Offering and his example about The Sabbath, and we can be sure that this consistent David-Jesus principal certainly extends to the issue of divorce and remarriage as well.

2Sa 3 – David and The Lord’s Example About Divorce And Remarriage

- Saul gave Michal to David as his first wife for –400 Philistine foreskins,” (1Sa_18:20-27; MT says –200”).
- David was separated from her, and she remarried another man named Phaltiel, having been given to him by her father, (1Sa_25:44).

Later David came to power and called his first wife back to himself:

2Sa 3:14-16 CAB And David sent messengers to Ishbosheth [μεμφιβοσθε*] the son of Saul, saying, **Restore** [Ἀπόδος – give over (to)] **me my wife Michal**, whom I took for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines. **15** And Ishbosheth [μεμφιβοσθε*] sent, **and took her from her husband**, from Paltiel the son of Laish. **16** And her husband went with her weeping behind her as far as Bahurim. And Abner said to him, Go, return [i.e. to your home]; and he returned.

[***Technical Source Text Note:** Unlike the MT, the DSS agrees with the LXX using the name ἡεκυ ηβσζε,” (as opposed to λεβσζε) although many people consider this a mistake in the DSS Hebrew, which is repeated in the LXX Greek given the context: (1) 2Sa 2:8, etc.; (2) 2Sa 4:1-2 (compare the DSS & LXX vs. the MT), (Dead Sea Scrolls Bible, p. 238-240) – one way or the other, all of this indicates that the LXX has been diligent to represent a Hebrew text which is often similar to the DSS but different than the MT. It is clear that so many of the differences between the MT and LXX are not due to the LXX translators themselves, but the fundamental use of an alternative Hebrew text]

- David stayed married to Michal for the rest of her life, (2Sa 6:16-23).
- In Jeremiah 3:1-22 (quoted previously) the Lord specifically applied the Mosaic divorce laws to a wife leaving her husband to be with others. This specifically parallels David and Michal’s situation: Michal left David and was with another man, but then David acted **contrary to the prescription of the Law of Moses** by returning to his first wife, just like God did with Israel!
- Unlike the way he treated Michal, David would not return to his secondary wives (his ten concubines) after his son had sexually defiled them during David’s second flight from Israel, (2Sa 16:22; 20:3). His first wife had gone further in her deviation and defilement from her faithfulness to David than the ten, but David showed greater determination to return to the one who had been more defiled by being remarried, than he did with the ten, because Michal was **his first wife**.

What Can We See From This?

- We can see from this that God places a profound priority on the first wife.
- We can see that God does not place a priority on secondary wives.
- We can see that when polygamy was allowed, secondary wives could at times be put away, even when there was only temporary (and perhaps involuntary) defilement .
- We can see that it was not acceptable in God’s mind nor in David’s heart to remain separated from the first wife, even if the defilement was great and the faithlessness extensive.

A Summary of Sacrifice, Sabbath, and Returning to the First After Remarriage

We can see a consistent undeniable paralleling pattern between Jesus and David on the issues of Sacrifice and Offering, The Sabbath, and other foreshadowings of New Covenant teaching and principals. How can we suddenly, without warning, break this consistently reoccurring pattern in our minds when it comes to the issue of divorce and remarriage? How can we do this when Jesus consistently taught that David’s example should take **priority** over the Law of Moses in establishing the New Covenant?

It turns out that not only does God consistently approve of David’s example of breaking up divorce and remarriage and returning his wife to himself, her first spouse, but God actually considers David’s actions so perfect of an example that, from Jeremiah to Hosea, God constantly uses David’s example as a picture of his insistence of returning Israel to Himself:

Hos 6:7 CAB But they [Judah and Israel/ –Ephraim” (Hos 5:8-15)] are as a man transgressing a covenant.

Hos 7:4 CAB They are all adulterers...

Hos 3:5 CAB And afterward shall the children of Israel return, and shall seek the Lord their God, **and David** their king; and shall be amazed at the Lord and at His goodness in the latter days.

Hos 2:7 CAB ...and she shall say, I will go, and return to my former husband...

How is it that this man David was so amazing that he went about through life with the affirmation of doing works never before described in the Law of Moses, and God Himself constantly turned around and approved of these actions as perfect pictures of Himself performing redemption for Israel, and ultimately, all mankind?

Act 2:29-30 CAB ...David... 30 ...being a prophet...

Act 13:21-23 CAB ...and God... 22 ...raised up for them David as king, to whom He also said bearing witness, I have found David the son of Jesse, to be a man in accordance with My own heart, who will do all My will. 23 God, from the seed of this man, according to the promise, has brought to Israel salvation,

And in what way is Israel saved?

Hos 2:7 CAB ...and she shall say, I will go, and return to my former husband...

19. The Mosaic Death Penalty Explains Deu 24:4 and Returning to the First

Although it might not seem like it at first, if we parallel the moral requirements concerning the Mosaic death penalty with the moral requirements Moses gave restricting returning to the first marriage, we can see some important facts about how God has updated both of these things in the New Covenant

Deu 24:4 – “That the Land be Not Defiled...”

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to many people (pastors and church goers alike) concerning returning to the first spouse, is the **strong language** of the Mosaic Law prohibiting this return. After all, it does say,

Deu 24:4 CAB **the** former [πξότεξνο – first] **husband who sent her away** [έμσπνστει αο – same as v. 1] **shall not be able to return** [έπαλαστξέξα ο – lit. turn again upon/ return upon] **and take her to himself for a wife**, after she has been defiled [κετ τ δ κηαχηλαηαυτηλ – lit. after the defilement of her (i.e. after her remarriage)]; because it [ότη – lit. that] is an abomination **before the Lord your God**, and you shall not defile [κηαείτε] the land which the Lord your God gives you to inherit.

A Reminder that These Laws Have Been Updated

We have effectively seen that the Mosaic divorce and remarriage laws were completely amended, verse by verse, by the Law of Christ. Nevertheless, let us now also specifically focus on the end of verse 4 of Deuteronomy 24, which specifically prohibits returning to the first, and let us be reassured of its disqualification in New Testament theology from another profound Scriptural Truth.

A Reminder Concerning Hardness from Being under the Law

But before we go much further, please remember and consider that if we are still taken aback by this strong language despite all the Biblical examples given, it is if nothing else, because we have ignored the clear message throughout the Bible that we are not to be under the Mosaic Law, (example: [Rom_6:14](#)). Yes, if we do aspire to take up the Law, Paul says, “Christ [ῥηστὸς – anointed one] will profit you nothing!” ([Gal_5:2](#) CAB). If we are still trying to be under the Law of Moses, it cannot be apart from the hardness of heart that brought about the Law in the first place. And it is not as though any of this says at all that we have to throughout the Old Testament in order to understand these things: We do not have to wonder and stagger here as though the New Testament did not already specifically answer how this law is fulfilled and applied in the New Testament. On the contrary, to actually keep this law it is required that one does this in light of Jesus fulfillment of it in truth rather than returning to it in the oldness of its use for unsaved people. Any attempt to ignore the update Jesus gave to this is a return to flesh-based righteousness, and this is a dreaded crime we must seek to be clear from!

Some people actually think that it is still permissible to make concessions for divorce due to hardness of heart, and that as though they were under the New Covenant. Let us be courageously clear: The Bible makes no small point that a life of “hardness of Heart” has to do with one who is going to hell ([Pro_28:14](#); [Joh_12:40](#)). Therefore, if we will rather be under the Law of Christ, ([1Co_9:21](#); [Gal_6:2](#)) then we will not make concessions this way. Once the foundations of this law and its entire essence has been explicitly fulfilled and updated, anyone who seeks to permit divorce or forbid the faith of reconciliation is an opponent to what God created in authenticating the New Covenant. But for the sake of those still struggling and for the sake of being thorough in establishing every pillar of truth which God has provided for us, we will even do more to make these things as clear and solid with much confirmation from the Scriptures.

The Rest of Scripture Explains Deu_24:4’s “Defilement”

To faithfully and accurately understand Deu_24:4’s abbreviated reference to “defilement,” we need to get a comprehensive, big-picture understanding of the Biblical cases of defilement that speak to this scenario. We need to realize that this strong “defilement” language is not isolated to Deuteronomy 24, but is a repeated theme throughout the Scriptures, especially in the Law of Moses. If we will be sensitive to the other times that these things are discussed and let the rest of the Bible teach us, then we can understand the nature of this principal against defilement that is briefly referenced in this case. The concept of an “abomination” “causing the land to be defiled” and or “sin” is repeated in these verses:

Compare [Exo_21:14, 23-25](#); [Lev_24:17-21](#); [Num_35:30-34](#); [Deu_19:10-13](#); [22:22](#); [Jdg_1:6-7](#); [1Sa_15:33](#) with [2Sa_11:3-4, 14-17](#), [21 c, 24](#); [12:13](#); [Psa_51:14](#); [Mat_5:38-39](#); [Joh_8:3-4, 10-11](#)

While addressing a parallel “defilement” of the land (as [Deu_24:4](#) describes), these and many other verses also show that the Mosaic death penalty was amended for the New Covenant. Throughout the next number of points we quote some of these passages to show the full implications that the Scriptures teach by doing this:

Mosaic Death Penalty Legislated

Exo 21 – Mosaic Death Penalty – Eye For Eye

[Exo_21:14-25](#) CAB And if anyone lie in wait for his neighbor to slay him by craft, and **he go for refuge**, you shall take him from My altar to put him to **death**... [compare: [1Ki_1:50-51](#); [1Ki_2:28-34](#); [2Ki_11:12-16](#)]
23 But if it be perfectly formed, [MT: “And if any injury occurs” (WEB)] he shall give life for life, **24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot**, **25 burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe**.

The “eye for eye” command is repeated again in [Lev_24:17-21](#)

Num 35 – Mosaic Death Penalty: No Ransom; No Exceptions! Or You Defile the Land

[Num_35:30-34](#) CAB Whoever kills a man, you shall slay the murderer on the testimony of witnesses; and one witness shall not testify against a soul that he should die. **31** And **you shall not accept ransoms for life from a murderer** who is worthy of death, for he shall be surely put to death. **32** You shall not accept a ransom *to excuse* his fleeing to the city of refuge, so that he should again dwell in the land, until the death of the high priest. **33** So shall **you not pollute with murder the land** in which you dwell; for this blood pollutes the land, and the **land shall not be purged** from the blood shed upon it, but by the blood of him that shed it. **34** And **you shall not defile the** land on which you dwell, on which I dwell in the midst of you; for I am the Lord dwelling in the midst of the children of Israel.

Things to Notice from Num 35

- The land is defiled by murder
- The only way it can be clean again is by killing the murderer
- Because of this you cannot take a ransom to keep the guilty alive
- Instead you are not allowed to promote the pollution of the land by murder, but must instead **purge**... [the land] from the blood shed upon it” by killing the murderer
- This is to be done without respect of persons (that is, it is enforced equally no matter who is guilty)

(Also see: [Deu_19:10-13](#); This law also agrees with the principals given after the flood: [Gen_9:4-6](#))

Mosaic Death Penalty – Stone Adulterers

[Deu_22:22](#) CAB And if a man be found lying with a woman married to a man, you shall kill them both, the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so shall you remove the wicked one out of Israel. (There are many times that murder and adultery are linked to the death penalty. See [Jam_2:10-11](#))

Notice The Strong Implications of This Death Penalty

First, please note that the Mosaic Death penalty is specifically given in every book of Moses’ Law: [Exo_21:14-25](#); [Lev_24:17-21](#); [Num_35:30-34](#); [Deu_19:10-13](#); [22:22](#). So we know that this is a **serious** Law. Repetition denotes emphasis. A (good) parent’s instruction is far more serious when they repeat it. **Second**, please don’t miss that for both murder, and adultery, the only answer under the Mosaic Law was death.

[Lev_20:10](#) CAB Whatever man shall commit adultery with the wife of a man, or whoever shall commit adultery with the wife of his neighbor, let them die the death, the adulterer and the adulteress.

[Lev_24:17-22](#) CAB And whosoever shall strike a man and he die, let him die the death... **19** And whosoever shall inflict a blemish on his neighbor, as he has done to him, so shall it be done to himself in return; **20** bruise for bruise, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as anyone may inflict a blemish on a man, so shall it be rendered to him. **21** Whosoever shall strike a man, and he shall die, let him die the death. **22** There shall be one judgment for the stranger and the native, for I *am* the Lord your God.

[Deu_19:13](#) CAB Your eye shall not spare him; so shall you purge innocent blood from Israel, and it shall be well with you.

The KJV clarifies this by representing as,

[Deu_19:13](#) KJV ...put away *the guilt of* innocent blood from Israel...

[Deu_22:22](#) CAB And if a man be found lying with a woman married to a man, you shall kill them both, the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so shall you remove the wicked one out of Israel.

Mosaic Death Penalty Enforced

[1Sa_15:33](#) CAB And Samuel said to Agag, As your sword has bereaved women of their children, so shall your mother be made childless among women. And Samuel hacked Agag *to pieces* before the Lord in Gilgal.

Samuel was not just some prophet with a long white beard. This was a prophet capable of violence! You don't mess with Samuel if he gets a chance to enforce the justice of the Law of Moses. In addition to this example, there are many other examples throughout the Old Testament of enforcing this Law, including the following passages:

Joab's bloodshed: [2Sa_3:23-30](#); [20:8-13](#);

How Joab was repaid: [1Ki_2:5-6](#), [28-34](#)

Other examples: [Num_15:30-36](#); [2Sa_4:5-12](#); [21:5-9](#);

But so many have tried to suggest that such an enforcement of the Mosaic death penalty was not possible during New Testament times when the Jews were under Roman occupation, since this was illegal for them ([Joh_18:29-31](#)). But don't forget that the Jews of Jesus and Paul's day also tried to enforce this death penalty many times in the New Testament, even though it was officially illegal:

[Joh_8:3-5](#), [7](#), [58-59](#); [10:31-33](#); [11:8](#); [Act_7:58-60](#); [14:5](#), [19](#). And also compare: [Luk_20:6](#); [Act_5:26](#).

Mosaic Death Penalty Amended

David, Bathsheba, and Uriah

[2Sa_11:3-4](#) CAB And David sent and inquired about the woman. And *one* said, *Is not this Bathsheba the daughter of Eliab, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?* [4](#) And David sent messengers, and took her, and went in to her, and he lay with her...

[2Sa_11:14-17](#) CAB And the morning came, and David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. [15](#) And he wrote in the letter, saying, Station Uriah in front of the *most severe part* of the fight, and retreat from behind him, that he may be wounded and die. [16](#) And it came to pass while Joab was watching against the city, that he set Uriah in a place where he knew that valiant men were. [17](#) And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab. And some of the people of the servants of David fell, and Uriah the Hittite died also.

[2Sa_11:23-24](#) CAB And the messenger said to David... your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead...

Then after David was confronted...

[2Sa_12:13](#) CAB And David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said to David, The Lord has put away your sin; **you shall not die**.

After reading all of these passages, we have got to just stop here and be amazed... What did God just say? –The Lord has put away your sin; **you shall not die**.” Some kind of non-standard, supernatural forgiveness just took place totally outside what the law had made provision for, so that even God would not have David die!

Notice that David committed both adultery and murder in his sin, but was not put to death, but instead out the mouth of God it was declared to David by Nathan:

–you shall not die,” (2Sa_12:13 CAB). – Why is this and how can these things ever possibly be??

Jesus Declares it Amended

Mat_5:38-39 WEB –You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I tell you, don’t resist him who is evil; but whoever strikes you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Don’t miss that Jesus is pointing to the Mosaic Death penalty: Exo_21:14-25; Lev_24:17-21; Num_35:30-34; Deu_19:10-13; 22:22.

Jesus Explains why it is Different for the New Covenant

Mat_5:21-22 WEB –You have heard that it was said to the ancient ones, ‘You shall not murder;’ and ‘Whoever shall murder shall be in danger of the judgment.’ 22 But I tell you, that everyone who is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...

Mat_5:27-28 WEB –You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery;’ 28 but I tell you that everyone who gazes at a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Do you see that now Jesus is putting us all on the same plane with each other? Both those who have committed sin in their heart, as well as those who have committed sin in their flesh are counted guilty before God, particularly under the New Covenant which is based on the heart and not the flesh.

In addition to this, don’t forget how Paul said this very thing:

Act_13:39 WEB ...by him everyone who believes is justified from **all things**, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

And don’t forget that Paul himself was also in many ways a man forgiven of the guilt of murder (Act_7:58; 8:1-4; 9:1-2; 22:4, 20; 1Co_15:8-10; Gal_1:13-14; Php_3:6). And if we all now have access to this blessed forgiveness, this puts us all on the same plane together. This is the basic good announcement that Paul commanded all preachers to preach, and to even use Paul’s testimony (of being freely forgiven of capital sins) as a pattern for this (1Ti_1:3, 11-16, 18).

Because of this, everyone who believes in Jesus cannot justly demand the life of another, having realized that he himself is a forgiven murderer, because –all have sinned,” (Rom_3:23 CAB). And not only this, but under the New Covenant it says that there is –**no difference**”:

Rom_3:22-24 KJ2000 ...for there is **no difference**: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ [χριστῶ – anointed one] Jesus:

And James also repeats what we have been saying:

[Jam_2:10-11 WEB](#) ... whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he has become guilty of all. 11 For he who said, —Do not commit adultery,” said also, —Do not commit murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

Fulfilling a just death penalty under the New Covenant means that heart-criminals cannot enforce it (and that means all of us who are hoping to be saved by Jesus in truth).

Jesus Enforces it as Amended

[Joh_8:3-11 CAB](#) Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman who had been **caught** in adultery, and having stood her in *the* midst, 4 they said to Him, —Teacher, **we found** this *woman* committing adultery, **in the very act**. 5 Now Moses, in our law, **commanded** to cast stones at such. Therefore what do You say?” 6 But this they said, testing Him, that they might have an accusation against Him. But Jesus, stooping down, began to write on the ground with His finger, not taking notice. 7 And while they were continuing questioning Him, rising up, He said unto them, —He who is without sin among you, let him *be the* first to cast a stone at her.” 8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 And those who heard *it* [some source texts have here: —and being convicted under the conscious” (Jos.Trans.)] began to go out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman being in the midst. 10 And standing up and seeing no one but the woman, Jesus said to her, —Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?” 11 She said, —No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, —Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

[**Technical Textual Note:** Despite some —scholarly” controversies over this account of —The Woman Taken In Adultery,” the legitimacy and authenticity of this passage is documented in the appendix resource entitled, —Extra Notes on Church History”]

- On every aspect and detail, and on every level, according to the Law of Moses, this woman deserved to die
- The Law specifically said that she must be —found” in the act to enforce the death penalty: —And if a man **be found** lying with a woman ... you shall kill them both...” ([Deu_22:22 CAB](#)).
- This passage shows her legal and just and verified guilt twice, in the words, —... a woman who had been **caught** in adultery...” ([Joh_8:3 CAB](#)) and in the words of the Pharisees as they insisted upon her authorized guilt, —Teacher, **we found** this *woman* committing adultery...” ([Joh_8:4](#))
- Later in this chapter, we have another situation where Jesus says, —It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is valid.” ([Joh_8:17 CAB](#)). Because —we” means more than one man, this means that Jesus was obliged to accept the testimony of these men against the adulterous woman (—**we** found this *woman*...”) as a valid claim (which He in fact did in the words, —go... **sin** no more” - [Joh_8:11](#))
[This principal of —two or three witnesses” is documented in much greater detail in Chapter 3, under the chart entitled, —Mosaic Guidelines for Dealing with Accusations of Infidelity”]
- With or without the source text variation, —and being convicted under the conscious” ([Jos.Trans.](#)) it is clear that the woman’s accusers recognized their guilt enough to walk away with nothing more to say
- It is amazing that even though Jesus worked mercy for the woman which was contrary to the Law that they had from God through Moses, they were still —convicted by the law as transgressors,” ([Jas_2:9 CAB](#); and compare this with [Joh_8:8-9](#)).
- The words, —Neither do I condemn you” mean, —Neither do I enforce this just Mosaic death penalty upon you, which you deserve and have been fully convicted of according to God’s righteous standard,” (see [Rom_1:32](#)) But —sin no more” meaning —Respond according to the mercy shown you and be saved from sin, because this was its purpose.”

We have seen from the story of the woman caught in adultery that Jesus clearly enforced the Mosaic Death penalty as being (socially) remitted, but this is definitely not the only example we have in Scripture:

Luk_9:53-56 WEB and sent messengers before his face. They went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, so as to prepare for him. **53** They didn't receive him, because he was traveling with his face set towards Jerusalem [i.e. they could see that He was traveling to go be with Jews, but they were Samaritans (with well-established racial conflicts)]. **54** When his disciples, James and John, saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from the sky, and destroy them, just as Elijah did?" **55** But he turned and rebuked them, "You don't know of what kind of spirit you are."

Don't shrug this passage off lightly! They deserved to have fire consume them for rejecting Jesus, but this was not Jesus' agenda. Jesus did not come to enforce the justice of the death penalty, but to save people from being crushed under it!

Joh_3:17 WEB For God didn't send his Son into the world to judge [ἵνα κρίνῃ – or condemn/ bring justice to bear upon] the world, but that the world should be saved through him.

The Law – The Highest Order of Social Justice

The Law of Moses should truly be called *the highest order of social justice* for us, because it was a social government approved and ultimately given by God.

Gal_3:21 WEB Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could make alive, most assuredly righteousness would have been of the law. (Also see: **Rom_9:31**; **1Ti_1:9**)

The amending of the just (Mosaic) death penalty has been accomplished under the reality of the Kingdom of God, because under this,

Jam_2:13 WEB ...judgment^{G2920} is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment^{G2920}

[That is κρίσις (*krisis*) in Greek: The judgment that brings justice].

True Heart Justice Means Temporary Social Justice is Delayed

Now that the heart counts, fulfilling personal justice means delaying social justice by mercy, and placing it into God's hands until Judgment Day. And this was the case with the woman taken in adultery. And Jesus is pointing at us as well as the Pharisees if we hold people accountable to social justice. In this we should be asking ourselves, "When has anyone ever so sinned against me, but that God has not forgiven me 100 times as much and more for the crimes that I have committed against Him?" So also in this passage James points to us, showing us that we should have mercy.

But concerning Justice, we must first acknowledge that the Mosaic Death penalty was indeed **just**, and that it is the realization of the truest justice for the sins that it addresses:

Rom_1:32 CAB ...known the righteous judgment* of God, that those practicing such things are **worthy of death**...

[* ἡ δικαιοσύνη – hard to represent in English, but it certainly pertains to "justice"/ "righteousness" which God has determined]

And the Law says it like this: —. life for life, 24 Eye for eye... (Exo_21:23-24)” [because] —. you shall not defile the land (Num_35:33)” and it says that there shall be no respect of persons (even if they are a king or peasant): Lev_19:15; Deu_1:17; 16:19; 2Ch_19:7; Pro_24:23; 28:21. And this very death penalty also demands adulterers to be stoned, as well as fornicators, and homosexuals, and the like.

Even now, if we will have a righteous heart we will know and feel that this death penalty Law is indeed just. Yes, it is **just** that such a death penalty be enforced upon the sons of men holding them accountable for their sin, and that it be done to all men alike making no distinction. But please see this all-important fact: God does not give any one what they deserve who are justified by Him!

Rom_4:6-8 CAB just as David also speaks of the blessing of the man to whom God accounts righteousness apart from works: 7 —Blessed *are they* whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, and whose sins were covered over; 8 Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall by no means impute sin.”

God did not give king David justice according to what he deserved to receive for committing adultery and murdering a righteous man! But quite the contrary, God said, —you will not die,” (2Sa_12:13). And when God prophesied this unto David, this was directly contrary to the just Law of Moses, and was said previously to cause the land to sin! The same is true for Paul who was a participant in murderer (Act_7 – 8:1; 9:1; 26:10), as well as the woman taken in adultery, (Joh_8:3-4, 10-11). And the same is true for any of us who are justified by Jesus (Rom_3:22-23; 1Co_6:9-11; Jas_2:10-13).

It is not at all that God has removed justice by establishing a new covenant. In fact, the New Covenant comes with greater justice and potential for condemnation than the first covenant, (Heb_10:28-31). This is because now God’s available covenanted relationship with men specifically includes not only the sins done in the flesh, (Rom_8:3; 2Co_5:10) but also the sins of the heart and mind (Mat_5:21-22, 27-30; Rom_7:23, 25; Jas_4:8)

In doing this, God has raised a **higher** standard of righteousness embedding it in this covenant that He now offers mankind, by requiring righteousness all the way down to the heart through supernatural intervention, and no longer simply demanding separation from uncleanness in the flesh. But (as opposed to the Old Covenant) God has not only made it a just thing for us not to be condemned to hell who repent and believe Him, but He has necessarily accomplished this infusion of obedience by giving us grace, so that we don’t have to live in sin any longer and continue earning death: Compare Joh_5:14; 8:11; Rom_6:6, 12; 7:5; 8:3, 13; Col_2:11; 1Pe_2:24; 3:18

To those whom Jesus said, —neither do I condemn you,” He also said, —go and sin no more,” (Joh_8:11), and in the same way He said previously to a man who was healed, —Sin no more, lest something worse may happen to you,” (Joh_5:14 CAB).

Though they justly deserved it, Jesus did not call for their immediate physical condemnation in this life (the death penalty), because of the way that this covenant of mercy operates, but won’t He indeed judge and condemn them to death in both their physical person as well as their very soul at the Judgment, who continue in their sin until their death? Certainly He will! This is why He warned them concerning the next life, after answering their physical need by saying, —Sin no more!” (Joh_3:35; 5:22, 27).

However, while saying all of this, please don’t misunderstand me; I am not against the death penalty at all, (though I myself would never enforce it in this life). If you read this and think that I am somehow protesting the government’s ordained responsibility to enforce death penalty, then you have misunderstood both me and the Scriptures. On the contrary, God has clearly said:

[Rom_13:2-5 CAB](#) Consequently the *one* resisting the authority has opposed **the ordinance of God**, and those opposing shall receive judgment to themselves. **3** For rulers are not a fear to good works, but to evil... **4** For he is God's servant to you for good. But if you do evil, fear; for **he does not bear the sword in vain**; for he is **God's servant**, an avenger for wrath to the *one* practicing evil. **5** Therefore it is necessary to be subject, not only on account of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

By the way: This is what separates real Christians from lawless pacifists, in that, those who submit under the authority of the Scriptures recognize both realities that (1) the government has been ordained as a recognized institution by God to even kill people as may be necessary for maintaining and enforcing social justice, and at the same time, (2) Those who hope to be saved from sin by the infusion of the righteousness of God cannot coexist as part of this earthly, governmental ordinance and follow Jesus at the same time, since Jesus willingly received social injustice for the sake of establishing a Kingdom that is not of this earth. – If you actually follow Jesus, you cannot enforce social justice while He Himself willingly received social injustice ([Mat 26:51-52](#); [Rev_13:10](#))!

From all of these things it is extremely clear that you cannot be both under a –social justice” agreement with God as well as a covenant that makes you spared from the justice you deserve from God. You have to decide whether you want to enforce social justice now in this age and face moral justice later with God at the judgment, or else enter into a covenant that saves you from your heart-injustices and go and show others **this exact same mercy!**

So God has made it clear that He has, in fact, given the government the sword to begin with, and ordained them unto this. And He also says of him that, –~~he~~ is Gods minister.” But to those soldiers who seek repentance of their own (moral) sins, and hope to find obedience to His Kingdom, God says,

[Luk_3:14 KJV](#) ...do violence to no man...

Or more literally:

[Luk_3:14 Jos.Trans.](#) ...do not shake* no one through*...

[* *μισε σετε (diaseisēte)* – lit. shake (*seisēte*) through (*dia*) meaning to –rough up”; fig. *intimidate* or –do violence” (KJV); (see G1286)]

This is because it is quite impossible to fulfill these verses, and kill someone:

[Rom_13:9-10 CAB](#) ...*if* there is any other commandment, in this word it is summed up, namely, –You shall love your neighbor **as yourself**.” **10** Love does **no harm** to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

[Phi_2:15 CAB](#) ...that you may become blameless and **harmless**, children of God without fault ...among whom you shine as light bearers in the world...

[Mat_5:38-45 CAB](#) –You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ **39** But I say to you **not to resist an evil person**. But whoever shall slap you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also... **43** –You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor, and you shall hate your enemy.’ **44** But I say to you, **love your enemies**, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who mistreat you and persecute you, **45** so that you may prove to be sons of your Father in heaven; because He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and He sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Those who advocate the death penalty now should also come to grips with the fact that justice **also** demands the death of adulterers just as much as it does of murderers! For us to say that we insist on promoting the death penalty without promoting enforcing it upon fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals, and the like as well is hypocritical, because concerning all who do such things, God has clearly said that they are deserving of death ([Rom_1:32](#)).

I have seen people zealously rage for justice to come upon a well-known murderer, but I don't see those same people offended because the law enforcement will not put them to death for their past fornications, heart adulteries, and murderous hatreds! How hypocritical! This is the very reason Jesus said, *—He who is without sin among you, let him **be the** first to cast a stone at her,*" ([Joh_8:7 CAB](#)) but we have already cast the first stone in our hearts by condemning them, and have so insisted upon our own death.

[Mat_7:2 CAB](#) ...with what measure you measure, it will be measured *back* to you.

This is a fearful and dreadful thing to fall upon your soul in the Day of Judgment!

[Jam_2:8-13 WEB](#) However, if you fulfill the royal law, according to the Scripture, *—You shall love your neighbor as yourself,*" you do well. **9** But if you show partiality, you commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors. **10** For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he has become guilty of all. **11** For he who said, *—Do not commit adultery,*" said also, *—Do not commit murder.*" Now if you do not commit adultery, but murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. **12** So speak, and so do, as men who are to be judged by a **law of freedom**. **13** For judgment is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

And don't we find ourselves as David when he sinned?

[2Sa_12:5-7 CAB](#) And David was greatly moved with anger against the man; and David said to Nathan, As the Lord lives, the man that did this thing shall surely die. **6** ...because he has not spared. **7** And Nathan said to David, You are the man that has done this!...

For this reason the New Covenant recognizes the adultery of the heart, and this is why Jesus says *—He who is without sin... let him **be the** first to cast a stone...*" ([Joh_8:7 CAB](#)). It is not just unto physical adultery that He says this, but rather, *—He who has not done the same sin in their heart, be the first to enforce the death penalty upon this sinner who has done it in the flesh*' (Compare [Mat_5:27-30](#)).

How Does the Death Penalty Relate To Marriage?

The important thing to get from all of this is that just as not killing a murderer causes the land to be defiled under the Law of Moses, so also returning to the first spouse is forbidden on the bases of causing the land to be defiled, but Jesus amended both of these things! Those who question the safety of returning to the first because it may *—cause the land to be defiled*" should also question the safety of not insisting upon their own death for the murderers that they have committed in their heart by hating someone, ([Mat_5:21-22](#)).

[1Jo_3:15 CAB](#) Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

In God's eyes, such a person who has at any point been a *—heart-murder*" that is not put to death (including you and me) would be just as much a *—defiler of the land*" if Deuteronomy_24:4 held true for returning to the first spouse.

Conclusions About the Death Penalty and Returning to the First

So why have we spent so much time talking about the death penalty, when this is a work about divorce and remarriage? Mainly because Deuteronomy 24:4's warning against defilement is exactly the same as the Laws emphatic warnings against defiling the land by neglecting capital punishment and letting a murderer go free without executing him. And don't we all know that the New Testament itself is so largely formed by forgiven and redeemed murderers who were not put to death because of the mercy worked out by Jesus? Yes, and now under Jesus we are all held accountable as murders because of our past crimes in our heart! If Deuteronomy 24:4's warning against defilement and forbidding law against returning to the first spouse is over us in the same way it was for them, then so is our need to all be put to death and held to our capital crimes against God. Not one of us would survive and escape the death penalty in this life, nor the eternal hell in the next, now that Jesus has exposed us to the righteousness of the heart!

If Deuteronomy 24:4 is used as is, without the true light of the Gospel brought about in Jesus, as though [Deu_24:4](#) was applicable to **this** covenant just as it was under the old, and we reject the update that has now been written for us, we make Deuteronomy stand in the way of accepting the life and truth which God clearly teaches us in the Scriptures concerning divorce and remarriage, and returning unto a first spouse. If we are afraid of "causing the land to sin" and forgo obedience to the New Covenant for this reason, woe to us! Because it says,

[Gal_5:3-4](#) CAB ...he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who are justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

We are to be of a NEW Covenant of reconciliation ([Mat_5:24](#); [Rom_5:10](#); [1Co_7:11](#); [2Co_5:18-20](#); [Eph_2:16](#); [Col_1:20-21](#)) and we miss this if we tie ourselves by sinful flesh under the oldness of an old law in our flesh that is contrary to this service of reconciliation! Please hear what God has clearly said about His heart on this point of divorce and remarriage, and "discern the times" as Jesus commanded us ([Mat_16:2-3](#); and especially see: [Luk_12:54-59](#)) that you may obey the voice of God for this (New) covenant:

[Deu_18:15](#) CAB The Lord your God shall raise up to you a Prophet from among your brethren, like me; Him shall you hear.

20. A Summary of Returning to the First

Many are concerned about returning to one's first spouse after a remarriage in light of [Deu_24:3-4](#), but have ignored some very important things that the Scriptures have already told us about this passage...

(1) Believe the Amendments of the New Covenant!

We can first see that this whole section of Deuteronomy was amended by God for the New Covenant, (Among others: [Jer_3:1-22](#), [Mat_5:31-32](#); [19:8-9](#)).

(2) The First Wife is Prioritized; Reconciliation is Proclaimed

We can see that God's heart is for the first wife in [Jer_3:1-22](#) and [Mal_2:13-16](#), even if she were remarried, and that He's dissatisfied for her to remain remarried to another man (as we have seen in the verses we quoted previously) just like David was for his first wife to remain remarried (in these verses: [1Sa_18:20](#) – [2Sa_6:23](#)).

(3) David Proved This with His Actions, And God Approved of This By His Prophets

We can see that David, a man specifically credited by Jesus to have an example with greater priority than the Law of Moses, returned to his first wife, just as the Lord would have done for his adulterating people the Israelites, though the Law had not permitted any of these things! We see that David, a man according to God's own heart (1Sa_16:3-7, 12-14; 13:14; [Act 13:22](#)) and by God's own heart (Jer_3:1-22; Joh_8:3-4, 10-11) was involved in things that the Mosaic Law said would perpetuate _the land being defiled':

[2Sa_3:14-16](#) – Returning a first wife to himself after she was remarried,

[2Sa_12:13](#) – Not being put to death as the Law emphatically insisted (for murder and adultery)

Remember that the Law said that justice was to be enforced without any "respect of persons": [Lev_19:15](#); [Deu_1:17](#); [16:19](#); [2Ch_19:7](#); [Pro_24:23](#); [28:21](#). Showing NO "respect of persons" includes a king!

But we know that David's life-example surpassed the Law in authoritativeness, not because he was a king, but because he was a man according to God's own heart. He lived in and foreshadowed a New Covenant that man at that time knew nothing about! And this shows us that there is a higher standard than the Law, which forbade a spouse to return to the first after a remarriage. The higher standard which Jesus brought compels us unto reconciliation, even of original marriage partners who have since been remarried.

It is Time to Repent of Hypocrisy and Embrace Reconciliation

Why is it we typically want to have a false and hypocritical standard of mercy enough to say people can be cleansed by God even if they remain in a remarriage which the New Testament harshly condemns, while we cannot find the mercy and New Covenant faith in our hearts to believe that God can cleanse a spouse, who has even repented of adulterous remarriage by faith so that they may return to their first spouse, even though the Bible clearly shows this?

It is time to repent of our hypocrisy and filthy claims of love and mercy which we use to flatter people into remaining in the sinful life styles which God has condemned, and it is time to instead believe God and show the type of mercy He has taught us to walk in and believe Him for that actually saves people unto the purifying faith of Jesus to call people to repent of adulterous remarriages, and it is time to lay hold of the saving hope of reconciliation brought to us by Jesus under the New Covenant. It is high time we stopped boasting in the false love that is so conveniently adapted to the selfish lusts of comforting the flesh, and start caring about the love that actually saves people from sin and redeems them from the adultery Jesus condemned. It is high time we started caring about the love that actually loves God above the indulgence of the flesh, and takes up a cross to follow and obey Jesus, and loves people the way **God** told us to Love them, because this is the only love that carries with it a legitimate hope of salvation and glory in God's Kingdom!

[2Co_5:18-20](#) **CAB** And all things are [out] of [ἐξ] God, who reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ [χριστοῦ – anointed one], and who gave to us the ministry of this reconciliation, **19** that is, that God was in Christ [χριστῶ – anointed one] reconciling the world to Himself, not [verbally] reckoning [λογίζεσθαι – i.e. with words (λογίζεσθαι)] their transgressions to them, and *committing to us [*ζ κελο ἐλ ἡκτλ – arranging/–putting" in us] the word [τὸν λόγον (same root as before)] of this reconciliation. **20** Now then, we serve as ambassadors [πρεσβεύομεν – (made up of) elders] for [ὑπὲρ] Christ [χριστοῦ – anointed one], as though God were appealing [παρακαλοῦντος – lit. (speaking out) callings next to (you); fig. (making) exhortations] through us: we implore *YOU* *on Christ's behalf [*ὑπὲρ χριστοῦ – lit. over anointed one], be reconciled to God.

Let us embrace this new spiritual reconciliation which is now available with God through Jesus, and in the same way let us promote this moral parable of physical reconciliation which is now available for spouses. If Deuteronomy 24 said that a woman was permanently defiled after remarriage, is the reconciliation of first spouses proclaimed in the New Covenant a defiling reconciliation?

To the spiritual side of returning to the first spouse after marriage to idols, God says,

2Co_5:18 CAB And **all things** are ^[out] of ^[ἐκ] God, who reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ ^[χριστοῦ – anointed one], and who gave to us the ministry of this reconciliation

And to the physical, moral side of returning to the first spouse after adulterous marriage, He says,

Act_13:39 WEB ...by ^[ἐν – in] him everyone who believes is justified from **all things**, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

And it is because of this proclamation that it is written in the unbreakable Scriptures of truth, that God says,

Jer_3:1-2, 7, 12, 14, 22 (CAB)

v. 1-2 If a man put away his wife, and she depart from him, and become another man's, shall she return to him anymore? Shall not that woman be utterly defiled? ^[referring to Deu24:2-4]... **2** ...you have...been utterly defiled. You have...defiled the land with your fornications ^[lit. prostitutions] and your wickedness... ^[as in Deu24:4; Lev 19:29; Deu23:17-18]

v. 7 And I said... Turn again to Me...

v. 12 ...Return to Me, O house of Israel, says the Lord...

v. 14 Turn, you children that have revolted, says the Lord...

v. 22 Turn, you children that are given to turning, and I will heal your bruises...

2Sa_3:14 CAB ...David sent messengers... saying, **Restore me my wife**...

Hos 2:7 CAB ...and she shall say, I will go, and return to my former husband...

21. The Seven Examples that Demand True and Complete Repentance From Unlawful Marriage!

We have heard of the example of David and many other men of God so far throughout this book, but now it is time for an intense climax! God has already told us what to do about divorce and remarriage by example, and seeing that men of God spilled their blood for this teaching, we ought to take fervent heed that we also be found in such faith and greatness in God's Kingdom like the prophetic examples he left with us to imitate.

Ezra and Nehemiah Broke Up Forbidden Marriages

When there were marriages with foreign women among the children of Israel during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah that were contrary to God's law, these marriages were forcibly broken up to be obedient to God, And some of these marriages had begotten children!

Ezr_10:3 CAB Now then let us make a covenant with our God, **to put away** [ἐκβαλεῖν – throw out] **all the wives** [γυναῖκας – women], **and their offspring**... and let *it* be done according to the law

Ezr_10:10-11 CAB And Ezrah the priest arose, and said to them, You have broken covenant, and have taken [ἐκαθήσατε – lit. *sat down* (i.e. *in your houses as...*)] **strange wives** [γυναῖκας ἄλλοτριάς], to add to the trespass of Israel.
11 Now therefore give praise to the Lord God of our fathers, and do that which is pleasing in His sight, and separate yourselves from [ἀπὸ] the peoples of the land, and from [ἀπὸ] the strange wives [τῶν γυναικῶν τῶν ἄλλοτριῶν].

[**Greek Note:** the word –from” (ἀπὸ) is the root concept and vocabulary for ‘divorce’ (ἀπνι –ση) and ‘divorce certificate’ (βηβ νλ ἀπνστασ νπ) for most all of the major New Testament marriage passages (except 1Co 7) – In Greek, ending cohabitation and separating –from” (ἀπὸ) strange women includes the core concept of renouncing the marriage which had previously been considered socially acceptable]

Ezr_10:16 CAB And the children of the captivity did thus...

Ezr_10:18-19 CAB And there were found *some* of [ἀπὸ] the sons of the priests who had taken strange wives [γυναῖκας ἄλλοτριάς]... **19** And they *pledged themselves [*ἔδωκαν χεῖρα αὐτῶν – gave their hand] **to put away** [ἔξε νεγκαι – a form of ἔθν ξ σ – *to bear/ “carry” out*, i.e. *to throw out of their houses* (as stated in v. 3)] **their wives** [γυναῖκας αὐτῶν], and **offered** a ram of the flock for [περὶ – around/ –concerning”] a trespass offering because of their trespass.

Ezr_10:44 CAB All these had taken [ἐλάβοσαν] **strange wives** [γυναῖκας ἄλλοτριάς – lit. *other/ –foreign” women*], **and** [MT adds, –some of them” (WEB)] **had begotten sons of them.**

For what it is worth, an alternative Greek copy of this same account makes this somewhat more specific by saying:

1Es 9:36 Brenton All these had taken [σπλόθησα – cohabited (with)] **strange wives** [γπλαῖθαο ἀνν γελεῖο – lit. *women of another genealogy/ race*], and they *put them away [* ἀπέπασαλ – essentially the same word as Mat 5; 19; Mar 10; Luk 16; etc.] **with** [σὸλ] **their children.**

[1Es = –4st Esdras” (or *Esdras A* in the LXX), which is a duplicate Greek translation and compilation of material from 2nd Chronicles (or 2nd Supplements) and Ezra and Nehemiah (or 2nd *Esdras*), and other sources.]

And this crime done in Judah was just as it is also said of Israel:

Hos_5:6-7 CAB They shall go with sheep and calves diligently to seek the Lord; but they shall not find Him, for He has withdrawn Himself from them. **7** For they have forsaken the Lord; for strange children have been born to them: now shall the cankerworm devour them and their heritage.

This theme of divorcing or –throwing out” forbidden women is repeated over and over again throughout Ezra and Nehemiah:

(Ezr_9:1-3, 6, 12)*; Ezr_10:3-5, 10-19, 44; (Neh_9:2; Neh_13:1-9; Neh_10:30); Neh_13:23-30;

[* The (parentheses) in these references indicate where foreign *men* and *sons* were also put out of Israel]
[**LXX Note:** The book of –Ezra” is –2Esdras” Ch 1-10 in the LXX, and –Nehemiah” is –2Esdras,” Chapter 11 and onward]

For some reason, although over and over again God clearly and emphatically showed us that we have to leave forbidden marriages that He condemns in order to live, we still think we can go about without

repenting like they repented in the Bible and we still think we are forgiven! Without any real Biblical basis, we have now established a perverted gospel that promises —salvation” without repentance, and is this the point of the New Covenant?

It is clear then, that there is a great fundamental gulf dividing Biblical Christianity and modern christianity, since they actually left unlawful marriages all throughout the Scriptures to get right with God, but we think we can continue in such marriages today and still go to heaven, even when Jesus declared our unlawful marriages to be the most monstrous crime of adultery!

Those who repented in the Bible said, —Now then let us make a covenant with our God” (Ezr_10:3 CAB) and it is obvious that we are not in any type of covenant with their God in any sense, because we refuse —to put away all the [forbidden] wives, and their offspring.” Modern christianity is serving a *different god*, which they boast, —would never require such things from his children.’

Joh_8:44 CAB You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you desire to do...

And many will harden their heart against the example of Ezra and Nehemiah and complain by saying this is inapplicable to us today because it is in the Old Testament. But as we have already shown, such arguments ignore the fact that the Scriptures have said,

1Co_10:6 KJV ...these things were our examples...

And

2Ti_3:16-17 CAB All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be proficient, having been thoroughly equipped for every good work.

So then, in what way have the stories of Ezra and Nehemiah been given to us as **profitable examples** in **inspired Scripture** for establishing **doctrine** and doing **good work**?

We Must Still Obey Ezra and Nehemiah Today In the New Covenant

Forbidden Wives in the New Covenant are Different Now, But They Still Exist

The Difference Between Forbidden Spouses

- We do have an update to God’s laws on forbidden wives in the New Covenant, so we should be diligent to pay attention!
- Whatever covenant we find ourselves in, it is a consistent principal to put away forbidden spouses.
- **OT** – We should take note that during the time of the Law of Moses (including Ezra and Nehemiah’s time) forbidden wives included pagans and those inciting rebellion against God’s Law
- **OT** – Under the Old Covenant they primarily managed evil-hearted people, and especially because of this they even in some cases killed pagan women among them who swayed the unfaithful nation away from truth (Num_25:1-18). How can hard hearted people maintain polytheistic women, and yet still maintain even an external faithfulness to monotheistically recognize the one true God? – it is evident from the Scriptures that this is primarily why pagan women were either killed or divorced under the Old Covenant.
- **Now We Cannot divorce unbelievers** – Though it is still wrong to enter into marriage with unbelievers, yet now, it would be still worse to divorce them under this covenant because Paul, by the Spirit of God, has commanded us not to do this (1Co_7:12-17, 40).

- **No Divorce** – Now real Christians are called by faith to bear all things‘ (1Co_13:7), and because of this we neither kill nor divorce any of our pagan spouses, but remain faithful to them as much as they permit (1Co_7:11-24) hoping for their salvation (1Co_7:16; 1Pe_3:1; Luk_9:56; Luk_15:10).
- **No Divorce** – When it comes to marriages that are not —forbidden,” Christians are not ever allowed to initiate a divorce.
- **No Divorce** – There is only one —exception clause” allowing divorce from a lawful spouse in the New Covenant, and that does not include if a spouse is an unbeliever.
- **Remarriage** – Under the New Covenant, forbidden wives are primarily those who have already been lawfully married to other people.
- **Summary of Differences** – But though there is a shift from internally lost Jews being commanded to put away forbidden wives to maintain monotheism in the nation of Israel, to now calling people to put away any forbidden wives to break away from socially normalized immorality to enter into a heart-purifying covenant with Jesus, there are still forbidden marriages, and if we don‘t forsake them, it is clear that we have no inheritance in Jesus‘ Kingdom

Luk_14:26-27 WEB If anyone comes to me, and doesn‘t **hate** his own father, mother, **wife**, children, brothers, and sisters, yes, and his own **life** [επι ρηλ – soul] also, he can‘t be my disciple. 27 Whoever doesn‘t bear his own cross, and come after me, can‘t be my disciple.

Mat_10:37 CAB He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

Luk_18:29-30 CAB So He said to them, —**Assuredly** [ἀκίλ] I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or **wife** or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30 who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.”

The Similarity Between Forbidden Spouses

Because of these Scriptures, it is abundantly clear that whether it is Ezra and Nehemiah‘ s day of forbidden wives or our day of forbidden wives, it is clear from these things that whoever does not forsake them has nothing to do with the Biblical Christianity Jesus established and legislated for those who would forsake all to enter His kingdom. But if we stagger at the apparent —difference” between Ezra and Nehemiah‘ s break up of forbidden wives and our forbidden wives today, we should consider at least three very important realities:

- (1) In some great mystery, even though there forbidden wives were somewhat different than ours, yet Malachi still linked their situation with divorces which God refused to recognize (Malachi 2) and remarrying people they were not permitted to.
- (2) Even though the men themselves did not commit adultery per say (because polygamy was allowed at that time), yet it is clear that the women they divorced were always defiled when they remarried (Deu_24:4; Jer_2:7, 23; 3:1-2), and this —defilement” is what Jesus calls —adultery” in the New Covenant (Mat_5:31-32).
- (3) Malachi, also went on to speak against adultery in chapter 3, and foretold of two future messengers in the **New Covenant**, who would also end up calling people to leave forbidden wives when divorce and remarriage would one day be adultery in the same way for both men and women (Mar_10:10-12)...

John The Baptist – The First Martyr for God’s New Testament Teaching Against Adultery

We could continue here as we have done in previous places, directly and plainly addressing the countless technical doctrinal aspects of this issue, showing many clear passages declaring remarriage after divorce to be an adulterous relationship condemned by God, and most church leaders would still deny this reality. But if you have any heart at all for Jesus, how could you deny the example of the heroic martyrdom of a man consumed with Jesus* who gave up his life to preach against the sinful lifestyle of an adulterous remarriage? And how could you ignore the amazing testimony of approval given to this same martyr and His sacrificial stance by Jesus Himself? Have you no courage in your bones that may resonate with the faith of this man who spilled his blood for this truth?

[* Mat_3:11-17; Mar_1:2-3, 7-8; (Luk_1:17), Luk_1:76-77; 3:15-17; Joh_1:15, 23, 26-37; 3:23-36; 5:33-35; Act_13:24-25; 19:4]

How could you stop up your ears and ignore the example of this man whose name was John the Baptist, who, up to that point was the greatest man born of women other than Jesus, and how could you believe anything other than the heroic cause he died for, and seeing this testimony, how could you live for a gospel that proclaimed anything other than a total, hard-core stance against the adultery of remarriage after divorce ([Mat_11:11-15](#))?

If you hate Jesus to begin with then none of these appeals will find a common yearning in your heart, but if you have fallen in Love with the real Jesus from heaven and are still wavering on this point of truth I am urging you to embrace this life, because if you really love Jesus, then in this truth your love is perfected, and you know this all the more because God’s Spirit testifies loud and clear in accordance with the example given to us by John the Baptist, and everyone who is stricken with a love for truth is eagerly compelled toward this light (see [Mat_11:11-12](#) quoted later).

[Mar_6:17-18](#) CAB For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, **his brother Philip’s wife; because he had married her.** 18 For John would say to Herod, ~~It~~ is not lawful for you to have **your brother’s wife.**”

[Mat_14:10](#) CAB And having sent, he beheaded John in the prison.

[Mat_17:12-13](#) CAB But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they desired. Thus also the Son of Man is about to suffer by them.” 13 Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

John’s resulting death is recorded in: [Mat_14:1-13](#); [17:12-13](#); [Mar_6:14-32](#); [9:12-13](#); [Luk_9:7-10](#); (Also see [Mat_21:35-36](#); [22:6](#))

[Mat_11:11-12](#) CAB –Assuredly I say to you, among *those* born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men seize it.

Here the Bible demonstrates that despite the legal remarriage of Herodias, God testified through John that she was still under her one flesh covenant to Philip! But some have thought that John’s preaching against the remarriage was because of an Old Testament command (See [Lev_20:21](#)). We cannot say this honestly, first, because the Bible explicitly tells us that when John preached, he preached the Kingdom

of God ([Luk_16:16](#)), leaving us unable to truthfully dismiss his actions as though they were irrelevant to our own situations by attributing them to a command in the Old Testament that almost never applies to our immoral marriages that we deal with today. Secondly, Jesus' approval of John's actions did not make them out as though they were simply defending the Mosaic Law (as any other good Jew might), but on the contrary, Jesus was certain to link John's revolutionary actions to the particular teaching of the New Covenant concerning divorce and remarriage which basically **no one else was preaching!**

[Luk_16:14-18](#) CAB Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were hearing all these things, and they were mocking Him. **15** And He said to them, –You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. Because that which is exalted among men is an abomination before God. **16** The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone enters forcibly into it. **17** And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle [i.e. smallest (horn-like) Hebrew character] of the law to fail. **18** Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery ^{G3431}; and everyone who marries a woman who is divorced from her husband commits adultery ^{G3431}.

If Jesus linked John's preaching against remarriage with the particularly New Covenant proclamation, then we would be unreasonable to link it backward to a teaching already given by the Old Covenant. This would be a pitiful mistake to make, especially after Jesus did so much to profoundly link it with the demands of the New Covenant. And this linking of John to the New Testament teaching of divorce and remarriage is consistent with what was prophesied in Malachi ([Mal_2:11](#), [2:13](#) – [3:3](#)). It is wrong and even inconsistent to say that John is harping on a previously established Old Testament law that everyone already knew (as is forbidden in places like [Heb_6:1-2](#)), when he is repeatedly linked to pioneering truth and bringing in the first, fresh words of New Covenant teaching.

The Adventure that John the Baptist Calls Us To

Will we sit back and play church as usual, or will we take the heroic call of John's life and give our lives away for the truth of the Gospel, like He did, and go out with a flame?

[Joh_5:33](#), [35](#) CAB ...John... has testified to the truth... **35** He was the burning and shining lamp...

And again Jesus says to His disciples:

[Mat_5:16](#) CAB ...let your light shine [–ἵνα in this way] before men, so that they may see your good works, and they may glorify your Father who is in heaven.

And do we often wonder why our lives are so boring and uneventful? I'm pleading with you: Embrace the revolution!

I have found that church people who live in sin are typically complacent toward such greatness and will often not lift a finger to actually please God in this way.

What kind of a Legacy, and inscription on your tomb-stone, and what kind of Eulogy are you willing to leave whenever you may die? What kind of a message do you want to proclaim when you pass out of this life? After meeting and talking with countless pastors in America, I have found that most all of the preachers that I have personally met would prefer a cozy and jolly legacy that looked more like Santa clause than Moses! And quite typically they are even proud of this shame and completely despise the Biblical greatness they have rejected.

If you are not lusting after the greatness of people in the Bible like John the Baptist, then you need to repent and become a real Christian. It is amazing that Jesus linked the –bright and shining" life of

truth that we should go after with a man named John who stood up for the Biblical teaching against divorce and remarriage, even unto death!

The Divine Proclamation of The Seven Examples!

The Summaries of this great matter

When you talk about repenting of adulterous remarriage, so many people say, “but there are no examples of breaking up remarriages in the Bible” – and I say, “Excuse me?” Let it stand for all time: there are **seven examples** in the Scriptures of people who were used to demand breaking up unlawful marriages

- (1) **David** – He actually, literally broke up a remarriage by force, and returned his remarried spouse to himself for the rest of their lives!
- (2) **Jeremiah** – God reaffirmed David’s actions in the Spirit by prophesying in the same way for His divorced and remarried bride to return to Himself!
- (3) **Malachi** – Addressed the divorce and remarriage of His day and spoke of two coming messengers who would take a fervent stand against adultery, and in the mean time prepared a remnant people for the repentance from these unlawful relationships that would be brought about and carried out through two people around his time who were used to rebuild Jerusalem...
- (4) **Ezra** – Called the who land to repentance which resulted in breaking up unlawful marriages
- (5) **Nehemiah** – a man who also responded in zeal along with Ezra to break up forbidden marriages at multiple times, reinforcing the Words given through Malachi against the treachery of these men
- (6) **John the Baptist** – pioneered the proclamation of the New Covenant preparing the way for Jesus, and literally spilled his blood being unjustly murdered in his astounding stand against adulterous remarriage!
- (7) **Jesus** – in Luk_16 approved of the martyrdom of John the Baptist, directly linking it with the New Covenant teaching against adulterous remarriage, following the same pattern spoken through Malachi by linking the “messengers of the covenant” (Jesus and John) with their prophesied condemnation of divorce (Malachi 2), and testimony against the adultery of remarriage (Malachi 3)

Let no more nonsense be propagated! From the faithful and profound foreshadowing examples of the righteous and prophetic David, to the demands announced and proclaimed by Jesus, the Scriptures tell us at least seven times by example that we must repent and break up the adultery of unlawful marriages. While so many debate theologies these seven examples demand obedience in our day, because you cannot contradict what these men actually did.

The Scriptures have perfectly instructed us. Seven times they demand from us obedience by example. It is time to repent of adulterous remarriage.

CHAPTER 3 – “THE EXCEPTION CLAUSE”

1. Introductory Facts About the Exception Clause

What is “The Exception Clause”?

In a few powerful Words, Jesus all at once completely condemned the wickedness of the hard-hearted Jews who divorced their wives and sent them out of their houses on the basis of the permission in [Deu_24:1-4](#). (See [Mat_19:3-8](#); [Mar_10:3-9](#)). On top of this Jesus condemned them further by announcing that remarriage was actually adultery, which now left the Pharisees as hard hearted adulterers under Jesus’ law! (Compare [Mat_19:9](#); [Mar_10:10-12](#); [Mat_5:31-32](#); [Luk_16:14-18](#)).

When people talk about the “exception clause” today they are usually referring to [Mat_19:9](#), because they like to think that it allows an exception to both divorce and remarry without such sin. If you press people for more, you can usually get them to admit that the exception is actually first taught by Jesus in [Mat_5:31-32](#), but they rarely like to use this passage as the bases for what they believe because they don’t really have that many convincing ideas on how to make it look like the exception is permitting remarriage as well as divorce in that passage. But why would the same teaching in two different places within the same book leave the readers with two very different conclusions? And with all of the other passages* that teach on marriage and divorce, why is it that the exception clause is not even mentioned once anywhere else in the entire New Testament beyond Matthew?

My great aspiration is that by the end of this chapter you will be able to see that the exception clause is not at all the great “loophole” to Jesus’ teaching to allow divorce and remarriage as most people have made it out to be.

[* Most of these marriage passages are covered in depth in chapter 2, and are also referenced throughout this chapter]

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What’s Behind the Modern Use of “The Exception Clause”? – Wicked People Always Want to Break God’s Yokes

We have seen through many verses so far that the major and clear emphasis throughout the Bible on marriage is that it is a life-long permanent unbreakable union sealed by God. The Bible does much to communicate with certainty that only death ends this covenant.

Despite this, man’s heart still looks for excuses and ways out. Unfortunately, the wicked heart of man will always seek to dismiss himself from the responsibility of the stringent demands and “restrictions” of righteousness. This unfaithfulness is described by the Psalmist who speaks of the wicked, starting first by quoting his plot:

[Psa_2:3-5](#) CAB saying, Let us break through Their bonds, and cast away Their yoke [or fastener] from us. **4** He that dwells in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall mock them. **5** Then shall He speak to them in His anger, and trouble them in His fury.

Note: Here in the [LXX](#), this is the same root word which Jesus uses to describe marriage, when He calls it a yoke’ or fastener,’ (i.e. “...what God has fastened/ yoked together...” [Mat_19:6](#)).

The stakes are high. May we escape this judgment. May we never be found as those who seek to “break bonds” (including marriage “yokes”) that God has made binding. But because of his wicked nature, man’s rebellion will consistently seek to deny every “bond” and “yoke” of righteousness, including that of marriage

We can see this wickedness greatly manifested quite often in the realm of what many often call “The Exception Clause.” In many cases, this becomes the first step people take in attempting to “break” the “bond” of marriage in this way. It is the most popular misrepresentation that people have used to teach that marriage could be dissolved apart from death, if their spouse commits adultery. Although the Scriptures never actually say this, people usually teach this in reference to two passages in Matthew:

[Mat 5:32 KJB](#) ... whoever divorces his wife, except for a report of prostitution [i.e. *fornication*], causes her to commit adultery...

[Mat 19:9 KJB](#) ... And I say to you, anyone divorces his wife, only for prostitution [i.e. *fornication*] ...

But although this “exception” is made for limited reasons and specifically explained by passages in Matthew, and others elsewhere, it never attempts to indicate that the one flesh bond is “broken” as the majority of Protestants would like to have it say. But before we say much in the way of direct explanation, we need to thoroughly consider some very big picture problems and wide-spread misunderstandings...

Common Myths About Adultery Freeing a Person to Remarry

Did you know the saying “god helps those who help themselves” is not in the Bible? This saying actually came to us originally through an ancient pagan (polytheistic) story called, “Hercules and the Wagoneer,” and was a proverb about the Greek gods helping those who help themselves, and was eventually rephrased, reintroduced and re-popularized through Benjamin Franklin so it could then intrude among professing (but uninformed) monotheists. This pagan saying is not only **not** in the Bible at all, but it is actually very much contrary to everything the Bible teaches (ex. [Rom 5:6-8](#); [Eph 2:1-10](#); [Isa 25:4](#); Also carefully compare and consider: [Isa 45:2](#); [Exo 14:13](#); [1Sa 12:16](#); [Luk 24:49](#)/[Act 1:4](#), [8](#); [Lam 3:26](#); [Mat 10:19-20](#)/[Luk 12:11-12](#); [1Ch 14:14-15](#); [Gen 49:18](#); [Jer 3:23](#)). How about “God works in mysterious ways” and “Cleanliness is next to godliness,”? – It turns out that many of our charming (but sometimes unbiblical) sayings are not in the Bible at all.

So often, humans eagerly repeat faulty information, even when it has no real bases at all. Most of us all know that there was a time when people, even church leaders, commonly promoted the idea that the earth was flat. In the same way nearly everywhere I have gone, especially among church people, it is commonly repeated that a person is allowed to both divorce and marry another if their spouse cheats on them: (1) There are some places in the Bible that tolerated divorce and remarriage, but it was never because a spouse was divorced for adultery (because this was to be punished by death); (2) Again, even in the one case where divorce is righteously given in the New Covenant, remarriage is not allowed. – It may come as a surprise to many who read this and hear this for the first time, but there is nowhere in all of Scripture where it says that a person can divorce and remarry if their spouse is unfaithful. While there are places in the Old Testament where a person is commanded to have their wife **killed** if she committed adultery ([Lev 20:10](#); [Deu 22:22-24](#)) there are no actual places in Scripture, Old or New Testament, that sanction divorce and remarriage for adultery. “Execution and remarriage” was once a possibility under God in some cases of adultery, and divorce without remarriage is now a possibility (in the one case of prostitution) but divorce and remarriage (although we know it has happened in spite of the Scriptures) has never been a moral solution offered by any Scripture for how people ought to deal with adultery.

Many clever myths have some basis for being believed and repeated, just as the earth seemed to be flat to many people's observation. So also many of our cheap _bible versions' are at the forefront of trying to reinforce common myths by often adding extra words to reinforce the common insanity held by church goers, although these things have no real basis in the Hebrew or Greek Bible (as we can see in a moment). But while misperceptions about the nature of the earth are very unfortunate, when it comes to myths about marriage the stakes are much higher, and the (moral) consequences much more destructive when people fall due to misperception and misinformation.

Just as Benjamin Franklin was used to take a wicked pagan belief and repackage it so that he ended up enabling professing monotheists to fulfill pagan philosophical lusts by cloaking it as a monotheistic (and eventually -ehristian") saying, so also people who are supposed to be representing the Bible to us today have taken wicked pagan lusts contrary to everything Jesus actually taught, and passed them off as having somehow originated in the Bible. But if you help yourself to another spouse after the first one was unfaithful, beware, because you have just established yourself in the realm of paganism! This is because in the realm of reverencing and worshiping demons, truly -the gods help them that help themselves" as Aesop (620-564 BC) is said to report to us, but as for Jesus and the Bible, God has never promoted such things for us.

I know that saying all of this, raises lots of questions, but please hold on and be diligent in the following sections and chapters as we take a look at all of the Scriptures that answer these questions. **Note:** with these next two points we are not primarily focused on -proving" anything yet, but are mostly introducing some very basic considerations that should be taken into account while reading throughout the rest of this book.

Adultery Cannot Be The One Exception Allowing Divorce

Please carefully consider the problems and contradictions that arise if you say adultery is the exception for divorce in Matthew 5

- **"Heaven" proves that adultery cannot be the exception** – After Jesus takes His Bride (the assembly of real disciples) home with Him, **there is no divorce**. The parable has to be consistent in order to be a worthy parable: if God may temporarily divorce His bride before marriage (which He in fact does do in the Old Testament) and there is no divorce after the divine marriage, then it absolutely has to be the same way for moral marriage among humans today [Note: this is covered in much more detail toward the end of this chapter]
- If you don't forgive people (including spouses) from the heart, even _seventy times seven, 'neither will God forgive you
- The women married to lost men were never permitted to divorce their mostly immoral pagan husbands in first Corinthians seven. [Note: this is set to be more thoroughly covered in Chapter 4 if God permits]
- In just about every case where a couple wants to divorce, eventually someone has done or will do something adulterous. If the -one exception" were adultery, then it would no longer be an exception, but the standard practice. (This kind of explains why so many people are getting divorced and remarried in the church today doesn't it?). Adultery as the -exception" to divorce will inevitably make the few who -do not get divorced" the real exception to the rule when all is said and done, and our modern cultures are already well advanced along these lines.
- Jesus repeatedly uses the word adultery throughout the surrounding context of the exception clause. As some have said: if adultery were the exception which Jesus desired to establish, there is absolutely no reason why He should suddenly switch words at this critical point, however, if Jesus desired to distinguish the exception from adultery then this would be perfectly reasonable grounds for Jesus to switch words when it came time for the exception – Adultery in Greek is -ενηρ σ" (*moichaō*), (G3429) and is used in [Mat_5:27](#) (1 time), v. [28](#) (1 time), v. [32](#) (2 times). – This makes

four times which Jesus uses the word **“adultery”** [μοιχεῖσθαι (moichaō)] in Matthew five, and it is only when He gets to the exception that he switches the word to **“fornication”** (πορνεία), (G4202). – saying adultery is the exception leaves no reasonable explanation for this strategic and particular application of these words

Adultery Cannot Allow Remarriage

We can say with even more certainty that it is impossible that adultery should allow remarriage

If you say that adultery allows remarriage...

- You make adultery and or remarriage (committed by the first guilty spouse) permit the second, initially innocent spouse to repeat the very same crime (remarriage) which Jesus condemned in the first place
- You presume to say that one person’s sin makes it non-sinful for the other person to turn around and do the exact same thing!
- You forget a most basic element of ‘childhood morality’ – **“Two wrongs do not make a right”**
- You are not preaching anything better than **“An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,”** – **but even with this law Jesus amended the standards** for the New Covenant (**Mat_5:38-48**), and in fact, you are promoting something much worse than this!
- As some say: If adultery frees the innocent spouse, an innocent spouse can become **“unmarried”** from their spouse and be living in fornication with them without even knowing it, all while remaining faithful to their God-joined spouse, (whom we now say is *not their spouse*, if indeed adultery ends one flesh)
- You make at least one person in every divorce allowed to remarry because, after divorce, nearly everyone gets remarried. – This means that at least half of all remarriage would not be adultery like Jesus said it was, and if Jesus was a liar, then we have no hope at all for any truth to begin with!
- You ignore the clarifying, universal statement which Jesus gave after both exception statements (Mat 5 and 19): ‘whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery’ – It is very clear that Jesus still condemns remarriage as adultery, whether or not a woman is innocent or guilty.

BIG Dilemma: The Exception is Only in Matthew!

Not only is the exception not **“adultery”** as most assume it is, but it is a big deal to notice that it is only in the Gospel of Matthew:

The 7 Primary, New Covenant Passages on the Marriage Law

1	Mat_5:27-32	← Exeptive statements only in Matthew	
2	Mat_19:3-10	5	Rom_7:2-3
3	Mar_10:2-12	6	1Co_7:10-11
4	Luk_16:16-18	7	1Co_7:39

To Mark’s predominantly Gentile audience, to Luke’s prestigious Theophilus (who received a thorough and accurate account), to the Corinthians, and even to the Romans there was not even a hint of an

exception given (especially in the Greek) when presenting the Law of marriage, divorce and remarriage!

Why are they not given one? If anyone should be informed of such a defining and altering exception, shouldn't it be someone as eager and well attested as the Most Excellent Theophilus' (Luk 1:1) is evidenced to be? Doesn't Luke say that he wrote it to Theophilus according to [θαζεμιῆο] the thoroughness of, —.having traced the course of **all things** *accurately from the first" (Luk 1:3 WEB)?

[* ἀθξιβῶο (akribōs) – i.e. thoroughly, to the —utmost point" (this is where we get our word —accurate" from)]

If the exception is what we usually make it out to be, we should consider all of the problems that this raises... and we can start with the fact that it is not practical that such an important and defining detail would have been neglected to every other audience besides Matthew's, especially when someone as exact and thorough as Luke is writing (not to mention the thoroughness of Paul's letter on this to the Corinthians)!

The fact that the majority of all the Bible verses on —The Law of Marriage" seem to make it absolute, while Matthew is used by preachers to teach that it is not, is the conflict that I call the —Red Flag" of divorce and remarriage when it comes to the exception clause. If five passages clearly make absolute statements and Matthew is used by people to make them —not absolute," we ought to question our usage of Matthew and look carefully into what we have done that may have distorted it out of being consistent with the absoluteness of the outnumbering clearer verses. We should not overthrow the clear and absolute consensus of many Scriptures to establish and hold to what ends up being a shaky understanding of one passage.

Obviously, the Bible is not contradictory, but what we have made of it in English is highly problematic. Seeing these things, I would hope for us that there would be something of a —Red Flag" to us saying, —Something's missing in our understanding of Matthew and this teaching" – seeing that what we think is a wide exception was actually deemed non-critical to mention in the other references as we have just seen. If this teaching can stand and be proclaimed with or without this exception, then it is obvious that it is not a defining element of it, and if the exception, is in fact, not a huge exception that defines this entire teaching, then we have certainly done something **very** wrong in our interpretation of it!

If Matthew's exception was —highly altering" as we use it in the church, then it should have also been included in all of the passages. But if it is completely compliant with the absoluteness of the other passages, then we can easily understand that it addressed something particular to Matthew's audience that did not alter the teaching given in the other accounts.

Doesn't it seem far more likely that the message is uniform, rather than suggesting that there were very different things taught to different audiences by interpreting Matthew the way we do? Do we assume (as some heretics do) that all of the other passages were wrong, and it took the corrective writing of Matthew to straighten things out? – If we are anything —Christian" at all, we know this is impossible.

Because of all of this, I hope you can see that this exception begs for explanation in light of what most people have taught about marriage today, much in the name of Matthew's exception.

So why is the exception only in Matthew and not in the other five references?

2. Does *Porneia* Show that the Exception Is for Adultery or Prostitution/ "Fornication"?

In Jewish culture, divorce regularly happened before and after certain couples got married (Mat 1:18-19). In this section we need to explore which of these cases are intended in Jesus' exception.

Divorce and Remarriage Repentance Revolution - www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com

The Very Basics of “Fornication” vs. “Adultery” in English

When talking about the exception clause it sometimes becomes necessary to pause and first establish some basic English vocabulary so we can know what we are talking about in our own language before moving on into Greek and the thorough details behind the exception clause in Matthew. If we just start with looking at English, I find that so many people don’t know, or are not sure what the difference is between fornication and adultery in their own language.

Note: I am only giving a very basic, and simplified explanation here. For a much more thorough explanation for the English terminology summarized here, see the appendix entitled, [–Exception Clause Research](#)”

(1) Fornication is basically “voluntary sexual intercourse engaged in by an unmarried person”

[American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th edition, “fornication,” <http://www.yourdictionary.com/fornication> (accessed January 12, 2011).]

Of course, beyond this basic, short definition there are many variations, extensions, and even misunderstandings to this (some of which we are about to cover in a bit), but this definition is the basic underlying definition for a number of languages, including American English (which is generally the definition I am using for the purposes of this book). Unfortunately, so many well-meaning people have confused “fornication” with so many other things, including “adultery.”

(2) Adultery is basically “voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and someone other than his or her lawful spouse.”

[Random House Unabridged Dictionary, “adultery,” <http://dictionary.infoplease.com/adultery> (accessed January 12, 2011).]

So, for a very basic, simple, big-picture English understanding, **fornication** is sex before marriage, and **adultery** is sex outside of an existing marriage. Even when reading English words in relatively accurate English Bible translations we should be able to recognize that both fornication before entering marriage and adultery after entering marriage are sexual sins that God condemns with fervent opposition and warnings of eternal fire.

Scenarios of Sexual Sin

Scenario 1

Unmarried Person (commits fornication) + Unmarried Person (commits fornication)

In this case neither person commits “adultery,” because neither person is married. Both people commit fornication.

Scenario 2

Married Person (commits adultery) + Married Person (commits adultery)

In this case neither person commits “fornication,” because both of these people are married to different people. Both people commit adultery.

Scenario 3

Unmarried Person (commits fornication) + Married Person (commits adultery)

- Although the unmarried person's personal crime may be considered one of –fornication” we see that the unmarried person may join in adultery with a married person;
- In the same way, a married person may participate in an unmarried person's –fornication,” yet the married person's personal crime is specifically called –adultery”;
- As a –combined crime” this scenario is sometimes called, –single adultery” (see [Mat_5:27-30](#) and compare [Lev_20:10](#)) because although one person may indeed be –single,” yet the married person brings –adultery” into the scenario, and this adulterous aspect can overtake the –unmarried” aspect and end up summarizing the whole crime as –adultery”;
- Because of this, fornication may sometimes include adultery by extension, and adultery may include cases where there is fornication, yet fornication generally speaks of an –unmarried” aspect of a crime, while adultery speaks of an aspect where someone is sinning against their marriage.

***Porneia* – One of the Main Exception Words We Need to Understand**

When Jesus says, except for a word [or] report of prostitution [πνεξλε αο (porneias)]’ ([Mat_5:32](#)) there is much debate over what exactly is meant. Does this refer to *adultery* (as most understand it today) or does it refer more specifically to *fornication*, or some other variation of sexual sin? Although there are many other important things that we need to consider, to begin digging into these things we need to start by understanding the Greek word *porneia*. But we must not be as most people who take a careless and superficial approach to these needs instead of actually giving an answer, because if we are not different than others who claim to define *porneia* then we will just be pushing another worthless and filthy opinion like everyone else! Since it is clear that damnation awaits the irrational, we have to courageously dig deeper than that and insist on the saving integrity that is attracted to an answer that is thorough, accurate, and complete so we can understand these things with honesty and integrity and actually honor God with a blameless proclamation.

How Translations Represent and Misrepresent *Porneia*

Almost all older, original and or literal translations of the exception clause have consistently said –fornication” or –whoredom” [i.e. *prostitution*]. **For Example:** the [Latin Vulgate](#) (–fornicationem” **405** A.D.), The Bishops Bible (1568), The Geneva Bible (–whoredome” – 1599), [KJV](#) (1611-1769), that of John Nelson Darby (1884), The Revised Version (1885), YLT (whoredom – 1898), ASV (1901), the Spanish Reina-Valera Bible (SRV; –fornicación” – 1909), and many more!

Note: –fornicationem” in Latin as well as some other languages was used to speak of sex before marriage as well as prostitution in general

We see that at least as early as **405** A.D. the exception has been represented as fornication (–fornicationem”) by the [Latin Vulgate](#) and has consistently been represented as either –fornication” or –whoredom” [i.e. *prostitution*] by straightforward Bible translations on into English for many, many years. For the most part, ever since the exception exited the Greek language, the exception has continued to be represented this way until people started drastically changing their minds about what they wanted the Bible to say about marriage and divorce.

Defining *Porneia* – Charting the Linguistic Development of *Porneia*, and Every Single Occurrence and Variation Throughout the Entire Bible!

Because there has been so much foolish debate and sloppy speculation as to the specific meaning of *porneia* throughout countless writings and discussions about the exception clause in English and other

languages, I determined to compile the most complete documentation and comprehensive analysis that I have ever seen done to thoroughly answer this great need in a way which cannot honestly be contradicted. When it comes to defining *porneia*, you do not have to simply take my word for it; with the following charts I am happy to present a complete solution to fully demonstrate the development of *porneia* as well as cover every single possible use of this word in the entire Bible, including the Greek Old Testament **LXX**! – From this compilation of thorough research, as explained throughout the next few points, we can have an extremely thorough, accurate, and truly Biblical solution and definition for understanding *porneia*.

As much as possible, by the kindness and help of God, I am ambitious to confront this long-debated question and give the most truthful and undeniable answer that has ever been given in English.

Chart Notes – Key Things to Remember While Reading all of the Following Charts

- The following charts are largely a “lineage of words” (or “etymology”). Although most etymologies are often brief and limited, I have designed this “lineage of words” to basically integrate a larger number of related key words than usual. In this case we are including more key words so that we can actually cover every aspect of the development of the primary prostitution-word that Jesus uses. In this way we can see how numerous words relate to each other and we can make a more thorough comparison of them. We are going through all of this to better comprehend the general progression of terminologies as they eventually develop into the primary word used in the exception clause.
- When representing each word from Greek into English (instead of resorting to the shameful scandals of **paraphrasing**) I have prioritized the exact, literal, and direct representations of each of these words throughout the following charts, since it goes without saying that representing things honestly will obviously prioritize truth over opinion. I have done this to first establish a practical and transparent bases for understanding each of these words, that is exact and reliable, and then afterward I have sought to draw out all of the contextual and figurative implications (as much as the capacity of this analysis seemed to allow).
- Also note (as usual) I have diligently sought to write the most concise definitions possible, as much as I have been helped to do this so far. If you have any reliable corrections or clarifications please let me know (especially since I am constantly laboring that every detail may have reliability and integrity).
- Please be aware that the first three charts are essentially for comparison and background purposes only; the fourth chart that follows this directly pertains to *porneia*.
- Scriptural references are taken directly from the **GNT** and **LXX**. The Greek New Testament (**GNT**) references include a compilation of New Testament textual variations, and the Old Testament **LXX** references include a comparison with the Hebrew **MT**. The Old Testament references also include the “**Apocryphal**” books (from Greek), because it is clear that these books also directly affected the language and theology of the **GNT**.

Note 1: What about Hebrew vs. Greek? – The Hebrew equivalent counterpart for *porneia* is זָנָה” (*zānāh*). *Zānāh* (from Hebrew) is virtually always consistent with *porneia* (from Greek) in translation. The various forms of *zānāh* and *porneia* follow each other by consistently correlating together throughout the Hebrew and Greek Old Testaments, so that when you look in the Hebrew it says *zānāh* and when you look in the Greek it says *porneia*. Since Jesus gave the exception in Greek (much like it appears in the Greek **LXX**) we are seeking to define the primary exception word in Greek. Since Greek is the ultimate target language for the exception, and the Greek virtually always matches the Hebrew in translation, we are mostly focusing on and covering Greek for now (with a few references to Hebrew whenever it may be pertinent).

As long as you might be careful to not lose your bearings and get disoriented, you would basically arrive at the exact same conclusions, with the same primary base of Scriptural references, no matter which language you focused on (as partly documented in the “Exception Clause Research” appendix). The Greek will basically give us all the same references that the Hebrew will, along with a significant number of additional references due to source text variations as well as a wider base of text to search through. – It is only English and other languages like it that really mess up the consistency when considering such concepts and words in cases like this. So, because the Greek is sufficient for understanding the exception, we only need to cover Greek to document *porneia* throughout the Old and New Testaments (i.e. the **GNT** and **LXX**) and in this way we can stay consistent with the target language in which Jesus gave the exception.

Although translational consistency is not really an issue when documenting *porneia*, the main places where we have to make a distinction between Hebrew and Greek is when there are source text variations. Whenever a direct reference to prostitution is in the current Greek LXX but not the current Hebrew MT I have marked each of these occurrences with “-LXX,” which is the normal and accepted convention for such cases. The exception to this is the Greek “Apocryphal” books, which generally do not have Hebrew counter parts to them (except for a few portions found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and a few other locations).

Note 2: I have labored for countless hours over numerous years to gather and compile every form of *porneia* possible in the entire Bible throughout various Greek copies of the Old and New Testaments, and I deeply appreciate it if you happen to find any references that I may have missed.

Note 3: The following resources have been used and consulted to compile the definitions for this point:

(1) The Entire GNT and much of the LXX – The Bible does a good job of defining words; (2) Strong’s; (3) Word Study*; (4) The “Analytical Lexicon to the Septuagint” (ALS)*; (5) Google Translate [<http://translate.google.com>] – i.e. for a Modern Greek comparison; (6) A few other resources (For numbers 1-3, see the Bibliography).

[* Although all of these resources can be very informative tools, it should go without saying that some resources were used with particular caution.]
[All resources (1-6) were used out of many years of experience and much research]

Final Preparations Before Reading The Following Charts

In seeking to explore and understand the linguistic background of *porneia* as well as every single occurrence and variation of this term throughout the entire Bible, the following series of charts begin by drawing out the fundamental building blocks of this word. With the fourth and last chart, we move on to give a brief summary and analysis of *porneia* itself by giving every reference for *porneia* in the Greek Bible (LXX and GNT). This is done in order to document every possible application of *porneia* and take note whenever a reference particularly contributes to understanding this term. As a result of this, we can establish a foundation with the facts condensed in these charts that can help us toward attaining a sound and thorough, Biblical awareness of *porneia* which is further developed as we continue throughout this chapter.

(1) Some Basic Greek Directional Words With “π” (pi) in Them

Greek	Pronunciation	Strong’s Number	Meaning & more
παξ	<i>pará</i>	G3844	<i>next to (fig. near)</i>
πξ ο	<i>prós</i>	G4314	<i>toward (or to)</i>
επιη	<i>epí</i>	G1909	<i>upon (or on)</i>
άπ	<i>apo</i>	G575	<i>away and or from</i>
ύπ	<i>hupo</i>	G5259	<i>under (or beneath)</i>

What can we see from this chart? – Although there are many more Greek directional words we could consider, have you noticed that in this small sample compilation of very basic and common directional words, I have intentionally included words that all have one letter in common? I have given these examples to demonstrate how frequently the letter “π” (pi)* is used in directional words. As these basic directional words develop into more complex terms, do you suppose that this might eventually contribute to defining the Greek word *porneia*?

[* **Note:** the letter “π” (pi) in Greek is similar to the letter “P” in English. (When speaking in Greek, it is not actually pronounced “pie,” as many English speakers mispronounce it)]

(2) Per-Words – From Words that Mean *Directionally Crossing Borders*, to Words that Mean *Selling in Another Location*

Greek	Pronunciation	Strong's Number	Meaning & more
ὑπέρ	<i>hyper</i>	G5228 ALS p. 551	A primary preposition: A very basic and common relational/ positional word (a preposition) literally meaning, <i>over or above</i> ; In one form or the other, this word occurs hundreds and hundreds of times in the LXX and GNT. (Note: <i>hyper</i> itself comes from an even more basic root word: <i>peráō</i>).
περὶ	<i>peirō</i>	No Strong's Number Not in ALS	—to <u>perce</u> —* through (* Strong's on G4008; also see G1289 (G4687); G3984; G3987; G4044; Word Study on G4198)
περὶ ἄνω	<i>peráō</i>	No Strong's Number Not in ALS	To pass beyond or through/ go further; This is a very basic and —primary word— which is used as a bases for many other Greek words; (See G4097; Word Study on G4205)
πέραν οἱ περὶ αὐτῶν	<i>peran</i>	G4008 From <i>peirō</i> ; ALS p. 433	An adverb/ —modifier—: Beyond – primarily: a qualification of extended location, as in, —beyond the Jordan— (Mat 4:15); fig. <i>in addition to</i>
περὶ ἄνω οἱ περὶ αὐτῶν	<i>perátēs</i>	No Strong's Number; ALS p. 433	A noun (person): A <i>gone-beyond</i> (fig. <i>crossed-over</i>) person (esp. <i>across the Euphrates River</i>); only in Gen 14:13 LXX (περὶ ἄνω – masc.); fig. —wanderer, migrant— (ALS p. 433) [This is a Greek equivalent to the word, —Hebrew—: H5680 (& compare H5677; H5676; H5674; Greek transliterations: G1445; G1443)]
πέραν οἱ περὶ αὐτῶν (as in Modern Greek)	<i>pernēmi</i>	No Strong's Number From <i>peráō</i> ; Not in ALS	To sell/ spend That is, you have typically traveled —beyond— the borders of your home city to another location to buy and sell; (This word is not directly used in the GNT nor LXX [they seem to use G4097 instead] but <i>pernāō</i> is a basis for G4204 and G4205)

Although this chart (chart 2) has covered how *per*-words can go from meaning “crossing boundaries” to “selling things,” very similar principles can be seen with *pro* and *por*-words in the next chart (chart 3).

(3) Pro and Por-Words – From Words that Mean Going Somewhere, to Words that Mean Making Things “Go” into Your Possession

Greek	Pronunciation	Strong's Number	Meaning & more
πρ	<i>pro</i>	G4253 ALS p. 460	A primary preposition: <i>Fore/ before/ in front of/ prior to</i> (in relation to location or time)
πρ σ (as seen previously)	<i>prós</i>	G4314 ALS p. 464	A preposition: <i>Toward (or to)</i> a place/ time/ purpose/ goal – with numerous fig. meanings (as seen in ALS p. 464)
πρ νο	<i>póros</i>	No Strong's Number Not in ALS	“ a passing or passage”/ “ a way” (Word Study on G4198 and Strong's on G4200; also see G1711–G1713; G2141; Word Study: G639; G2585)
πρ ρσ	<i>pórrō</i>	G4206 Compare G4207-G4208 ALS p. 457	An adverb/ -modifier”: <i>At/ from a distance/ far</i> <i>away/ far forward/ far</i> <i>ahead/</i>
πρ ε νκαη	<i>poreuomai</i>	G4198 From <i>póros</i> ; ALS p. 456	An Action-Verb: <i>To proceed/ go/ walk/</i> <i>march through/ travel</i>
πρ ε α or πρ ε ας	<i>poreia</i>	G4197 From G4198 (somewhat related to <i>póros</i>) ALS p. 456	A noun: the <u>concept</u> or <u>event</u> of A journey/ a way/ path / route/ course of travel i.e. the route or the journey itself (compare: G1711–G1713)
πρ δσ	<i>poridzō</i>	No Strong's Number; ALS p. 457	An action verb: Lit. <i>To affect (idzō)</i> <i>something and make it go</i> <i>into your possession”; To</i> <i>get/ obtain (something); to</i> <i>acquire; fig. to make</i> <i>profit” (ALS p. 457)</i>
πρ ησκο or πρ ησκοῦ	<i>porismos</i>	G4200 ALS p. 457	A noun: the concept or practice of Acquisition; fig. means of livelihood, gaining, gain” (ALS p. 457) Note: this word often seems to have negative connotations in Modern Greek as well as in 1Ti 6:5-6 (which is partly understandable given its association with G4204 and G4205, as seen in the next chart)

What can we see from these charts? – We see that *pro* and *por*-words [chart 3] can progress from simply describing “going somewhere” to meaning “acquisition,” much like *per*-words [chart 2] can go from meaning “crossing boundaries” to “selling things”. Although none of these words documented in the last three charts directly speak to sexual sin, understanding this background of words is essential for thoroughly understanding all of the implications of *traveling* and eventually *making money* that are behind the word *porneia*, since this lineage of words eventually begets this very important term.

[Note: A large amount of extra research with many more examples of related –distance” words in Greek (as well as some Hebrew) can be found in the appendix entitled, –Exception Clause Research”]

(4) Porn-Words – The Words that Pertain to Selling People – Every Occurrence of Every Form of Porneia in the Entire Bible!

Notice (by comparing the previous charts) that when you keep the “πόρ” (por) and add the Greek letter “ν” (nu) to this lineage of words, then we go from talking about selling things to selling people (prostitution)

Greek	Pronunciation	Strong's Number	Meaning & more
<p>π ἄρ ν ο ο γ π ἄρ ν ο</p>	<i> pornos </i>	G4205 From <i>pernēmi</i>	<p>A masculine noun (person): A male who is involved in the sale of the body (sexually) for profit (as a means of living) – either as a male prostitute himself, or (by application) any man who is with women who do this sort of thing; a whoremonger/ fornicator</p>
<p>10 verses: 1Co5:9-11 (Compare: 1Co5:1 (<i>porneia</i> – G4202); 1Co5:8 (“wickedness” G4189); 1Co5:13 (G4190)); 1Co6:9 (clearly fornication); Eph5:5 (compare Eph5:3 (G4202)); 1Ti1:10 (does not encompass homosexuality); Heb12:16 (see next chap...); Heb13:4 (fornication – a man having sex before marriage vs. a man doing it within marriage); Rev21:8; Rev22:15; (compare Pro23:21 LXX)</p>			
<p>π ἄρ ε ο γ π ἄρ ε</p>	<i> πόρνῃ </i>	G4204 –Feminine of G4205” (Strong’s)	<p>A feminine noun (person): A female who sells herself (sexually) for profit (as a means of living) – a female prostitute/ whore, or (by application) any female who fornicates</p>
<p>48 Verses: Gen 34:31 (fornication – Shechem vs. Dinah & Family); Gen 38:15, 21-22 (fornication – Judah & Tamar; ‘pregnant out of wedlock’ = sex before marriage: Gen 38:24; [shameful: Gen 38:23]); Lev 21:7, 14 (fornication – The Priest’s Marriage Restrictions); Deu 23:2 (a prostitute’s child [LXX]; sometimes = v. 3) Deu 23:17-18 (female (πόρνε) and male (πνῆλεός) prostitution/ fornication forbidden [i.e. (unmarried) “daughters”]; compared to “the price of a dog”); Jos 2:1; Jos 6:17, 23, 25 (fornication – Rahab the harlot/ professional fornicator); Jdg 11:1 (Jephthah...the son of a harlot); Jdg 16:1 (fornication – Sampson); 1Ki 3:16 (fornication – Solomon judging 2 unmarried prostitutes [i.e. not ‘cohabiting’ (married) with a man 1Ki 3:17]; 1Ki 12:24 only in some LXX copies (called “π”); 1Ki 21:19 (LXX, not MT [LXX = 20:19]); 1Ki 22:38 (LXX & MT: known fornicators washed in the same place); Pro 5:3 (fornication – an unwedded prostitute); Pro 6:26 (adultery [Pro 6:24 (LXX); Pro 6:29; Pro 6:32; Pro 6:34; Lev 20:10] – i.e. a married woman who dresses like a prostitute: Pro 7:10); Pro 29:3 (wasteful); Isa 1:21 (lodging); Isa 23:15-16 (singing); Isa 57:3 (adulterers and the prostitute [LXX]; see: Isa 57:3-9 esp. Isa 57:9 [πνῆλεός – LXX]); Jer 3:3 (fornication during betrothal [...]; Jer 2:2; as a virgin [παρθένο]; Jer 2:32-33); Jer 5:7 (“they committed adultery, and ‘lodged in harlots’ houses [‘ ἐλὲν ἐν οἰκῶν πόρνην ἁμαρτῶν]” (CAB)); Eze 16:30-31 (compare related Greek in Eze 16:24 LXX; Eze 16:15-17; Eze 16:20; Eze 16:22; Eze 16:24-26; Eze 16:28; Eze 16:30-42; Eze 16:45-48; Eze 16:51-59); Eze 16:35; Eze 23:43 (“commit adultery...And...also ‘gone a-whoring after the manner of a harlot [‘ θὰι ἔργα πόρνης θὰι αὐτῆς ἐμπεπόρνησεν.]” (CAB)); Eze 23:44 (compared to [not equated with] adultery); Hos 4:14 (also see v. 13, fornication – contrasted with adultery; unwedded immorality vs. wedded immorality); Joe 3:3 (sometimes 4:3); [LXX: “given... boys to harlots” (CAB)]; Nah 3:4 [“sells the nations by...fornication, and... sorceries” (CAB)]; Mat 21:31; Mat 21:32; Luk 15:30; 1Co 6:15-16 (fornication – previously contrasted with adultery: 1Co 6:9]; Heb 11:31; Jas 2:25; Rev 17:1, 5, 15, 16; Rev 19:2 [compare these last references with 2Ki 9:22; Rev 2:20-23 (τῆς γλαῖθου ἰεὺδ βαι) – the/ that woman Jezebel (Byzantine texts additionally have: “συν,” making it ‘your wife Jezebel!)];</p>			
<p>π ν ἄρ ε α ο γ π ν ἄρ ε α</p>	<i> porneía </i>	G4202 from G4203	<p>The main feminine noun: The concept/ act of/ crime of... A female selling herself (sexually) for profit (as a means of living); prostitution/ whoredom, or (by application) fornication; fig. sex outside of marriage</p>
<p>62 Verses: Gen 38:24 (fornication – Judah & Tamar); Num 14:33 (spiritual); 2Ki 9:22 (“the harlotries [πορνησιαι] of your mother Jezebel” (CAB); compare: 2Ki 9:30; Pro 7:5-10 (etc.); Jer 4:30; Eze 23:40-45); Isa 47:10 (LXX: that of your prostitution (Jos.Trans.); “shame”); Isa 57:9 (LXX: “increased...them that are far from you” (CAB)); Jer 2:20 (fornication – Jer 2:2 – during their: MT: betrothal [“בְּיָהוּדָה” אֲנִי אֲמַלְטָה]; or LXX: “perfection” [“ἐπιτελειομενη”], fig. “growing up” (NETS), or rather, fig. ‘consecration’ (as it is used in most other LXX places); Jer 2:32-33 – as a virgin [παρθενη] who fornicate); Jer 3:2 (defiled land); Jer 3:9 (betrothal fornication & adultery: “...the prostitution of her...she committed adultery” (CAB); compare: Jas 4:4); Jer 13:27 (betrothal adultery & fornication); Eze 16:15 (trusting in beauty); Eze 16:22, 25 (sex with multiple men/ “defiled your beauty” (CAB)); Eze 16:33-34, 36, 41 (last 3 refs: irony of reverse-payment! – How paid prostitution turns into plain old fornication); Eze 23:7-8 (fornication – ended virginity [“παρθενοποιουσα”] by <i>porneia</i> [esp. LXX]); Eze 23:11-22 (corruption, shame & defilement; particularly: v. 11, 14, 17-19; Eze 23:27, 29 (shame), 35 (wrath as “payment” for prostitution; compare Rev 14:8); Eze 43:7, 9 (spiritual); Hos 1:2 (woman of prostitution); Hos 2:2 (sometimes 2:4) (prostitution & adultery); Hos 2:4 (sometimes 2:6) (children of...); Hos 4:11 (also see v. 10 – linked with wine); Hos 4:12; 5:4 (last 2 refs: spirit of prostitution); Hos 6:10 (defiled); Mic 1:7 (payment for prostitution); Nah 3:4 (well loved...sorcery...sells nations); Mat 5:32 (divorce exception: ἡ γυνὴ πνῆλε ἄσ – a word/ report of fornication; Greek correlates with: Deu 22:13-21); Mat 15:19-20 (sin list – <i>porneia</i> distinguished from adultery); Mat 19:9 (divorce exception – previously limited to ‘not putting space between’ a wedded couple: Mat 19:4-6; Mar 10:6-9; confirmed by Paul: 1Co 7:10-16, 39); Mar 7:21-23 (sin list – same as Mat 15:19-20); Joh 8:41 (“We were not born of prostitution”); Act 15:20, 29; Act 21:25 (last 3 refs: basic instructions for non-Jews); Rom 1:29 (not in A-texts); 1Co 5:1 (unusual prostitution/ ‘fornication’ – with father’s wife); 1Co 6:13 (the body was not made for <i>porneia</i>!); 1Co 6:18 (the immediate solution: Flee! (as in 2Ti 2:22) – because it sins “into” [εἰς] the body); 1Co 7:2 (the (usual) long-term solution: mutually monogamous marriage – this is a definite reference to avoiding sex before marriage (fornication)); 2Co 12:21 (we have got to repent of <i>porneia</i>!); Gal 5:19-21 (sin list: disqualifies from Heaven); Eph 5:3-13 (absolutely forbidden along with ‘uncleaness’ & it disqualifies from Heaven);</p>			

Col 3:5-10 (sin list: disqualifies from Heaven); 1Th 4:3-8 (esp. v. 3, 5-6 – includes lust; abstain from it, or else suffer God's vengeance; it is stealing; includes 'breaking boundaries' (see 1Ti 5:1-2)); Rev 2:21; 9:21 (last 2 refs: refusal to repent); Rev 14:8 (repaid with wrath, as in Eze 23:35^{sup. LXX}); Rev 17:2 (wine of prostitution); Rev 17:4 (cup full of abominations...filth...); Rev 18:3 (wine/ wrath); Rev 19:2 (judgment for corruption);

<p>πνξλε σ</p>	<p><i>porneúō</i></p>	<p>G4203 From G4205</p>	<p>An Action Verb: The act of someone selling themselves (sexually) for profit (as a means of living) – <i>To commit prostitution</i>, or (by application) <i>to fornicate</i>; fig. <i>to have sex outside of marriage</i></p>
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25 Verses: Deu23:18 (Greek = v. 17 or 19); [Jdg 2:15 – because "ἐμπενξενόντων" – "they went" (CAB) is phonetically (and etymologically) related to *porneia* in Greek, some LXX texts have this as "ἐμπενξενόντων" and others as "ἐπνξλεπνλ" (G4203) "they would prostitute themselves" (NETS) – this mistake can more readily happen in Greek because of the similarity in words (compare MT), but prostitution [LXX: ἐμπεόξλεπσαλ] is in every text of Jdg 2:17]; 1Ch5:25; Psa73:27 [LXX = 72:27]; 106:39 [LXX = 105:39]; Jer3:6-8 (and see v. 9; – fornication & adultery during betrothal [as described earlier]); Eze6:9; 16:15 (beauty), 34 (reverse payment); Eze23:19 (multiplied fornication...); Hos3:3 (adultery – WAIT & be monogamous... no more **prostitution!** (after being wedded)); Hos4:10 (also see v. 11 – linked with wine); Hos4:14 (fornication vs. adultery – clear contrast); Hos4:18 ("πνξλενλτεο ἐμπεόξλεπσαλ" – double-intensification of prostitution; also: "loved dishonor"); Hos9:1 (payment for prostitution); Amo7:17 (prostitution after widowhood [compare: Gen38:6-11, 24]); 1Co6:18 (previously contrasted with adultery: 1Co6:9); 1Co10:8 (Num25:1-9; Psa106:28-29); Rev2:14, 20; 17:2; 18:3, 9;

<p>ἐθπνξλε σ</p>	<p><i>ekporneúō</i></p>	<p>G1608 From G4203; ALS p. 173</p>	<p>An Action Verb: An intensification of someone selling himself (sexually) – <i>to commit (intense) prostitution</i>: Out (<i>ek</i>) + prostitution (<i>porneúō</i>) = lit. <i>to (act) out prostitution</i>, or (by application), <i>to fornicate without restraint</i>; fig. <i>to be utterly unchaste</i>" (Strong's).</p>
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38 verses: Gen38:24 (fornication – Judah & Tamar); Exo34:15-16; Lev17:7 (last 2 refs: spiritual); Lev19:29 (fornication – do not prostitute your (unmarried) daughter); Lev20:5-6 (spiritual; but also compare v. 10 etc.); Lev21:9 (fornicating priest's daughter); Num15:39 (compare v. 40 – idolatry/ images); Num25:1 (last 2 refs: spiritual); Deu22:21 (fornication during betrothal – this is the main "betrothal chapter"); Deu31:16-17 (& see v. 18); Jdg8:27, 33; 2Ch21:11, 13; Jer3:1 (fornication – as a virgin [πνξλεπνλ]); Jer2:32-33; and compare: Jer2:2 [see MT vs. LXX]; Eze6:9; 16:16-17, 20, 26, 28, 30, 33 (reverse payment); Eze20:30; 23:3 (fornication – from virginity to sex before marriage), Eze23:5, 30, 43 ("commit adultery...And... *also gone a-whoring after the manner of a harlot [* θαι ἔξγα πόξλεο θαι ἀντη ἐμπεόξλεπσαλ] (CAB); Hos1:2 (woman & children of prostitution); Hos2:5 [sometimes 2:7] (prostituting, adulterous mother – compare Hos2:1-4 [sometimes 2:3-6]); Hos4:12 (spirit of prostitution); Hos4:13 (also see Hos4:10-18; fornication – contrasted with adultery; unwedded immorality vs. wedded immorality); Hos4:18 ("πνξλενλτεο ἐμπεόξλεπσαλ" – intensification of prostitution; also: "loved dishonor"); Hos5:3 (Israel defiled); Jud1:7 (Sodom and Gomorrah – intense prostitution [ἐθπνξλε σασαι] and "other flesh" [σαξθδο ετ ξα ο] – fig. *immorality with flesh that does not even pertain to them*);

<p>πνξληθο ογ πνξληθῆ ογ πνξληθων</p>	<p><i>pornikos</i></p>	<p>No Strong's Number; ALS p. 457</p>	<p>A description/ adjective: The quality/ attribute of (or pertaining to) selling oneself sexually – <i>whorish</i>, or (by application) <i>fornicating-ish</i>: Pro 7:10 – having a <i>prostituting-ish</i> appearance; lit. <i>having a perceivable-ness like one selling themselves (sexually) for profit</i>; Eze 16:24 (LXX) – a <i>prostituting-ish</i> house fig. <i>sex-outside-of-marriage-ish</i></p>
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<p>πνξλε νλ ογ πνξλε νυ</p>	<p><i>porneion</i></p>	<p>No Strong's Number; ALS p. 457</p>	<p>A noun: A place (a house) of selling someone (sexually) for profit; a <i>brothel, house of harlotry</i>" (ALS p. 457); a house devoted to prostitution; i.e. a place where men fornicate; Eze 16:31, 39 (LXX)</p>
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<p>πνξλνθ πνο ογ πνξλνθ πνυ</p>	<p><i>pornocopos</i></p>	<p>No Strong's Number; Made from: G4203 + G2873; ALS p. 457</p>	<p>A description/ adjective: The quality/ attribute of a man who "chops" (fig. grinds or labors) himself (into or after) a woman selling herself for profit;</p>
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		The character of a man who (repeatedly) fornicates with prostitutes; – a “harlot-chopping” type of man; lit. <i>Male-chopping-(after)-female-selling-her-self-ish-ness</i> ; Pro 23:21 (LXX)
Deuterocanonical Examples A search for “πνξλ-” words	every <u>porn</u> -word	11 Verses: Tob4:12 (πνξλείαο); Tob8:7 (πνξλείά); Wis 14:12 (πνξλείαο); [Sir9:3 (ἐταιρήνκελη)] Sir9:6 (πόξλαρ); Sir 19:2 (θνι κ ελνο τῆ π ξλη” and 1Co6:16: “ὁ θνι κ ελνο τῆ π ξλη”); Sir23:17 (ἀλξξσ πνο πόξλο ελ σώκατησξθδο αὐτν – very mysterious Greek); Sir23:22-23 (adultery – ελ πνξλεί ἐκνηρεῶξε); Sir26:9 (adultery or fornication – πνξλεία γπλαθδο – a prostitution (type of) woman; either a wife: Sir26:7 or a daughter: Sir26:10); Sir41:17 (αἰσρῶλεσξε ἀπο παξδο θαι κετξδο πεξι πνξλείαο – “Be ashamed of whoredom...” (KJV)); Sir46:11 (ἐμπεόξλεπσελ – i.e. spiritually carried “out” (ἐπ) fornication); Epistle of Jeremiah 1:9 or 10 or 11 ^{see note} ; (τεγνπο πνξλαρ); {Also see the So-Called “Psalms of Solomon” 2:11 and or 2:13}

[Deuterocanonical- Epistle of Jeremiah 1:9 or 10 or 11 – depending on which source you use: NETS = 1:10; e-Sword = Bar 6:10 (Greek)/ Bar 6:11 (Brenton)]

We see that we have gone all the way from Greek directional words, to travel words, to words that pertain to making money, and we have ultimately ended up at the prostitution words that speak to selling people. This is truly a humongous amount of information just a document one word (and we’re not even done yet)!

But when you consider how critical it is to understand the exception clause, and how thoroughly people have been misinformed, and how sloppy and irresponsible people had been when teaching about *porneia*, and how many marriages have been ruined because of the lack of integrity of pastors and Bible teachers on this word, perhaps the reader can understand why it is so important to make every effort to correct the nonsense that has been taught about *porneia*.

Please keep in mind that all of the important facts documented in these charts form the bases for a lot of what is said later throughout this chapter, and you should do well to repeatedly refer back to this point whenever we refer to the facts that have been established here.

I am very eager to give you a real answer for this word, and now that we’ve laid the foundation and documented the facts that have usually been ignored and denied, may God help us as we demonstrate the rest of what is necessary to understand *porneia* and the exception clause throughout the rest of this chapter.

Defining *Porneia* – Several Summaries of *Porneia*

(1) A Brief, Chart-Summary Definition of *Porneia*

A summary of all of the information we have just seen in the preceding charts:

- (A) *Per to Pern* – πξξ σ ” (*peráō*) – to pass beyond, becomes πξξλασ ” (*pernáō*) – to sell ^{Chart 2};
- (B) *Pern + Por* – πξλεκν ” (*pernēmi*)* – to sell ^{Chart 2} combines with πνξησκο ” (*porismos*) – acquisition / fig. – means of livelihood, gaining, gain” (ALS p. 457), (G4200) ^{Chart 3}, and the result of this is...
- (C) *Pern + Por = Porn* – this combination of *pern* ^{Chart 2} with *por* ^{Chart 3} becomes *porn* ^{Chart 4}, which generates all of the forms of, πνξλε α ” (*porneía*) – which directly means the sale of the body (sexually) for profit as a means of living, or simply, *prostitution* or *harlotry*.

[* An alternative form of πξλεκν ” (*pernēmi*) is πξξλασ ” (*pernáō*), (as seen in Modern Greek)]

We can definitely see this theme of *porneia* as —prostitution” by simply considering a few examples where *porneia* is directly linked with —payment” for immorality:

Gen 38:14-24; Deu 23:17-18, Eze 16:30-36, etc.; Hos 2:4-5, 12 (Jer 44:17-19); Hos 3:2 (in the LXX this is the same word as Hos 2:12); (Hos 2:14-15); Hos 9:1; Joe 3:3; Mic 1:7; Luk 15:30, etc.; (Rev 18:3-23)

All of this basically shows that *porneia* itself essentially comes from a combination of traveling, selling, and making a profit, which came to address selling the body for profit, but eventually addressed immorality as a whole, and often addressed fornication in particular. Beyond prostitution, *porneia* also describes (by extension) the shameful, cheap, and filthy practice of (immoral) sexual activity outside of marriage, or quite often, *before* marriage. But before we address the particular “fornication” aspect of *porneia*, let’s take some more looks at it by dissecting every part of the word.

(2) A Step-By-Step, Amplified Definition of Porneia

(A) **P**– This part of the word pertains to any of the slight “directional” aspects (or connotations) of *porneia*.

(B) **Por**– From this stem we can see that a person has not stayed within their default or native homeland, house, or location, but instead, this is the part of *porneia* that partly implies that this person is *going somewhere*, possibly even to *sell something*.

(C) **Porn**– At this point a person has not only “left the house,” but now they have stepped into selling their body and making merchandise of something that ought to never be sold, or else they are engaging in the sale of another person’s body. From this “**prn-**” stem comes all of the forms of *porneia*:

(D) **Porneia** – Once you reach *porneia*, this last bit of the word (*eia*) sums up the whole matter as a practice and a concept.

As for the application of the *porn*-stem and all of the various forms of *porneia*, we can say that this is a strong point where figuratively (and very practically) this speaks of the utter cheapening of sexuality by that which is shameful and immoral. – Making merchandise of the body very quickly implies the general atrocity of degrading and cheapening its entire essence by activating sexuality outside of marriage. Because *porn*-words are so contextually dependent, whenever you find them in the Scriptures you have to pause and reverently and thoughtfully consider in what way this immorality has taken place.

(3) Defining Porneia – Etymologically, Concordantly, and Contextually

Before I can give this three-part definition summary, I need to explain the words that I just used in the title:

(A) **Etymological Representation** – Presenting a word in the most literal and direct way possible by prioritizing the actual parts that make up the word (its root words) which typically results in **multiple words** in English to represent every part of a multifaceted word in Greek. Despite the shameful and fraudulent claims made by modern bible “translators,”* *etymological representation* is certainly the most thorough way to actually understand a word from another language (and this was demonstrated in the charts we looked at).

(B) **Concordant Representation** – Finding the **one word** in English that most accurately and literally correlates with the word in Greek.

(C) **Contextual Representation** – The various things that a word is used to address when it is applied in communication.

[* Most all modern “translators,” are under the shameful addiction of periphrastic apostasy as described under “Bible Paraphrases” in the Bibliography]

If we apply these three levels of representation to *porneia* then we can say that *porneia* is:

(A) **Etymologically** – Selling a person (sexually) for profit (as a means of living).

(B) **Concordantly** – Prostitution.

(C) **Contextually** – Sex outside of marriage in general, and often, sex before marriage (fornication) in particular.

(4) Understanding Strong's and Seeking Integrity – Why Does G4202 Seem to Definitely Include “Adultery” and “Incest”?

–**G4202 πορνεία** *por-ni'-ah* From G4203;

harlotry (including *adultery* and *incest*); figuratively *idolatry*: - fornication.” (Strong's)

As documented in more detail in the [Bibliography](#), James Strong (1822–1894) provided rules as to how to read his dictionary definitions. Concerning parentheses he said,

–() (parenthesis), in the renderings from the A. V. [i.e. the KJV, or, Authorized Version], denotes a word or syllable sometimes given in connection with the principal word to which it is annexed.”

(Taken from the bottom of page 6 in Strong's Greek dictionary)

So with the case of *porneia*, we see that ~~–adultery and incest~~” (being given inside of parentheses) do not actually represent ~~–the principal word~~” (as so many wrongly say) but are words that are ~~–given in connection with the principal word~~” and are ~~–annexed~~” to *porneia* by association, not direct meaning. Mr. Strong affirms what any honest and thorough student of Greek can easily confirm by reading the Old and New Testament Greek Scriptures: *Porneia* literally and directly means ~~–harlotry~~” (that is, *prostitution*) and may be applied ~~–figuratively~~ [as] *idolatry*” and similarly, it is also often used to address ~~–fornication~~,” (which is why the **KJV** and other more literal versions frequently represent it this way) and especially because of the wide scope that *prostitution* involves, it can also address scenarios where there is ~~–adultery~~ and” (in a small number of Scriptural cases) ~~–incest~~” by extension (as some think **1Co_5:1** refers to, where it is categorized as an unusual *porneia*).

But because *porneia* most literally (~~–etymologically~~”) means, ~~–to~~ pass beyond (or *travel*) and sell oneself for profit” (sexually), therefore *prostitution* (or *harlotry*) is the most direct English word we have for *porneia*. When it comes to actually translating this word, if we simply represent it in English by using the same word that is used in the Greek then it goes without saying that this is the most authoritative and accurate way to represent it in English, because this lets the Bible simply speak for itself by stating in English exactly what it says in the original Greek. As we see *porneia* accurately represented and used throughout the Divinely inspired Scriptures, the context will be more than sufficient to illustrate its implications. Let us let the Bible say what it will about this word and the Divine concept of defining the sin of *prostitution* and then let us submit accordingly.

(5) Note these basic things about the “Fornication” aspect of *Porneia*

- Although the direct and literal meaning is ~~–prostitution~~,” most historical Greek [Lexicons](#) (ancient language dictionaries) agree in emphasizing ~~–fornication~~” as a central application of this word.
- The context and usage of this word show this even more than the dictionary definition.
- In addition to some other generic uses, The Greek Old Testament (**LXX**) very clearly uses this word to address sex before marriage in numerous cases (and we are about to discuss many of these passages in greater detail shortly).

- There is no other word in Greek for addressing fornication than *porneia* and its related words.
- We should take a sober note that when sex before marriage is addressed in the Scriptures, *porneia* is consistently used to describe this sin.
- Because of this, some study notes will say to the side, “it fornication” in reference to this word.

(6) How Does “Prostitution” Often Address “Fornication”?

In as much as *porneia* has definite connotations of “sex that is not inside of marriage,” it can certainly also be used to suggest “sex that is before marriage.” Not only does it have this potential, it is very frequently used to specifically address fornication in this way.

Defining *Porneia* – Clear Examples Where *Porneia* is Sometimes Used to Specifically Address Fornication

Please don’t miss this important and defining note: Although the majority of modern church leadership wrongly seeks to insist that *porneia* always means any and every kind of sexual immorality, the purpose of giving these corrective examples has nothing to do with “proving that *porneia* always only means fornication,” but instead, the main purpose for this point is simply to show that “*porneia* can possibly, sometimes specifically address fornication” whenever the conditions of the context may point toward this. The majority of lawless church leaders say that *porneia* always means every sexual immorality, and they often accuse many who are trying to be more conservative of saying that it always means fornication, but neither of these things are true. *Porneia* does not always address every sexual immorality nor does it always address fornication, yet we can see in this section that *porneia* can at least *sometimes* specifically address fornication and not include adultery. Although we can certainly see this in the following examples, please keep in mind as you read that these facts are denied by the modern propaganda insistently promoted throughout the vast majority of all churches today. What we can clearly see from these examples in the Bible is that *porneia* is not always used as a “free-for-all,” “generic” “all-encompassing” sin that describes “every kind of sexual immorality” as so many modern theorists rigidly insist, but *porneia* actually exhibits the capacity to get curiously specific at times, and we are about to see some of these examples.

Gen 34 – Shechem vs. Dinah & Family

Gen 34:1-31 – This clearly uses “πόρνη” (*pornēn* – a female prostitute) to speak of sex before marriage (fornication):

- (1) v. 3 – She had been a virgin [–ἡλ παρζέλνλ...τῆο παρζέλννυ”]
- (2) v. 2 – She was raped [–θαί έταπειλσσελ αὐτήλ”] (as confirmed in: Gen 34:2-7, 13, 27)
- (3) v. 31 – When Dinah went from being a virgin to being forced to have sex before marriage, it was described by using a form of *porneia*. Someone who is raped before marriage is made to partake of what only a prostitute [πόρνη] (professional “fornicator”) does in Biblical days.

[Hebrew: –חַוַּנָּה” (*haC’zovnah*); Greek: πόρνη (*pornē*). Note: as in nearly every case like this, the Hebrew is perfectly consistent with the Greek. These two words are constantly paralleled from both languages. We could focus on either language and see the exact same patterns, but for the purposes here we will focus on Greek since this is the final form of the exception]

Gen 38 – Judah and Tamar

Gen 38:21-22 – Clearly speaking of fornication: Gen 38:24 – Tamar was not married, and when they saw her pregnant they assumed she committed *porneia*. The LXX uses multiple forms of *porneia* to describe this in the story. (This passage speaks of being a “prostitute” while also equating it with the practice of prostitution in general: εθπεπνξλεπθελ^{G1608}; πνξλεηω^{G4202})

Divorce and Remarriage Repentance Revolution - www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com

Lev 21 – A Priest’s Marriage Restrictions

Speaking of the Priest...

Lev 21:4, 6-9 CAB ...he shall not defile [κηαζήσεται] himself suddenly among his people to profane [βεβήι σση] himself... **6** They shall be holy to their God, and they shall not profane [βεβει ώσπση] the name of their God; for they offer the sacrifices of the Lord as the gifts of their God, and they shall be holy. **7** They shall not take a woman who is a **harlot** [πόξλελ] and **profaned** [θαί βεβει σκέλελ], or a **woman put away from** [έθβεβει εκ έλελ^{G1544} από – lit. thrown out from] **her husband**; for he is holy to the Lord his God. **8** And you shall hallow him; he offers the gifts of the Lord your God: he shall be holy, for I the Lord that sanctify them *am* holy. **9** And **if the daughter** of a priest should be **profaned** [βεβει σζή] **to go a whoring** [τν έθπνξλε σση], she **profanes** [βεβει νί] **the name of her father** [Deu 22:20-21]: she shall be burned with fire [έπι πξόο θαταθαπζήσεται– Gen 38:24; Jos 7:15, Jos 7:25].

Notice What God Says About Priests in Lev 21

v. 7 – God forbids the Priests to marry a *pornēn* – this directly indicates a woman who has been having sex before the priest may have thought to marry her; this is clearly using a form of *porneia* to address what you call *premarital sex*, or, *fornication*.

v. 9 – God forbids the priests to let one of their daughters be a *pornēn* – notice that if she is still living with her father, it is clear she has not yet married (i.e. she is not cohabiting with a husband if she is still living with her father) – it is in this unmarried context where she is forbidden to be a *pornēn* (a fornicator), just as a woman is described in an unmarried state when the priest is forbidden to marry a *pornēn*

Notice that Lev 21...

- (1) Talks about Forbidding a priest to marry a prostitute
- (2) Talks about forbidding his daughter to be one
- (3) Never talks about **the priest’s wife** committing adultery by becoming or acting like a prostitute after marriage – that might be theoretically possible too, but such possible “~~adultery~~” is not even mentioned in this case because the context is dealing with sex before marriage, and it is clearly using *pornēn* in this way.

The Rest of Lev 21 Compared with Eze 44

Lev 21:13-15 CAB He shall take for a wife a virgin [παξζέλλνλ] of his own tribe. **14** But a widow [Eze 44:22 – later specified to not include a priest’s widow], or **one that is put away**, [έθβεβει εκ έλελ – lit. *thrown out*] or **profaned** [βεβει σκέλελ], or a **harlot** [θαί πόξλελ], these he shall not take; but [άυι ’ – stronger contrast] he shall take for a wife [the] a-virgin [ή παξζέλλνλ] of [έθ] his own people [τν γέλλπο άύτν]. **15** And he shall not profane his seed [σπέξκα (sperma)] among [έλ (en)] his people: I *am* the Lord that sanctifies him.

Eze 44:22-23 CAB Neither shall they take to themselves a widow *for a wife [* ειο γπλαίθα – lit. *into a woman/ wife (for himself)*], or **one that is put away** [έθβεβει εκ έλελ], but [the] a-virgin [ή παξζέλλνλ] of [έθ] the seed of Israel. **But if there should happen to be a priest’s widow, they shall take her** [θαί ρήζα έ λ γέλεταη έμ εξέσο ι ήκζν λταη] **23** And they shall teach My people *to distinguish* between holy and profane, and they shall make known to them *the difference* between unclean and clean.

Notice these things From Ezekiel 44

- Death potentially frees a woman to remarry a Priest, but divorce does not
- A Priest’s widows can be clean, but divorced people cannot be cleansed in remarriage

- Notice that in the New Covenant, we are to all be “priests” with such high standards

Some Summaries of Priestly Requirements

- Being a *pornēn* is contrasted with being a virgin: [Lev 21:13-15](#); (**Notice**: if a virgin becomes a *pornēn*, this is necessarily speaking of sex before marriage)
- Said to profane: [Lev 21:6-7, 9, 13-15](#)
- Said to profane the name of her father: [Lev 21:9](#) (i.e. clearly sex before marriage while still living with her father, just as it is said to do in [Deu 22:20-21](#))
- Being a *pornēn* compared with a potential marriage after divorce: [Lev 21:7](#); (also see [Eze 44:22-23](#); and compare Jeremiah 3)

Deu 22 – Accusations Against The Virginity Of A Betrothed Girl

[Deu 22:13-21](#)

It goes without saying that this passage speaks of sex before marriage during betrothal, and it uses *porneia* to address this.

Note: Deu 22 is covered more thoroughly later

Sin Lists – Adultery Clearly Used As a Different Sin Than *Porneia* (or Fornication)

[Gal 5:19, 21](#) **CAB** Now the works of the flesh are manifest [*φανερὰ* (*phanera*) – made visible by light], which are: adultery [*κνηε α* ^{G3430} (*moicheia*) – which is the noun form of the verb: *κνηε* ^{G3429} (*moichaō*)], fornication [*πνελε α* ^{G4202} (*porneia*)], immorality [*ἀθαξιασ α* – lit. uncleanness], lewdness [*ἀσ ιγεηα*– lit. a type of “discontentment” meaning *lustfulness*]... **21** ...those who *practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

[* i.e. those who continue to convert these nouns he just mentioned into verbal actions in their own life won’t make it into the Kingdom of God]

In a list like this, it is impossible to conclude that *porneia* is supposed to include adultery, because Paul just listed adultery as a separate item on the list of condemnable sins. In cases like this, it is clear that *porneia* can be use more distinctly for fornication, especially whenever a contrast may be made.

Also see: [Mat 15:19](#); [Mar 7:21](#);

Conclusions

We have just seen from these examples that the modern claims about the supposedly “universal broadness” of *porneia* are inflated. *Porneia* is not always used to address any and every kind of sexual immorality in every case, as so many pastors now insist. From all of these examples we can definitely see that the great efforts of the majority of modern propaganda to universally blur *porneia* into generic vagueness is wrong. We ought not to accept the loose and sloppy rewritten definitions for this word just because our modern cultures tend toward training us to be shallow and gullible, and addicted to the forgery of paraphrasing*. The original Greek words in the Bible truly have powerful meaning to them, and their scope actually lets them be surprisingly specific at times. Seeing that *porneia* can indeed sometimes specifically address fornication, is it possible that Jesus could be using it this way in Matthew 5 and 19?

[* For more on “paraphrasing” see “Bible Paraphrases” in the Bibliography]

Porneia vs. Adultery – Sometimes there is Contrast

There is a curious tendency throughout the New Testament to contrast *porneia* with adultery much more frequently than the Greek LXX Old Testament had done. This is a tendency we have to consider when it comes to the exception clause, because Jesus uses both adultery and *porneia* in His exception statements, and we should ask ourselves if this same contrast is intended in Jesus' Words as is frequently found in the epistles and other New Testament writings. It is clear that at least sometimes when *porneia* is used with adultery it is because the author or speaker wishes to contrast the two sins as occurring before and after marriage. We have got to ask ourselves if it is possible that this is also happening when it comes to the exception in Matthew:

The exception for divorce – is for *porneia*

Marrying another – is called *adultery*

Is there contrast in these two scenarios? Aren't these two terms intended as two *different* sexual sins since they are distinguished in this way for two different scenarios? Is the *porneia* exception intended to address sexual sin done before marriage, while the –adultery” of remarriage is immorality after marriage?

The Question that Arises: How Can the Divorce Exception Be Before Marriage?

We see that *porneia* can sometimes address cases of fornication. Do you think Jesus was using *porneia* this way? If the exception actually has to do with sex before marriage, the natural question that arises from this is: How does it make sense to divorce someone for sex before marriage? Some people might think that they have missed something here. At this point many people ask, –Why would Jesus give such a strange exception for ‘divorcing before marriage’ if this is indeed the case?”

3. Jewish Betrothal Explains the Fornication-Exception

The Gospels Were Written to Specific Groups

The writers of the Gospels each wrote to specific people and people groups. (Compare [Luk_1:3-4](#)).

Matthew Was Uniquely Written to the Jews

While Matthew was particularly written to the Jews, the other Gospels are not so Jewish

(1) Matthew repeats things

- Examples of repetition in Matthew: [Mat_5:31-32](#); [19:8-9](#); [17:20](#); [21:21](#)
- It is part of Jewish literature, and Divine culture to repeat things ([Gen_1:1-31](#) - [2:1-3](#); [4-25](#)), so because Matthew's original (Jewish) audience was already more adjusted to this and expects this for emphasis, Matthew does more repetition than the other Gospels.
- In the other Gospels there is not nearly as much repetition

(2) “The Kingdom of the Heavens” vs. “The Kingdom of GOD”

- There are 32 occurrences of this term in the Bible, and all of them are found in Matthew

- The term, —the Kingdom of the God” is only used 4 times in Matthew
- The term —The Kingdom of the Heavens” [—ἡ βασιμεια τῶν νύξλων] is used only in Matthew because the Jews were greatly anticipating —The Kingdom of the Heavens” and had significantly emphasized this before Jesus came preaching about it. To this (Jewish) nation then, it is of particular importance to include the specific details which Jesus mentioned about —The Heavens” when speaking of the coming Kingdom.
- In other Gospel accounts of the same events, it usually reads, —the Kingdom of the God,” [—ἡ βασιμεια α τν εν ”] (for example, compare [Mat_13:33](#) with [Luk_13:18-19](#)).

(3) Jewish Terms are Not Explained

Matthew frequently uses Jewish terms without any explanation:

Ceremonial washings – [Mat_15:2](#)

—The Holy City” – [Mat_4:5](#); [27:53](#)

—The city of the great King” – [Mat_5:35](#)

Jewish rulers mentioned – [Mat_2:1, 22](#); [14:1](#)

Matthew clearly presupposes that his audience is already thoroughly familiarized with these involved Jewish concepts. Throughout the other Gospels, unique Jewish practices are often explained, for example, Jewish customs, (such as [Mar_7:3-4](#)) and Aramaic sayings, (such as [Joh_20:16](#)). (Also see: [Joh_1:41](#); [4:25](#)).

(4) The Evidence Left Behind is Abundant

—The ecclesiastical writers Papias, St. Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, and St. Jerome... agree in declaring that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel for the Jews. ...[Matthew] shows that he is familiar with Jewish geography, history, culture, and classes of people and thoughts. ...phrases like: ‘_Son of David,’ ‘_the holy city,’ and ‘_city of the great king.’”*

All of these things show Matthew’s Jewishness, and in addition to all these Jewish ideas and more, Matthew, —also makes 53 Old Testament Quotations, and over 70 O.T. references to prophecies.”* and these are also considerably Jewish things to do.

* Source: www.newadvent.org/cathen/10057a.htm
Confirmed 7/21/11

(5) Matthew was Originally Written in Hebrew

From many voices written down in church history, we can know for sure that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew, and this is confirmed from the most authoritative voices right down to the other end of the theological and chronological spectrum in Origen’s day:

(A) Matthew in Hebrew – According to Papias, the Apostle John’s Disciple

—This is what is related by Papias... with regard to Matthew he has made the following statements]: Matthew put together the oracles [of the Lord] in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them* as best he could.”

Note: —interpreted” is a reference to (as we now say it) —translating” the Gospel of Matthew from Hebrew into Greek

(From Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 39; See [Ante-Nicene Fathers](#), Vol 1, –Fragments of Papias” Ch VI.; in [e-Sword](#) at 1.06.02)

We can see that the report of a –Hebrew original of Matthew’s Gospel” is confirmed by such authoritative voices as Papias, the Apostle John’s disciple (as quoted by Eusebius) and these things have even more authenticity confirmed into these statements by Irenaeus:

(B) Matthew in Hebrew – According to Irenaeus, the disciple of John’s Disciples

–Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure [i.e. their Martyrdom], Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him. Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.”

(Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book III, Ch 1, point 1; See [Ante-Nicene Fathers](#), Vol 1; in [e-Sword](#) at, 1.06.02)

(C) Matthew in Hebrew & the Other Gospels For the Nations – According to Origen

–Concerning the four Gospels which alone are uncontroverted in the Church of God under heaven, I have learned by tradition that the Gospel according to Matthew, who was at one time a publican and afterwards an Apostle of Jesus Christ, was written first; and that he composed it in the Hebrew tongue and published it for the converts from Judaism. The second written was that according to Mark, who wrote it according to the instruction of Peter, who, in his General Epistle, acknowledged him as a son, saying, *‘The church that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Mark my son.’* [Compare [1Pe 5:13](#)] And third, was that according to Luke, the Gospel commended by Paul, which he composed for the converts from the Gentiles. Last of all, that according to John.”

[–This fragment is found in Eusebius, H. E., vi. 25,” and is said to be –From the First Book of the Commentary on Matthew”; See *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol 9, –Commentaries of Origen,” –Origen’s Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew.”; in [e-Sword](#) at, 9.13.17; This quote is thought to have been originally written ~245-248 AD]

(6) There are No Real Grounds to Dispute the Jewishness of Matthew

No one really disputes these conclusions about the Jewishness of Matthew, and the fact that it was written in Hebrew is common knowledge for those who have reasonably done their homework, especially because this is unanimously confirmed among the early church leaders.

Even the subtle heretic Origen, who was prone in his writings to question and doubt well-established facts and precious truths of the Scriptures, knew Matthew was originally written in Hebrew. If Origen went about questioning the books of the Bible that we know are true, but didn’t question the Hebrew of Matthew, this indicates that Origen did not consider this fact debatable during his time. If we compound this observation with the numerous testimonies from all the other early church leaders, there really isn’t any reason to question the Jewishness of Matthew.

Both The Verbal and the Written Gospels Were Audience-Specified Proclamations

As a point of comparison to what we have already said, [Gal 2:7-8](#) makes a type of Jew-Gentile distinction between the –Gospel for the nations” [or –Gentiles”] and –the Gospel for the Jews” in a parallel way:

Gal_2:7-8 CAB but on the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted *with* the gospel for the uncircumcised [non-Jews], just as Peter *with the gospel* for the circumcised [Jews], 8 (for He who worked with Peter in *the* apostleship to the circumcised [Jews], worked also with me in *that for* the Gentiles),

In the same way as these verbal proclamations of the Gospel through Peter and Paul were ethnically particular, so also the “Gospels” (that were written down for us) were also audience-specified presentations of the “Everlasting Gospel” (compare Rev_14:6), which is written forever in the Heavens (compare Psa_119:89). Out of the eternity of this infinite mystery, the Gospels were written down for us, presenting the necessary facts of this Good Message (“Gospel”) as each people group was uniquely and respectively in need of knowledge for salvation.

Matthew was written specifically presenting this eternal truth particularly to the Jews to meet what they needed for their salvation. Because of this, we know for sure that some of the things which we have from Jesus were not ever written in the four Gospels (as seen in Act_20:35; and compare some of the unique details of Heb_5:8), especially since none of the Gospels claim to have written down all of the amazing things that happened, but only that which was deemed appropriate in each particular case by God through His servants unto each people group He commissioned them to write to (Joh_21:25; 14:26; compare: Mar_10:10; Act_2:40; 15:32, 20:2, 9, 11; 28:23). We ought to understand it this way if we are going to truly understand the Gospels, and with Matthew, this can become a critical dynamic when it comes to Gentiles needing to understand some of the **Jewish** aspects of Jesus’ teaching on marriage.

The Separation of Jews and Gentiles May Trip Us Up On Understanding Marriage

Jews and Gentiles generally lived separately, (Ex. Mat_10:5, Act_10:28; 21:27-29; 22:21; also Joh_4:9). If Gentiles were somewhat excluded from some of the everyday understandings of the Jews, then the teachings of the Gospel of Matthew may very well have been hard for them to understand at many points, in the same way as it is often hard for uninformed readers today to understand.

Because Matthew was written to the Jews and not the Gentiles, then we who are Gentile-minded might have trouble understanding their customs mentioned throughout the book. We should be sensitive to the fact that we need “cultural bridges” to help us understand Matthew, even more-so than the other Gospels.

So many have recklessly supposed that Jesus was teaching in a Gentile mindset when they read about the exception clause in Matthew, whereas, if a non-Jewish reader wishes to read Jesus’ Words this way, they should have read them in Mark or Luke since these Gospels were designed and intended for that audience. But now we see Jesus making a Jewish statement about an exception which has been condensed* and tailored for the Jews. It is not found in any other place than the Gospel for the Jews. We ought to be sure we understand it this way before we go out and boast about the “loophole” we found in Jesus’ teaching.

[* Note: The fact that the *written* exception clause has been condensed from what was at first proclaimed *verbally* goes without saying, as we have already established with all of the references at the end of the point entitled, “Both The Verbal and the Written Gospels Were Audience-Specified Proclamations” – this is the nature of what it means to make a condensed narrative.]

What is “Jewish Betrothal”?

In the same way that other cultural mysteries tend to trip us up, Jewish customs on marriage don’t immediately make sense to us. One of the primary examples of this is their practice of usually getting legally and morally “bound” into a covenant that makes them man and woman, husband and wife, long before the marriage supper. In English this is usually called “Jewish betrothal” in order to keep non-Jews from confusing it with their own customs of “engagement.”

With Jews, instead of simply getting an “engagement” they were completely “betrothed” and bound by covenant so that they would have to get a legal divorce if a man decided to socially and legally back out of his agreement before actually cohabiting with her. This isn’t “giving a ring with the intention of becoming husband and wife one day,” this is a man paying a “bride price” and putting the matter in official writing with sufficient witnesses to establish the covenant relationship at the moment they fully agree to this.

When Jews decided to get married, they did not mess around with hopeful engagement commitments like we often do; they sat down, got serious, made the covenant right then, and then the man went away to prepare for the marriage supper which would typically take place about a year later. This left the bride with a year of preparation and waiting to see if she would be faithful and ready for the exciting day whenever he may (at any moment) make the surprise entrance into her city to “receive her unto himself”, scoop her up into a chair elevated by the groomsmen (Son_3:6-7, 11), and bring her away to the seven-day* marriage celebration.

Some Basics about Betrothal vs. Engagement

- Jewish Betrothal is by nature distinct from what most people call engagement
- Engagement is the intention for two people to become spouses one day; betrothal establishes two people as spouses immediately
- Engagement looks forward to making a “one flesh” covenant in order to morally cohabit; betrothal is the “one flesh” covenant, made long before cohabitation
- Engagements are what Gentiles (non-Jews) do; betrothal is what ancient Jews did
- Gentiles only consider divorce after a marriage is celebrated; Jews had to consider the possibility of divorce before, during*, and after a marriage celebration.
- Because the man has comparatively very little opportunity in an actually **moral** culture** of “getting to know” his woman before cohabiting with her, the main reason for possibly divorcing a woman during betrothal would be if she committed prostitution [fornication] before the marriage supper. This is referenced numerous times in Scripture and ancient Jewish writings.

[* Ancient weddings were typically seven days long; see the context of the following references: Gen 29:27; Jdg 14:10 (esp. MT), 12, 16-18; Joh 2:1 (Καὶ τῆ ἡμέρας τῆς γάμου οὐκ ἐγένετο);

If there was an issue detected with the woman’s purity (i.e. Deu 22:13-29), the man was expected to take her to the Rabbis the very next day after consummation (the second day of the wedding feast) to obtain a divorce certificate]

[** To understand what a “truly moral culture” is, see the “No Dating Battle List” on www.TrueConnection.org]

Basic Betrothal Concepts

- A female virgin passes from having virginity in her father’s house (Deu 22:14-21) to being called a young woman (Deu 22:19) by the culmination of this betrothal process in coming together with her man in cohabitation (Deu 22:13-14, 16).
- If she passes from her virginity by sexual activity before the betrothal process is culminated, then this is referred to as “prostitution” (Deu 22:21)
- “Prostitution” before cohabitation is a crime of a woman not waiting for her man, and this wickedness is punishable by death if proven; (we call this “fornication” in English).

Some Basic Biblical Examples of Betrothal

If we are wondering if Betrothal is actually taught in the Bible, we can start by simply looking at the very beginning of the New Testament:

Mat 1 – Joseph and Mary

[Mat_1:18-19 CAB](#) Now the birth of Jesus Christ [ῥηστὴν – anointed one] was like this: After His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found pregnant by the Holy Spirit. **19** Then Joseph her husband, being righteous and not wanting to make her a public example, purposed to put her away secretly.

But after being instructed by the angel, Joseph, ~~—~~ took... his wife, [Mary,]" ([Mat_1:24b CAB](#)) and married her.

Did you notice that Joseph was called ~~–her husband~~" before He had even entered into cohabitation with Mary? Did you notice that Joseph was considering going through a legal divorce process ~~–before they came together~~"? Did you notice that this betrothal incident is only recorded in Matthew and not in any of the other Gospels? Did you notice that Matthew did not clarify this statement to accommodate an uninformed gentile reader? We see then, that when reading Matthew we have to maintain a sensitivity and particularly ~~–Jewish~~" awareness to both notice and understand what exactly just happened in this story of Joseph and Mary. When betrothal is referenced in Matthew, Matthew (like many other Jewish writings) presupposes that the reader is already familiar with these Jewish concepts and needs no explanation to understand this betrothal scenario that is being described.

The Greek Means Betrothal

The word for ~~–espoused~~" (μνηστευθεισῆς^{G3423}) in Matthew is the same word used for betrothal in the Greek Old Testament (including [Deu_22:23](#), [25](#), [27-28](#) [μειμνηστευμένη^{G3423}], etc.).

Deu 22 – Accusations Against The Virginity Of A Betrothed Girl

[Deu_22:13-21](#)

A Virgin who mourns for her "Husband"?

[Joe_1:8 CAB](#) Lament to Me more than a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth.

(Also see [Deu_22:23-24](#) for more)

Note: a ~~–virgin~~" is never really considered to have a ~~–husband~~" in our modern cultures, but this was the way that God described this ~~–Jewish~~" scene through the prophet Joel. If you understand Jewish betrothal, this passage makes perfect sense. Without understanding these things, you are left as a confused Gentile.

These are only a few examples of the many references to betrothal throughout the Scriptures. Many more examples are yet to come.

Deu 22 and Beyond – Facing the Fact of Divorce During Betrothal

Especially by now, I would hope that we are all familiar with the fact that the Bible very clearly describes divorce during betrothal to be a righteous divorce as we have seen in [Mat_1:18-19](#). From this plain and simple passage we are required to face the fact that divorce during betrothal was:

- (1) An existing, accepted, Jewish practice, and
- (2) considered ~~–righteous~~" before God.

But I have found it extremely helpful to dig deeper and perceive exactly where this divorce during betrothal' came from. – It turns out that this is actually somewhat communicated in the betrothal

chapter, Deu_22: When a man lied about finding his wife to not be a virgin during the seven-day marriage feast, it says...

Deu 22:18-19 CAB And the elders of that city shall take that man, and shall chastise him, 19 and shall fine him a hundred shekels, and shall give *them* to the father of the young woman, because he has brought forth an evil name against a virgin of Israel; and she shall be his wife: **he shall never be able to put her away.**

And again, if a man raped a woman it says,

Deu 22:28-29 CAB And if anyone should find a young virgin who has not been betrothed, and should force *her* and lie with her, and be found, 29 the man who lay with her shall give to the father of the damsel fifty silver shekels, and she shall be his wife, because he has humbled her; **he shall never be able to put her away.**
(also see [Exo 22:16-17](#))

We see from these two commands in the betrothal chapter (Deu 22) that a restriction is placed on a man's authority to divorce a woman after he has sinned against her honor and taken away her virginity. This clearly implies that the man has the authority to divorce her as long as he does not sin against her in this way. When you consider the fact that betrothal is **a binding one flesh covenant**, it is easy to see why Jews (including righteous Joseph) always understood that divorce was permitted during betrothal (before getting married) according to Deuteronomy 22, especially when it was for **unproven fornication**.

This can be easy enough to notice when comparing the betrothal chapter (Deu 22) with Joseph's example (Mat 1), but it keeps getting clearer and clearer when you keep ~~“doing your homework”~~:

Deu 22:25-27 CAB But if a man find in the field a young woman that is betrothed, and he should force her and lie with her, you shall slay the man that lay with her only. 26 And the young woman has not committed a sin worthy of death; as if a man should rise up against his neighbor, and slay him, so is this thing; 27 because he found her **in the field**; the betrothed young woman cried, and there was none to help her.

Interestingly, a very periphrastic, commentary-version of this passage which was sometimes used by some Jews has an **additional phrase** that reflected the common understanding of Judaism during New Testament times, and really helps illustrate Joseph's situation:

—..if a man find a damsel in the wilderness, and do violence to her and lie with her, the man only shall die who lay with her, for the damsel is not guilty of death; **but her husband may put her away from him by a bill of divorcement**; for as when a man lieth in wait for his neighbour and taketh his life, so is this matter: he found her upon the face of the field ; the betrothed damsel cried out for help, but there was no one to deliver her.”

(Commentary on [Deu 22:25-27](#) – Targum Pseudo-Jonathan [or, as some call it, *Targum Yerushalmi* –Jerusalem Targum"] – English Translation by JW Etheridge)

Do you see the extra phrase in this paraphrase? This understanding was common enough among Jews, and similar concepts can be found in abundance throughout the Jewish Talmud* (especially in the extensive tract called *Gittin*). Many Jewish writings call for divorce during betrothal if the death

penalty somehow cannot be enforced ~~by~~ the mouth of two or three witnesses.” [* Talmud Note: I have spent well over an entire week compiling quotes from the Talmud, and if God may help us, we hope to eventually include some of these key quotes from the Talmud and make them available in the appendix entitled, “Exception Clause Research” and or in this book.]

After trying to clarify Deuteronomy 22, a little bit later this same paraphrase (or commentary) then goes even further by saying,

—A man should not take a wife who is bowed down (or violated)...”

(Commentary on [Deu_23:1](#) – source same as before)

Whether it was unproven rape or even unproven fornication, the Jewish rabbis consistently allowed divorce during betrothal for these ~~unproven~~” situations whenever it was clear that a woman’s virginity was somehow ended before the marriage celebration.

Do you see how this Law, and these types of Jewish understandings of the Law, come to bear on Marry in Joseph’s situation? Doesn’t this help illustrate why Joseph was thinking of divorcing Mary during betrothal, and doesn’t it also provide an intriguing backdrop at the beginning of Matthew before Jesus ever gives an exception clause for divorce?

But it is important to add to this the fact that the Jews were not just innovating and making up new ideas about divorcing during betrothal, because this is actually the exact same picture God gives to His very own betrothed bride:

[Isa_50:1 CAB](#) Thus says the Lord, Of what kind is your mother's bill of divorcement, by which I put her away? Or to which debtor have I sold you? Behold, you are sold for your sins, and for your iniquities have I put your mother away.

[Jer_3:8 CAB](#) And I saw that (for all the sins of which she was convicted, wherein the house of Israel committed adultery, and I put her away, and gave into her hands a certificate of divorce) yet faithless Judah feared not, but went and also committed fornication herself.

We can clearly see that divorce during betrothal is a definite possibility in the Bible, and it was so defining among the Jews that you cannot escape Joseph’s righteous, Jewish example of this. Joseph thought to divorce Mary during betrothal just like Jews did all throughout the Talmud (except that he thought to do it quietly with a more righteous and perfect heart than they). This is the divorce God did, and this is the divorce Joseph did. And if we are going to be honest, we have to face the fact that this is a definite possibility for Jesus to reference when dealing with the exception clause in the book of Matthew.

The Two Divorces in the Law of Moses – The Solid Context For Betrothal!

We have spent a great amount of this chapter very briefly summarizing some of the greatest proofs for betrothal, but in the end this is actually an extremely simple issue.

The Old Covenant Allowed Two Basic Types of Divorce

Type	Pre-wedded Sexual-Based Divorce	Wedded Non-Sexual-Based Divorce
Scripture Reference(s)	Deu 22 ; Mat 1 & all throughout the prophets (esp. Isa 50 and Jer 2 - 3)	Deu 24 (Deu 21:13-14)
Specific Cause(s)	Prostitution [-fornication*]	24:1: - Wife finds no favor (in husbands eyes) - Something shameful (found in her) (Note: this is a generic, unspecified -problem*) - Husband does not delight in her (Deu 21:14) (Note: Ultimately, he needs no real reason at all) 24:3: - Husband hates her (This covers just about any -eause* you can think of!)
Moral Quality?	Righteous (see below)	Hardhearted (see below)
Who is Guilty in this?	The Immoral, Divorced Woman* (Jer 3:8; Isa 50:1; In appearance: Mat 1:18-19, etc.)	The Man Who Divorces (Mat 19:8; Mar 10:4-5)
Summary	Before Marriage the essential reason to divorce would be for sexual unfaithfulness	After Marriage the reasons to divorce could be for all kinds of things!

[* unless it is the case of rape in the field: Deu 22:25-29; Gen 34:1-31; 2Sa 13:14-20 (v. 13 & 20 – no one would marry her because of this); etc.]

If you divorce after the marriage yoke like Jesus specifically told you not too then you will cause your wedded wife to commit adultery, but if you divorce the righteous divorce during betrothal for -prostitution* (a sexual cause) before marriage, you will not be the cause of her unfaithfulness. This is an extremely solid summary of Matthew 5 and 19.

If you come to the point where you finally honestly understand Jesus' extreme teaching about marriage as He actually said it, then surely you will start feeling like His disciple's when they first heard it:

The Question

Mat 19:3 CAB The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife *for just any reason [* θατ πασαλ αιτιαυ – lit. *down according to every cause* (clearly including multiple causes, even for non-sexual reasons)]?"

The Conclusion

Mat 19:10 CAB His disciples said to Him, "If such is *the ease [η αιτια – lit. *the one cause*] of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry [i.e. enter into wedded, cohabitation]."

Divorce and Remarriage Repentance Revolution - www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com

If your concept of Jesus' teaching sounds fair to the average person, then it is clear that you are not one of his disciples, because you have drawn a totally different conclusion than they did! If you come up with multiple reasons to divorce, then it is clear that you are one of the Pharisees who also taught this.

But if you are going to be a Pharisee or a disciple, you need to go ahead and make up your mind, because these two types of divorce were always taken together all throughout Judaism (as can be seen throughout many Jewish works such as the Talmud and even Josephus).

Jesus very clearly knocked down the non-sexual, wedded, "divorce for any reason" suffered in Deuteronomy 24 and promoted by the Pharisees, but affirmed the divorce for unproven prostitution as given in Deuteronomy 22. These are the two types of divorce the Jews always debated over, and these are the two issues Jesus addressed. It is extremely clear that Jesus picked the divorce for sexual reasons and rejected the non-sexual divorce, and He even used the same words in His exception clause to do this. It would have been enough for Him to specify the "sexual aspect" of His exception with the Word *porneia* since this is the same word Deuteronomy 22 uses, but in Matthew 5 He goes so far as to even use two words from Deuteronomy 22:

Deu_22:20-21 – τὸ γυνὸν... ἐθ' πνεξλε σαῆ' (LXX)

Mat_5:32 – τὸ γυν π πνεξλε αὐ' (GNT)

[Note: These two correlating Greek words are covered much more thoroughly later]

Seeing that these things make it extremely clear that Jesus' exception is a reference to the sexual-based divorce of Deuteronomy 22 and Matthew 1, it is unavoidable to face the fact that the exception for divorce takes place before marriage during betrothal, just like Deuteronomy 22 describes, and just like Jewish rabbis constantly debated, and just like Joseph fulfilled in all righteousness, and just like God has been practicing Himself with His own people for thousands and thousands of years!

If we have been practicing and promoting the hard-hearted wedded divorce of Deuteronomy 24, now is the time to be zealous and repent and take up the righteous legacy fulfilled in the New Covenant which Moses spoke of, Joseph fulfilled, and Jesus commanded!

Matthew 1 Requires a Qualification to Be Made in Chapters 5 & 19 – The Exception is in Matthew Three Times not Two

We have shown how Jesus condemned those who took advantage of the divorce permission in [Deu_24:1-4](#), and we have said that the two main passages in Matthew that are usually called "the exception clause" are [Mat_5:32](#) and [Mat_19:9](#), but did you know that even considering both of these cases still does not account for all that Matthew says about the possibility of divorcing righteously without a hard heart? Though the exception is not in the other Gospels, it is in Matthew for a good reason, but one of the reasons we misunderstand these references is because, while often focusing on Matthew five and nineteen, we don't usually notice Matthew's first foundational application of a righteous divorce in Matthew one.

In dealing with this issue, it is very helpful for us to see that the only book that mentions "the exception" among the divorce and remarriage teachings of the New Testament, gives the perfect example of this "exception" in the very first reference to it, in the righteous example of Joseph and Mary. As we saw in this passage previously, it says, — Joseph her husband, being righteous and not wanting to make her a public example, purposed to put her away secretly," ([Mat_1:19 CAB](#)). Joseph out of righteousness had it in mind to divorce Mary for some kind of "report" of prostitution before marriage (see v. 18, and compare [Joh_8:41](#)) as defined in [Deu_22:14-21](#).

The Jews knew what a *saying*, or *report*, of prostitution (or *fornication*) was, and because of this it is appropriate for it to be present in Matthew, "the Gospel unto the Jews" (as we showed earlier with

passages like [Gal 2:7](#)). In representing Jesus' teachings and specifying the wording with the audience in mind, as we have already seen that all of the four Gospel writers knowingly did, Matthew would have left an "untied string" in his account if he had mentioned what righteous Joseph did when thinking of divorcing Mary during betrothal, and then followed this account by recording Jesus as saying that all divorce was unrighteous."

Without particularly resolving to include what Jesus said about divorcing for a report of prostitution before marriage (fornication), Matthew would have left Joseph looking unrighteous for not obeying the laws of God that would be proclaimed fully in the New Testament, as though Joseph did not have them already written on his heart from loving God (see [2Co 3:2-3](#)). But instead we are told that Joseph was righteous, and his actions are given to us as an example of righteousness that we should follow in it.

Matthew is the only Gospel that records Joseph thinking of divorcing Mary, and Matthew is the only Gospel that gives an exception to divorce in Jesus' marriage teaching. Do you see a consistent pattern here yet? We see then that the actions of righteous Joseph in Matthew one require some kind of a comparable exception to be stated in Matthew five and nineteen when Jesus teaches about divorce. Out of Divine inspiration, Matthew drew from the facts that were available before him and composed a narrative that teaches us about marriage in a Jewish context, and in this way, three times the Gospel of Matthew teaches us from the story of Joseph to the teachings of Jesus, that there is only ONE righteous reason for divorce.

Why Didn't Joseph Have Mary Stoned? – This Actually Teaches Us A Lot About Jesus' Exception!

For a long time I wondered why Joseph did not have Mary put to death for being pregnant before being wedded. After all, they were under the Old Covenant at that time, and the Law said that women who committed prostitution during a betrothal should be stoned.

I would say that the answer is a lot more clear and easy to understand than I had noticed at first: I think you can say pretty certainly that no one was in a posture to stone Mary because she did not fit the descriptions of the stoning requirements exactly as described in [Deu 22:14-27](#): "And if a man **be found** lying with a woman...you shall kill them both..." ([Deu 22:22 CAB](#)). This is why the Pharisees were very specific when accusing the woman taken in adultery by saying, "...Teacher, we **found** this *woman* committing adultery, in the very act," ([Joh 8:4 CAB](#)). Unlike this woman, Mary was clearly not found in the act (especially because there was no "act" of immorality in Mary's case to "find" her in!). Righteous Joseph would not have wanted to have Mary publicly stoned because without "two or three witnesses" that could have violated the principal behind the commandment that teaches Jews not to falsely bring up an evil name about a faithful bride (compare [Deu 22:13-19](#)). Although there was evidently a very bad report that was given to Joseph which prompted him to have it in mind to divorce her (compare [Joh 8:41](#)), yet, in Mary's case, she was not found in an act of prostitution, and because of this there was the possibility that she had been raped, and the Law says not to put someone to death in this case [Deu 22:25-28](#). Even if a woman is suspected but not found in the sin of immorality, this would still leave such a woman "innocent until proven guilty," because for stoning to take place guilt must be proven by catching the transgressor in the very act:

[Deu 17:6 CAB](#) He shall die on the testimony [MT: "At the mouth" (WEB)] of **two or three witnesses**; a man who is put to death shall not be put to death for one witness [MT: "at the mouth of one witness" (WEB)].

Also: [Deu 19:15](#); [Num 35:30](#); [Mat 18:16](#); [Joh 8:17](#); [2Co 13:1](#); [1Ti 5:19](#); [Heb 10:28](#)

[Deu 22:22 CAB](#) And if a man be **found** lying with a woman married to a man, you shall kill them both...

Joh_8:3-4 CAB Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman who had been **caught in adultery**, and having stood her in *the* midst, **4** they said to Him, —Teacher, **we found** this *woman committing adultery, in the very act*.

Deu_22:25-27 CAB But if a man find in the field a young woman that is betrothed, and he should force her and lie with her, you shall **slay the man** that lay with her **only**. **26** And the young **woman has not committed a sin worthy of death**; as if a man should rise up against his neighbor, and slay him, so *is* this thing; **27** because he found her **in the field**; the betrothed young woman cried, and there was none to help her.

Cases of Immorality Were...

- Punished by death by the mouth of two or three sources of confirming evidence (i.e. “two or three witnesses”).
- I have summarized this as: **the witness of two is true – in the law** (as in **Joh_8:17** [esp. in Greek: ὁ μάρτυς τῶν δύο ἀνδρῶν ἀληθὴς ἐστίν –the witness [or testimony] of two men is true (Jos.Trans.)]).
- If there is only one source of evidence, then the death penalty cannot be enforced.
- If a woman is not caught in the act, the “unproven case” applies

And doesn't Mary fit this description of being “**in the field**” since there was the possibility of concluding that Mary had been raped, especially in light of her good character, which was certainly known in such a small town like the one they lived in, just as it was said of Ruth in **Rth_3:10-11**? Wasn't Mary and her family in a small enough social context for “everyone to know everyone”?

Rth_3:10-11 CAB ...Blessed *are* you of the Lord God, *my* daughter, for you have made your latter kindness greater than the former, in that you followed not after young men, whether *any be* poor or rich. **11** ...for all the tribe* of my people knows that you are a virtuous woman.

[* LXX: οἱ πᾶσι – fig. relatives; MT: –city” (WEB)]

Mat_13:55-56 CAB Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Jude? **56** And His sisters, are they not all with us?... (Also see: **Mar_6:3**)

We see in Jesus' home town, they not only knew Mary, but also the names of Jesus' brothers. These small towns were more common then, and this seems to be the most reasonable light to see Mary's situation in: Everyone probably knew she was known to be righteous, but apparently no one could explain the scandal of her pregnancy.

Maybe you can imagine the scene in Luke chapter 1, and the distress and confusion apparently people felt:

v. 5-23 – Strange things happened with Zacharias in the temple

v. 24-25 – His wife Elizabeth goes into hiding

v. 26-38 – Mary is visited by an angel

v. 39-56 – Mary goes away for three months* (v. 36, 55-56) into the mountainous hill country (v. 39) to visit Elizabeth (v. 40)

v. 55 – Mary returns home three months* later, and she is “found” pregnant (**Mat_1:18**; just as Tamar was “found pregnant” three months* after conception: **Gen_38:24**)

[* **Note:** The repeated theme of waiting three months to see if a woman is pregnant is repeated in a number of other places outside the Bible, including the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan [or, as some call it, *Targum Yerushalmi*/ ‘Jerusalem Targum’] of Deu 21:13 (which is generally considered periphrastic)]

Mary very well could have been declared and considered innocent by the provision of the Law of Moses since she was away from home and was traveling into the mountainous hill country (Luk 1:39) which is comparable to the woman who is raped in a field, as described previously in the Law of Moses (Deu 22:25-27). In addition to this, we should consider passages like Pro 27:25 and Deu 11:11, where ‘~~m~~ountains’ and ‘~~f~~ields’ are closely associated together to generally describe being outside of a city, which is basically the context in which a woman was considered ‘~~i~~nnocent until proven guilty’ if she was ‘~~f~~und’ pregnant. Because of these factors, they may have easily concluded that she was ‘~~r~~aped in the field,’ especially since she generally would have had to travel through fields outside of the cities to get into the hill country (Gen 14:10), and not to mention the probability of spacious meadows within the hill country while trying to get to the specific city.

Although Mary very well had the potential to have been considered a victim of rape (Gen 34:2-7 – as confirmed in Hebrew, ‘ה ויענהה יו יכב’ (MT), and Greek: ‘ἐταπειλώσασα αὐτήν’ (LXX) and reaffirmed in: Gen 34:2-7, 13, 27), yet, what virtuous woman of any righteous character and zeal to clear her own name and that of her family from a charge of sin (Pro 22:1; Ecc 7:1; 2Co 7:11; Lev 21:9; Deu 22:21) would not quickly cry to her father and or brothers that she was raped as soon as she could (Gen 34:5-7; 2Sa 13:20-21; Gen 34:2-7), if indeed she was the innocent victim of a horrible crime? Instead, **after three months**, Mary returns home pregnant and seems to go about with no shame or guilt that she is pregnant before her wedding! Instead of crying over the apparent tragedy of the loss of her virginity (2Sa 13:19-22), she continues steadfast in her demeanor, as though she has some kind of faith that she has done what is right and suffers no harm! Maybe you can see how this could be a complicated issue for all those involved, especially Joseph. [The word ‘ἐνθυμηθέντος’ (*enthumethentos*), (G1760) in Mat 1:20 implies that Joseph’s deeper passions and emotions were affected as he was ‘_considering’ these things.]

Betrothed people in the Bible actually practiced sexual purity before marriage (sexual morality) by not ‘~~m~~ing’ romantically before a marriage feast. In most cases they did not communicate, unless it was with or through the bride’s family. Because of this, Joseph obviously did not hear the report of Mary’s pregnancy from Mary herself, otherwise his idea to divorce her could not have been called ‘~~r~~ighteous,’ as it is described in Mat 1:19. But knowing at least something of her righteous character, Joseph could have initially suspected some kind of rape, but then, the implications of the testimony of her relatives would not have added up.

One could imagine that Joseph was probably thinking things like: I know Mary has had a righteous character, and I would think that she was probably raped, but the reports from her father and relatives seem to indicate that she was guilty of participating and cooperating with whatever situation got her pregnant (compare Luk 1:38)! – According to the Law, conceding or participating in the tragedy of rape, converts the case into the guilt of fornication for the woman (compare Deu 22:23-27), but in Mary’s case, though the guilt seemed apparent, it could not be proven...

Not long after Mary returns home, people think that she has committed prostitution before marriage (compare Joh 8:41) and this report gets back to Joseph (Mat 1:18-20). She does not qualify for stoning, but still, at the same time she sure does look guilty of fornication. This scene of apparent (reported) prostitution during betrothal is the perfect description played out for what follows in the book of Matthew concerning the exception clause.

Joseph did what he did in righteousness, foreshadowing the righteous decree that would one day come from the lips of his own adopted Son, when out of perfect and infinite righteousness, the Son of God would fully make known to the sons of men that perfect decree and standard of righteousness concerning marriage and divorce. Joseph unknowingly but faithfully played the part given to him by God in setting the scene in Matthew one, for what Jesus would teach in Matthew five and nineteen.

So just as Abraham foreshadowed sacrificing his son, but stopped short of it when the angel stepped in and announced God’s provision of a sacrifice, so also Joseph foreshadowed the perfect righteousness

of intending to divorce Mary for the only cause where it is ever righteous to divorce a wife, but also stopped short of it when the angel stepped in and announced Mary's innocence and Joseph's commission to take her home. Abraham's intended sacrifice of his only son would one day be fleshed out in the actual sacrifice of Jesus' death, just as the righteousness of Joseph's intended divorce would later be fleshed out in Jesus' teaching on marriage and divorce.

In accordance with his righteousness, the very moment that Joseph heard from God that Mary was not guilty of prostitution before marriage, ([Mat 1:20](#)) we see a sudden change of plans in Joseph, so that he was now more than willing to take Mary home with him ([Mat 1:20-25](#); [Luk 2:4-5](#)) and help her in any way he could in the birth of her Divine pregnancy (see [Luk 2:6-7](#)). Joseph was no longer hindered or ashamed at all to have Mary with him as his wife (see [Mat 1:24-25](#)).

Joseph did not have the hard heart of divorcing wedded wives as God had tolerated through Moses ([Deu 24:1-4](#); [Mat 19:7-8](#) etc.) but instead Joseph had the soft and righteous heart of God ([Mat 1:19](#)) that would only divorce a woman if it was **before** a wedding when it did not put space between spouses that God had fastened together ([Mat 19:6](#)).

Though Joseph is now physically dead, without having one word he spoke specifically recorded in Scripture, yet, the record of what He did lives on, speaking unto us and teaching us unto this day, and not only this, but also teaching all nations everywhere where the Gospel of Matthew is read in the Bible, that the only just and righteous reason for divorcing a wife, is if she commits prostitution before the wedding (as in [Mat 5:31-32](#); [19:9](#)).

4. A Word of Prostitution/ "Fornication"? – **Logos in Matthew 5!**

With much thanks to persecuted writers A, B, D, and S, and a number of other anonymous persecuted believers with them for sharing my excitement in recounting the adventures God has given me to reveal truth, and for laboring with me and helping me write out this section in a clear way.

The Confirmation of *Porneia* in the Betrothal of Deuteronomy 22

In 2005, a friend visited my house and we talked about what the Bible says about marriage. He knew that I stood up for the permanency of one flesh, and that this included what I taught about betrothal and fornication. He also knew that others opposed me for defending the permanency of the marriage covenant, but he himself was inquisitive and open to the possibility that what I taught might be true. Then we got to discussing the potential of *porneia* to sometimes particularly address cases of fornication in some passages.

Especially because he was in Bible school, my friend was aware of the profound impact that the [Greek Septuagint](#) had on formulating the vocabulary for the New Testament. Since Jesus frequently spoke Greek and quoted the [Greek Septuagint](#) along with the rest of the New Testament writers, He very likely would have used "Septuagint vocabulary" in talking about marriage in Matthew 5 and 19. Upon these considerations my friend then asked me the critical question that I had not yet asked myself: If *porneia* in its specific usage can sometimes particularly address cases of "fornication," and can possibly be used in some cases to address betrothal-fornication, and one of the primary examples of betrothal-fornication is in Deuteronomy 22, then wouldn't the [Greek Septuagint](#) use *porneia* in this passage? "I don't know," I replied, "But we can find out right now." And so we skimmed together throughout the Greek in Deuteronomy 22 to jointly verify and prove whether or not *porneia* would be used to address fornication during betrothal, and not some other word such as "adultery" [κνηε σ

(*moicheiō*) which would be very possible for such a situation since the couple was already considered husband and wife. As we skimmed, we got to a certain verse toward the end, and there it was:

Deu 22:21 LXX ...ἐθ^ςπνξλε σαη...[*ekporneúsai*]

Greek: –ἐθ^ς” (*ek*), meaning “out,” plus –πνξλε σ” (*porneúō*: a variation of *porneia*), meaning to commit prostitution, coming together to essentially mean: to act “out” (and commit) prostitution/ “fornication” (see Strong’s G1608, G4203, and G4202).

So from this confirmation of *porneia*, my friend and I both saw that in Greek, Deuteronomy 22 uses the same word [*πνξλε α (porneia)*] to describe fornication during betrothal that Jesus uses in Matthew 5 to describe the only case where God allows divorce. In addition to this, I later confirmed that this use of *porneia* in Deuteronomy 22 is distinct from the commandment to not commit adultery in this very same book:

Deu 5:17 Jos.Trans. you shall not commit adultery

Deu 5:17 LXX vù κνηεύσειο.. [ou moicheúseis]

And this commandment is also quoted by Jesus word-for-word in warning against adultery just before talking about divorce and remarriage in Matthew 5:27:

Mat 5:27 CAB You have heard that it was said, You shall not commit adultery.

Mat 5:27 Greek ...vù κνηε σειο[...ou moicheúseis]

So in Mat 5:27-32 Jesus uses the same word for adultery [*κνηε σ (moicheiō)*] as Deu 5:17 does in forbidding sins against marriage, and He then uses the same word for the exception [*πνξλε α (porneia)*] that Deu 22:21 does in addressing sins done before a wedding during betrothal. Do you think that Jesus could have meant to use *porneia* to address the same unique case of betrothal-fornication that Deuteronomy 22 did?

The Discovery of Logos in Matthew 5

Earlier that same year I was sitting at my desk and reading through all of the passages about marriage in the New Testament in Greek to make sure that I had not missed anything due to English translations. This was one of the first times that I seriously read through Matthew 5 in Greek, and this time I found something that made me so excited that I verbally got loud!

When talking about the exception, Jesus does not actually say, –except for the cause of prostitution,” but He actually says, –except for a word of prostitution,” [*παξεθτόο ι γνπ πνξλε αο*].

Translations, Greek, and the Actual Meaning of Matthew 5:32

The NIV	for	marital unfaithfulness
The KJV	the cause	of fornication,
The Bible (Greek)	ι γυνπ (logou)	πνξλεηω (porneias)
Strong's Number	G3056	G4202
The Actual Meaning	a <u>word</u> / saying/ report (of)	prostitution/ -fornication"

This is huge! But what could it mean? My first thoughts were how this –word” or –report” compared with Joseph hearing a report about Mary’s pregnancy, and how he considered divorcing her after receiving this kind of report, as we talked about earlier in the detailed coverage of Joseph and Mary. Could there be some kind of a link here?

If Joseph had it in mind to divorce Mary in Matthew chapter 1 because he received some report that she had committed prostitution before their wedding, and then in chapter 5 Jesus explicitly teaches that divorce must only happen when there is a –word” (or –report”) of prostitution, then what do you think the chances are that both cases in Matthew are addressing the same thing? If they are talking about the same thing, then the exception in Matthew chapter 5 is about betrothal, just like the situation of Joseph and Mary in Matthew chapter 1.

The Problem: *Logou Porneias* Seems Like a Phrase!?

Finding *logos* in Matthew 5 was thrilling enough to keep me praying, meditating, and researching for a long time, but the adventure did not end there. In 2006, I was still wrestling through these details, and I returned again to my desk and opened to the passages on marriage, laboring over them in Greek.

I looked intently again at Matthew 5, and as I stared at the Greek, I could not help but be powerfully drawn again to those words, –ι γυνπ πνξλε αο” (*logou porneias*): –a word of prostitution.” I had read more of the Greek New Testament by this time, and now it seemed more and more obvious that these words were very unusual in the way that they were being used compared to the rest of the New Testament.

–A word of prostitution”? Since when in the New Testament has *logos* ever been used like this? When has anyone in Scripture ever talked about –a word of prostitution”? I kept stirring over and over in my mind of all the other occurrences in which *logos* is used in the New Testament, and how unique this one was. After considering this unusual Greek wording, I was deeply moved that these words were not just simple communication, but a type of unique phrase.

Notice that Jesus did not say anything like:

- An act of prostitution
- The defilement of prostitution
- The cause of prostitution (as many English versions mistranslate)
- The crime of prostitution

But He simply said:

- A word of prostitution

How do you ~~word~~ prostitution? Do you see how this begs for some kind of an explanation?

To explain this problem technically in terms of linguistics, when you describe an action-verb by using nouns (things) you are often doing this because you presuppose that the listener or reader already knows the details of the action which is being implied by the noun (~~thing~~). As an example of this, we might say ~~the police are giving out lots of tickets today on the highway.~~ We do not need to specify that ~~drivers~~ are the ones receiving these tickets because we already know about things like ~~automobiles~~ and ~~drivers.~~

Implications Chart

Statement	Implication
the police are giving out lots of tickets today on the highway.	You already know about automobiles, drivers, etc.
A word of prostitution	What does this imply that you already know?

When I say that these words in Matthew 5 are some kind of a *phrase*, please feel the full impact of what I am getting at: A *phrase* is when you take normal words and put them together so that they take on a new and specialized meaning. When something becomes a phrase, things that would otherwise be normal words have become a summarized way of speaking that have taken on connotations and meanings far greater than the words themselves can convey. As another example, no one understands *the phrase* ~~it is raining cats and dogs~~ unless they have already learned it means ~~its raining heavily~~ from previous experience. When compared to the Greek in the rest of the New Testament, after reading ~~a word of prostitution~~ (*logou porneias*) in Matthew 5, in light of its indirect linguistic usage, it became more and more obvious that this was not a simple and straightforward combination of words which we could directly relate to in modern cultures, but that it had to have been used previously as a *phrase* somewhere else in ancient Jewish culture for Jesus to use it here in Matthew 5 without explanation.

And so I searched and scoured through the New Testament for anything that would shed light on this phrase, but not once anywhere else in the New Testament was prostitution ever even referred to in the sense of a ~~word~~ or ~~report~~ (*logos*). I had even asked my *Intro to Greek* teacher what this meant, but doing this still didn't help me completely comprehend the nature of the phrase, since it did not reveal where such a wording originated from, and what its significance was. In that moment of intense consideration and desperation for truth, I suddenly remembered the challenging question that I had been posed with about [the Septuagint](#) the previous year.

The Answer to Logos in Mat 5: The Greek Old Testament!

I had searched through the **New** Testament for an answer, but somehow I had not yet looked through and considered [the Greek Old Testament](#) to determine what ~~a word of prostitution~~ could be. As this realization was rising in my mind, I determined in prayer before God that if the phrase ~~γυναικες πορνειας~~ (*logou porneias*) was referring to betrothal, then it would have to be somehow used in the betrothal chapter in [the Greek Old Testament](#), Deuteronomy 22.

I had fought so hard and so long for the teaching of the permanency of one flesh marriage, and I had even fought for and taught the betrothal teaching, but I did not want to keep teaching anything just because I thought it was right, but I wanted so desperately to actually submit with real integrity to the living dictates of the Scriptures whatever they would be. I did not want to just look to support what I wanted to teach, but I wanted to actually teach whatever the Bible was actually saying. And now, as reverently as I could, I weakly placed a challenge before God: I could no longer promote the phrase in

Matthew as speaking of betrothal if *logos* was not somehow used in the betrothal chapter. I was somewhat terrified at my commitment because as much as I could remember, I could not think of any place where *logos* could possibly be used in the Greek of Deuteronomy 22.

So I searched with great eagerness, somewhat not expecting to find *logos*, and after having glanced through very quickly and not seeing it, and then beginning to go through the first part of the chapter again in detail, I began to feel the sobering reality of possibly not being able to teach betrothal anymore.

And then I hit verse fourteen!

Not only is *logos* in Deuteronomy 22, it is in there three times!!! Not only is it in there three times, but it is in every way surrounding, addressing, and describing the prostitution-sin against betrothal! Are you excited about this yet, or are you still struggling to believe me? Then believe the Bible and see this for yourself:

Deu 22:13-21 CAB And if anyone should take a wife, and dwell [σπληνηθήση] with her, and hate her, 14 and attach [ἐπιτίθη] to her reproachful [πξνυ ασησηθνὸ] words [λόγους (*logous*)], and bring against [θατελέγθη] her an evil name [ὄλνκα πνλεξὸλ], and say [λέγη (*legē*)], I took this woman, and when I came to her I found not her tokens of virginity [παξζέληθ; 15 then the father and the mother of the young woman [παη ὄο] shall take and bring out [ἐμνίσονσηλ] the young woman's tokens of virginity to the elders of the city to the gate. 16 And the father of the young woman [παη ὄο] shall say [ἐξεῖ] to the elders, I gave this my daughter to this man for a wife; 17 and now he has hated her, and attaches [ἐπιτίζεσηλ] reproachful [πξνυ ασησηθνὸ] words [λόγους (*logous*)] to her, saying [λέγων (*legōn*)], I have not found tokens of virginity with your daughter; and these *are* the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall unfold [ἀλαπτύμνησηλ] the garment [κάτηνλ] before the elders of the city. 18 And the elders of that city shall take that man, and shall chastise [παη εὔσονσηλ] him, 19 and shall fine him a hundred shekels, and shall give *them* to the father of the young woman [λεάλη νο], because he has brought forth [ἐμήλεγθελ] an evil name [ὄλνκα πνλεξὸλ] against a virgin of Israel; and she shall be his wife: he shall never be able to put her away [ἐμαποστεῖση] 20 But if this report [ὁ λόγος (*ho logos*)] be [γέλεται] true, and the tokens of virginity are not found for the young woman [λεάλη η]; 21 then shall they bring out [ἐμάμνησηλ] the young woman [λεᾶληλ] to the doors of her father's house, and* shall stone [ι ηζνβνι ἡσονσηλ] her with stones [ἐλ ι ζνηθ], and she shall die [ἀπνζαλειται] because [ὄτη] she has wrought [ἐπνίσελ] folly [ἀξνσύλελ] among the children of Israel, to defile** the house of her father by harlotry [ἐθπορνεῦση (*ekporneusai*): so you shall remove [ἐμαξεῖο] the evil one [τὸλ πνλεξὸλ] from [ἐμ] among you.

[Note: This passage is covered in greater detail, including the Greek, in the appendix entitled, –A Translation and Analysis of the Primary Divorce and Remarriage Passages.]

I very much realize that this is all a lot to take in and comprehend, and that is why I have gone to such great lengths to make it as clear as I possibly can. In an effort to clearly summarize the effects of the Greek here, I am providing the following chart:

A Summary of the Use of *Logos* in Deuteronomy 22 and Matthew 5

Scripture Reference	Greek	English Pronunciation	Explanation
Deu_22:14	λόγους... ὃ νομα πονη ρὸν	<i>logous... honoma poneron</i>	A word/ saying (<i>logous</i>) that brings on an -evil” or -perverse” (<i>poneron</i>) name (<i>honoma</i>).
Deu_22:17, Deu_22:19	λόγους... ὃ νομα πονη ρὸν	<i>logous... honoma poneron</i>	Note: in Greek -perverse” (<i>poneron</i>) rhymes with prostitution/ -fornication” (<i>porneia</i>) – this is a play on words in Greek
Deu_22:20, Deu_22:21	ὁ ἰ ὄγνο... ἐκπορνε σα... πονη ρὸν	<i>ho logos... ekporneusai... poneron</i>	this saying (λόγος; <i>logos</i>) of... committing prostitution/ -fornication” (ἐθπνξλε σαη <i>ekporneusai</i>), where -ἐθπνξλε σαη” (<i>ekporneusai</i>) means to act out -πνξλε α” (<i>porneia</i> ; as used in Mat_5:32 in the next row)
Mat_5:32	ἡ γνπ πνξλε αο	<i>logou porneias</i>	A word/ saying/ report of prostitution/ -fornication”

Do you see the pattern? From the three occurrences in Deuteronomy 22, to the culmination of this terminology in Matthew 5, we can see this pattern repeating throughout the Bible.

In Greek, “to say” is τ γσ” (*legō*), and it is directly related to τ γνο” (*logos*) as you may be able to tell from the way it sounds (see [Strong’s G3056](#) and [G3004](#)). Although it is in different forms, the Greek word τ γσ” (*legō*) is used twice in this passage:

Deu_22:14 – ἡ γη (*legē*)

Deu_22:17 – ἡ γσλ (*legōn*)

These two words (*logos* and *legō*) are actually linked together in the Greek of [Deu_22:17](#) in the words, -now he has hated her, and attaches reproachful words [ἰ ὄγνο] to her, saying [ἡ γσλ]...” (CAB) – In the Greek word order, these two words are together next to each other: —λλ ἐπιρῖξεσηλ αὐτῆ πξνυ ασησηθνὸ λόγους λέγων Οὐρ εὔξεθ α τῆ ζπαγαξί σνπ παξξέληα” If we include the related word *legō* in our count of references to *logos* (as [Deu_22:17](#) somewhat does by association) then *logos* is referenced 5 times in this betrothal passage!:

Deu 22:14 [(1) ἰ ὄγνο... (ὄλνκα πνλεξὸλ)...(2) ἡ γη], v. 17 [(3) ἰ ὄγνο (4) ἡ γσλ], (v. 19 [ὄλνκα πνλεξὸλ]), v. 20 [(5) ὁ ἰ ὄγνο (singular)], (v. 21 [ἐθπνξλε σαη..πνλεξὸλ])

Judah and Tamar – A Word of *Porneia* in Gen 38?

After finding *logos* in Matthew 5 and Deuteronomy 22, I later found that the only other place in Scripture that comes close to paralleling the use of *logos* and *porneia*, as far as I have found so far, is the incident of Judah and Tamar:

Gen_38:24 CAB And it came to pass after three months, that it was told Judah, saying [ι ἐγνλτεο^{G3004} (*légontes*)], Tamar your daughter-in-law has grievously played the harlot [ἐθπεπόξλεπθελ^{G1608} (*ekperorneúken*)], and behold she is with child by harlotry [πνξλείαο^{G4202} (*porneias*)]; and Judah said, Bring her out, and let her be burned.

Forms of Logos and *Porneia* in Genesis 38

- Remember that ι ἐγνλτεο^{G3004} (*légontes*) in Greek (–to say”) is related to the word for –word” (as seen previously).
- Ἐθπεπόξλεπθελ^{G1608} (*ekperorneúken*) is a compound containing *porneia*, and this is why it is typically represented as four words here: –grievously played the harlot”; It is the exact same Greek wording as found in **Deu 22:21**
- πνξλείαο^{G4202} (*porneias*) is the exact same form of *porneia* as found in **Mat_5:32**

“she is with child by harlotry” – Literally and Figuratively

Greek	ἐλ	γαστξι	ἔρη	ἐθ	πνξλείαο
English	in	bowelled	having	out of	prostitution/–fornication”
Figurative Meaning	pregnant		having <i>the pregnancy</i>	as a result of	Having sex while not being married

Even though this passage is not specifically talking about marriage at this point, marriage had been an idea on the horizon (**Gen_38:6-11; 14**).

Did you notice that in this example as well as that of Deuteronomy 22, *porneia* is used to clearly refer to sex before marriage that would stop a person from going on to be wedded to a rightful spouse? While many people today try to say that *porneia* always means any and every kind of sexual immorality, this use of *porneia* in **Gen_38:24** cannot possibly refer to homosexuality, bestiality (sex with animals), or any other such varieties of sexual perversion that people try to permanently and universally blur *porneia* into, since none of these would have resulted in Tamar becoming pregnant before getting married. This is one of many passages that prove that *porneia* can be used in a specific sense to indicate sex before marriage in certain contexts that do not really include other varieties of sexual sin. Do you think that Jesus also used *porneia* the same way as these examples, especially since He (in the same way) also included the word *logos*?

It is clear that when they saw Tamar pregnant, they perceived her to have had sex before marriage, and they used the word *porneia* to describe this sin, and it is described as needing to be –reported” to the woman’s male authority when they found her pregnant. In three months Tamar was reported to Judah, and in three months Mary was reported to her authorities, including Joseph. Mary was reported to her family (usually especially meaning her father and or brothers – **Gen_34:5-7; 2Sa_13:20-21; Gen_34:2-7**; and also: **Deu_22:13-24**) and after that, they reported Mary’s condition to Joseph also, and this is the same thing that they did with reporting Tamar to Judah. Do you see that this –report of prostitution” before marriage is the exact same terminology that Jesus uses in describing a –report” of prostitution that allows divorce?

It is interesting that we have yet another passage that essentially ties *logos* (or *legō*) to *porneia* to describe a situation of fornication. With these two examples that are comparable in the [Greek Old Testament](#), shouldn't we suspect that Jesus is following right in line with this Biblical terminology as He so frequently does with other Greek [Septuagint](#) vocabulary?

A Summary of *Logos*

We see that Matthew 5 and Deuteronomy 22 both use *logos* and *porneia* in making commandments concerning marriage. It is clear from the context that all three uses of *logos* in Deuteronomy 22 are dealing with the potential fornication of a woman in betrothal. The third time *logos* is used, an intensified form of *porneia* –ἐθ~~π~~ν~~ξ~~λε~~ε~~σαι” (*ekporneusai*) is explicitly applied to the girl's* fornication. It is clear in Deuteronomy 22, and even more so in Genesis 38, that when the word *porneia* is used it is not a generic reference to all kinds of sexual immorality, but a specific reference to fornication (sex before marriage).

[* παῖς ὄο (*paidos*) – i.e. she is a young girl (Deu22:15)]

With Deuteronomy 22, it is intriguing enough that it uses *porneia* for a betrothal situation, but it is even more compounding that it also uses *logos* in this way. Doesn't Jesus imitate this pattern when He uses these very same two words for the one and only case where it is righteous to divorce? We should see clearly from this that teaching betrothal as the exception in Matthew 5 is not at all dependant on some “narrow” or “exclusive definition” of *porneia* as fornication (as some have mockingly protested), since there is actually a double confirmation with *porneia* walking hand in hand with *logos*, all the way back to the betrothal chapter in Deuteronomy 22.

If the language of Jesus strategically matches the Greek vocabulary of the betrothal section in Deuteronomy 22, how could Jesus not be talking about the same thing?

5. The Context of the Exception Clause Demands a Betrothal-Exception

Note: much more content for this section is currently being compiled, refined, and developed in the appendix entitled, “Exception Clause Research.”

Reckless and Sloppy Claims Against Betrothal

There is a very strong majority throughout christendom that opposes those who advocate a betrothal-exception. One of their most audacious, ongoing claims is that betrothal advocates are all depending solely on “the narrow interpretation of *porneia* as fornication” to “establish their view on marriage.” Furthermore, they say that the exception of [Mat 19:9](#) cannot be referring to betrothal because the context is dealing with wedded marriage, not simple “engagements.” But did you know that both of these claims cannot be upheld if we submit to every verse in Matthew 5 and 19? Nevertheless, these anti-betrothal assertions are constantly presented as the more “educated” positions on divorce and remarriage, and betrothal advocates are portrayed as “un-scholarly,” idealistic conservatives.

From what I have seen so far, it seems that it is really high time someone confronted the irrational and thoughtless claims against a betrothal-exception. It does not seem like this has really been done yet, as thoroughly as is needed for all sanity and solidity to be established. It is time that the fool-hearty claims of unreasoning men be put to silence, and that we give an honest and realistic consideration to the context of the exception clause.

It is About Context, Not *Porneia*!

It turns out that it is actually the context surrounding the exception clause (**not** the word *porneia* itself) that has held me to a betrothal-exception so long. I have actually tried to leave the betrothal teaching

multiple times, and I keep running into countless Scriptures and solid context every time which will not let me go. I thank God that it is the entire weight of the Scriptures that constantly teaches us a betrothal exception, not the definition of one word! – And as we move further into discussing “context,” did you notice that nothing in this book has been established on the simple basis of “narrowly defining *porneia*”?

The Most Basic Contextual Needs – Submission and Diligence

There is a lot of talk among pastors and seminaries about the importance of context when “interpreting the Bible,” and while we need to repent of our overall rebellious posture of profaning the Holy Scriptures with our human interpretations, yet still, there is a very real reason why people in “Bible schools” and seminaries have often become so emphatic about “context.”

It is not just the common fact that everything in all language ought to be always “interpreted” in context per-se, but that there is a great fundamental difference in the way modern culture communicates and the way the Bible communicates. We tend to speak in all kinds of directions with extremely short attention spans, and we have to always specify every statement we make lest at any moment those who listen to us quickly get lost as to what we are saying. When we turn this tendency toward reading the Bible the result is very destructive. – Often, we as readers and listeners simply refuse to invest the necessary care and energy to endure and persist in seeking truth so that we may understand the message being proclaimed to us.

In great contrast to our sloppiness, the Bible is much more riveted on context than we are used to, to the degree that our shallow modern cultures, with our quick and impulsive reading habits nearly always miss all or most of the entire context which the Bible’s communication is dependent upon. I call this greater dependence on context the “Hyper-Context Principal,” because shallow cultures typically need to think of Scripture in a “Hyper-Context” mode in order to reasonably receive its message. Our negligence in this area is one of the real reasons we feel like we need so much “interpretation,” and we end up making the Bible out to be much more cryptic than it really is.

Although it goes without saying that things like prophecies and parables are intentionally encoded in deep mysteries to keep perverted and foolish people from understanding what is spoken of ([Dan 12:10](#)), yet when it comes to the standards of personal righteousness that we are commanded to hold each other morally and socially accountable to, the Bible is extremely direct and clear to demand our obedience to the truth that we are responsible for applying. Especially when someone actually translates what the Scriptures actually say, and we are sensitive to cultural differences, the moral commands of the Bible do not need to be constantly “interpreted” before we can obey them like we so often think they do, but instead, **we** as readers of the Bible need to repent of being shallow and unsubmitive toward all of the context which we keep neglecting. The Bible is far more practical than we have ever given it credit for, and the fundamental essence of the great divide between our understanding and what the Bible is saying is not due to its lack of clarity, but our lack of discipline, humility, diligence and worship for God’s Laws of Truth.

We often find ourselves very lost when reading the Bible because we already forgot what was said a few verses earlier a long time ago and we are ready to move on to other “immediately inspiring (or gratifying) statements” while Paul on the other hand is still telling you about the great truth you already forgot about a few verses ago. So pay attention! The Bible was never intended to be a “quick read,” (or a *Reader’s Digest*) nor can you readily fragment its sayings as you please and suppose for a moment that you have any idea what it is referencing without carefully submitting yourself to the rules of communication it has established.

Even after you may finally accurately understand the linguistic statements of the Bible (which is hard enough itself with irresponsible English versions) you still have to always hold your attention to a **much** more riveted dependence on context. Every statement must be conscientiously considered with

surrounding statements and you have to believe that the one speaking is not contradicting himself or jumping around in a thousand different directions, but is consistently saying the same thing the whole time in order for you, as a modern reader from a much more shallow social context, to honestly say that you are submitting to the facts of what is being said. Most people get overwhelmed at these things and simply give up on understanding the Bible, while others simply go get professionally trained on how to convince church people that challenging passages do not actually mean what they clearly say, but those who repent of being shallow and rebellious and become faithful, diligent, and hungry, respond in faith to crucify their shallow mindset and are rewarded with truth!

This contextual need is not actually an issue of “~~interpretation~~” as so many make it out to be, but it is an issue of simply being diligent and considerate to submit to every statement the Bible makes, and to not be shallow and impulsive when reading as we tend to be.

We do not really understand deep and spiritual truth and moral laws as quickly as we think we should; we actually need a lot more time than we are usually willing to spend in order to deeply consider the surpassing truth which is proclaimed throughout the Bible. The clear proof that we usually mess up most of the time in this area is that when we draw conclusions about what the Bible teaches in a given verse we end up flatly contradicting other verses which are often in the immediate context of what we just read!

As helpful as “Bible verses” can be for reference purposes, it turns out that the very concept itself of “verses” being in the Bible can be tricky for us, in as much as we tend to frequently misunderstand them to suggest that such sayings are actually being broken down into small, self-governing units of thought – which is usually not the case at all in the Bible. You cannot honestly go and fragment a verse and suppose your own conclusions upon it without carefully and reverently subjecting your reading comprehension under the governing statements which surround it. When you read and come across an absolute statement in a given verse, hold on to it with your life, lest you quickly turn around and recklessly break it as a lawless pervert and forgetful hearer the next time you are tempted to fragment another verse later on and free yourself from righteousness.

Let us consider this —“Hyper-Context Principal” so we may submit to every word of God and not make truth out as though it contradicts itself for the sake of the common practice of our shallow cultures and quick and cheap interpretations. If we pay attention and submit every time God talks and ask God for understanding, then we will no longer need to interpret the Bible with our defiling ideas, but we can actually listen to the truth being given, not be a “forgetful hearer,” (Jas 1:25) and simply obey everything it says.

We do not need to go die in a cemetery to know that context is important (as so many do) since there is no profit in being a “more informed” (yet **de-educated**) breaker of God’s laws. But instead, by faith, in truth, we need to have a submissive posture to diligently keep every detail in mind of every saying which God speaks, and treasure it in our hearts when reading the Scriptures, as the law that now brings life. With the faith that comes out of fervent reverence, we can believe and agree with the governing passages of what God consistently says as we read each verse.

Summaries of the Basic Contextual Needs

- Although the “academic” needs of a real translation of the Bible and an informed sensitivity to cultural details is important, the biggest need we have is actually **moral** (not academic)
- Moral commands in the Bible do not need to be “~~interpreted~~,” they need to be obeyed
- If we simply submit to everything God says, we will no longer be deluded into thinking we have to (re) “~~interpret~~” passages so we can avoid obeying them
- “When you read and come across an absolute statement in a given verse, hold on to it with your life...”

- Especially when there are absolute statements in the Scriptures, we need to reverently submit, and not pretend that God is contradicting Himself
- You do not have a right to develop your own opinion and beliefs about the Bible; You are commanded to repent of your religion and obey what the Bible says, not what you want it to mean
- Don't —ba _forgetful hearer, ' (Jas 1:25)... obey everything it says"
- Being sensitive to the —Hyper-Context Principal," can help us be more conscientious and reasonable when reading the Scriptures
- —The Bible was never intended to be a _quick read, ' (or a *Reader's Digest*)" – so don't fragment its statements as though they were —being broken down into small, self-governing units of thought"
- Be —diligent and considerate to submit to every statement the Bible makes," do not be —shallow and impulsive when reading"
- Spend the necessary time it takes —to ~~de~~ply consider the surpassing truth which is proclaimed throughout the Bible"
- —discipline, humility, diligence and worship for God's Laws of Truth" go a long way for understanding truth, and fervent reverence produces powerful faith to make you related to the solid laws of God and able to obey them faithfully.

Matthew 5 & 19; Mar 10 – Jesus Did Not Re-teach Moses – Jesus Taught that Deu 24 Tolerated Evil, NOT that 'Moses Really Meant to Regulate Something Good'

The context of the exception clause makes it morally impossible for you to conclude that Jesus was simply clarifying What Moses Commanded

Although it is clear that Jesus confronted the divorce sin that Moses temporarily tolerated, there are many unsubmitted people today, going around teaching that Jesus told us What Moses really meant. While it is one thing to simply be confused over these things, it is wicked and rebellious to teach this, and we need to repent of it. Such people would like to contradict Jesus' complete confrontation of this divorce sin and make it out like Jesus was simply teaching the same thing as Moses taught. Surprisingly, this confusion against Moses and Jesus teachings often includes some people seeking to support adulterous remarriage as well as others seeking to oppose it. In either case, we need to arrange our lives under the authority of the Scriptures and fervently repent of this wickedness and agree with Jesus and believe these things exactly like He said them:

Mat 5:31-32 CAB —Furthermore it has been said, _Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a divorce certificate. ' 32 —**But** [δὲ] **I say to you...**

Mat 19:7-9 CAB They said to Him, —**Why** then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" 8 He said to them, —Mose, **because of the hardness of your hearts**, permitted you to divorce your wives, **but** [δὲ] from the beginning it has not been thus. 9 **And** [ἔ – **but**] **I say to you...**

Note that the double use of —**but**" [δὲ] in the Greek of Matthew 19 makes a double (or emphatic) reinforced, contrast with what Moses had permitted.

Mar 10:5-6 CAB And Jesus answered and said to them, —**In** view of your hardheartedness he wrote this commandment for you. 6 **But** [ἔ] **from the beginning...**

Jesus did not say, ‘Moses permitted you to divorce your wives in an evil way because he actually meant that you should only divorce your wives for good reasons,’ (that would be an illogical statement!) but instead Jesus says that Moses really did mean to permit them to divorce their wives, even though this divorce was allowing evil.

It is absolutely clear that every time Jesus mentioned the divorce which Moses tolerated, He contrasts it with what He is now teaching for the New Covenant. Let us no longer be wicked and insist that Jesus was interpreting what Moses meant, because Jesus ascribed his actions to regulating and tolerating evil, not to enforcing what God really wanted.

- Jesus made it clear that he was teaching something different than the divorce which Moses permitted in Deuteronomy 24
- Surprisingly, there are still people going around saying that Jesus was clarifying what Moses taught
- If Jesus said, ‘~~It~~ has been said... [i.e. by Moses to the Israelites] ...**But I say to you**’ (Mat_5:31-32), and you still have the nerve to insist that Jesus was clarifying what Moses meant, it is clear that you are a liar and need to repent
- The very fact that Jesus says, ‘~~but~~ I say to you’ establishes that He is teaching some radically new legislation that has not been established before
- People who do not submit under the authority of Jesus do not go to heaven. If you let your soul be irrational and teach contrary to Jesus’ clear statements your damnation is just
- It is absolutely clear that Moses permitted divorce and it is in this very light which Jesus forbids it
- Jesus’ one exception for divorce cannot possibly be what Moses meant in Deuteronomy 24, because Jesus completely condemned the hard hearts that called for this permission
- Jesus’ divorce exception actually has to be something very different from Moses divorce permission in order for the exception to not be a hard hearted divorce as those tolerated under Moses

Who is Actually Guilty Here?

It is clear from both the Jewish Talmud as well as the New Testament Scriptures themselves (Mat_19; Mar_10) that the Jews consistently considered Deuteronomy 24 to contain the particular cause or causes of fault in a woman to permit divorce.

Mat_19:7 CAB They said to Him, ‘Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?’

But Jesus emphatically confronted this hypocritical debate and demanded that Deuteronomy 24 instead contained an accommodation for the particular guilt in the hardness of **men** who wickedly divorced their wives. Instead of engaging this debate on conventional terms to determine what —some uncleanness” was **in the woman** in Deuteronomy 24 (as recorded in the Talmud and practice to this day), by calling **the men** ‘hard hearted’ and guilty in their divorces Jesus over through the entire basis of their assumption to begin with that there was a lawful reason at all in Deuteronomy 24 for the men to keep divorcing their wives. This is an absolute stance condemning their divorces, which plainly shows that Moses permitted them to divorce their wives **without** a lawful cause against them, for the simple ‘cause’ that the men were hard hearted. No matter what —some shameful matter” was [LXX: ἄσρεκνλ πξῆγκα], **the men** were still guilty for divorcing their wives, but now the absolute rule for hart-purified followers of Jesus, is, ‘when the one God has yoked ‘the one’ together, man may not put space between them.’ (Mat_19:6)

Real followers of Jesus who are hoping by faith in truth to inherit salvation do not have the prerogative to try and adjust Moses’ or Jesus’ Words and make Jesus to seem to be saying the same

thing we want to think that Moses actually meant. We need to face up to the fact that Moses put up with this evil for the sake of the evil people he managed and that God now demands something much higher from us today if we are going to actually inherit heaven and escape the destiny of those whose sins were tolerated. This is what Jesus clearly taught, and we need to repent of trying to pretty up the picture of wickedness which Moses was ordained by God to manage. Jesus condemns this perverse hard heart today, including its wicked divorces described in Deuteronomy 24 which were temporarily allowed by Moses until truth could come inside of the heart of men to stop perverse divorces.

Whatever we make of the exception clause where Jesus did allow divorce, if we are going to be submissive and honest followers of Jesus, then we have to conclude that it has to be something very different than the hard hearted divorce which Moses permitted in Deuteronomy 24!

If we finally come to the reasonable point as we should, and agree with Jesus that His divorce exception is different than Moses' general divorce permission, then we need to determine what then did Jesus allow divorce for...

Stop Fragmenting Porneia; Submit to the Clear Command!

This is Very Important!

While most people zero in on the word *porneia* (Mat_19:9) and fragment this one word and make endless debates over its definition to prove what the exception is (just like they did previously with Deuteronomy 24 I might add!) Jesus already told us what the difference was between His rules and what had been allowed previously: *so the one* which the one God has yoked together man may not put space between, (Mat_19:6). This absolute rule was already clearly set before Jesus ever said anything about an exception. It is impossible that we should now conclude that the exception reverses this! If Jesus already told us that His standard is different than Moses because He no longer allows the separation of yoked spouses, why are we going about thinking to force *porneia* into teaching an exception that includes all sexual immorality, when this flies in the face of the clear rule that has already been set in place?

It is only when we get to our non-Jewish context that people start complaining and grumbling against the idea of *divorcing before the marriage yoke*. There were two basic types of divorce in Jewish society: divorce before marriage (Deu 22), and divorce after (Deu 24). These were regularly discussed as two distinct parts of the same issue among the Jews. Never mind all of this foolish nonsense of saying Matthew 19's context does not address betrothal divorce. The Jews always considered Deu_22 to be directly linked with Deu_24. When Jesus came, He absolutely closed the door to divorcing after the marriage yoke (Mat_19:6), and gave one exception for divorce which could then only occur [before] it. This possibility is wide open among the Jewish context which Jesus addressed, and if we find ourselves not being *“Jewish”* enough to understand this, God has kindly supplied the Jewish Scriptures (in Hebrew and Greek) which talk at length about this, and even use the same words (not just *porneia*) which Jesus uses for the exception.

Notice that it is only after Jesus completely closes the door for the general divorce permission from Deuteronomy 24 (which occurred after marriage), that He then gives an exception for divorce. Unlike nearly every other rabbi of His day, Jesus refused to find a lawful cause to divorce in Deuteronomy 24, but instead gave the one cause of *prostitution*, which can only be found in Deuteronomy 22 when describing betrothal. After Jesus closed the door for Deuteronomy 24's divorce of yoked spouses, the only other divorce left open was the Deuteronomy 22 divorce of non-yoked spouses, which uses the exact same words as Jesus' exception! Do you not yet see how Mat_5 and 19 have to be speaking about betrothal after you give an honest consideration to their context?

This non-yoked divorce of Deuteronomy 22 was so limiting and restrictive, Jesus' disciples could not conceive of how it could be profitable (or safe) to ever marry and begin cohabitation ([Mat_19:10](#)) if indeed men could never be permitted to separate themselves from their wives after God had yoked them together ([Mat_19:6](#)).

Do you see that before ([Mat_19:6](#)) and after ([Mat_19:10](#)) the exception ([Mat_19:9](#)), [Mat_19](#) shows us that divorce becomes no longer available **after** the marriage yoke. If divorce is not available after the marriage yoke, then the context makes it certain that the only divorce which Jesus could have permitted would have to occur before the marriage yoke.

The Common Fornication-Divorce that the Rabbis Constantly Dealt With

Throughout the enormous volumes of the Ancient Jewish Talmud an overwhelming amount of legal discussion is thoroughly debated on every point for all kinds of unforeseen difficult legal cases that were brought to the rabbis. This scene of a man bringing his bride to a rabbi and giving his (initially unproven) word (or *unproven testimony*) that he did not find her a virgin, comes up repeatedly over and over in various tracks within the Talmud, as the rabbis tried to determine without any question whether or not the woman had remained a virgin during betrothal. This is the same scene from Deuteronomy 22 which they discussed when dealing with such cases.

And whenever the Jews discussed the divorce of Deuteronomy 24, the potential of divorce before marriage was always just around the corner in Deuteronomy 22. The Jews constantly compared and contrasted Deuteronomy 22 with Deuteronomy 24 in numerous places throughout the Talmud, and these things are also consistently presented this way in works like Josephus, so that these discussions always go hand-in-hand. For ancient Jewish rabbis, you are always asking, what about divorcing before marriage, and what about divorcing after? You would be really hard pressed to demonstrate that Jesus (being in the place of a Jewish rabbi) meant something entirely different than this common practice among the Jews in light of all the evidence we have presented.

Jesus condemned their discussion of reasons to divorce after marriage from Deuteronomy 24, and when it came to the infamous unproven cases,¹ avoided the unproven adultery and bitter water, but instead gave only one solution in the form of a recognized divorce exception established in Deuteronomy 22, and constantly enforced by the Jews of unproven immorality before marriage. This pre-marriage-yoke¹, divorce-solution for *a word*² of *porneia*³ particularly pertained to Jesus as a rabbi, just as these things are constantly discussed and debated by the rabbis in the Talmud, and recorded for us as a brief example in Matthew one⁴ before Jesus ever gave an exception clause.

1. Pre-marriage-yoke: [Mat_19:6](#), 10

2. (a) divorce-solution for *a word*...: [Deu_22:14](#) [[λόγνο...έγη](#)], v. 17 [[λόγνο_έγσλ](#)], v. 20 [[ό_ι_όγνο](#)]; [Mat_5:32](#) [[ι_γνπ](#)]

3. *Porneia*: ([Deu_22:14](#) [[όλνκα_πνλεξόλ](#)], 19 [[όλνκα_πνλεξόλ](#)]), [Deu_22:21](#) [[έθπορνε_σση...πνλεξόλ](#)]); [Mat_5:32](#) ([πνξλε_αο](#)); [Mat_19:9](#) ([πνξλε_](#))

4. Matthew one: All of these things are played out in [Mat_1:18-19](#)

6. Matthew 5 Shows that the Exception Does Not Allow Remarriage

Whether in English or in Greek, it is clear and certain that Matthew 5:31-32 condemns remarriage, even if done after the exception that allows divorce.

Matthew 5 and 19 Focus on Two Different Things Concerning Divorce and Adultery

The more liberal interpretations of the remarriage issue have deemed the exceptive elements of Mat 5 and 19 as a liberal “exception clause,” presuming that these exceptive elements permit remarriage. It is important to note that they typically insist that both chapters show this view. Many of them would say, “You commit adultery if you remarry, except if you divorced her for adultery,” [although the exception is not about “adultery” but a report of “prostitution” during betrothal].

First, as a matter of clarification, the exception of Mat 5 is focused on how the man is responsible for a woman’s adultery after being divorced and remarried, whereas Mat 19:9 is focused on the man’s (personal) adultery because of his own remarriage (after divorcing). These are two very different specific foci, though they both follow a husband divorcing his wife and end with the wife committing adultery:

Mat 5:32a **KJB** But I say unto you, That whoever divorces his wife...causes her to commit adultery...

Mat 19:9a **KJV** And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife... and shall marry another, [He] committeth adultery...

Do you see the difference in emphasis? I don’t think that even liberals would disagree with the distinction that I am making here.

Note that in Matthew 5, whether or not the man that divorces his wife directly commits adultery himself is not the issue whereas in Mat 19 it is. In Matthew 5 it is only said about him in this verse, that he “...causes her to commit adultery...” Nevertheless as Jesus says later in this same book,

Mat 18:7 **WEB** Woe to the world because of occasions of stumbling [$\sigma\theta\alpha\lambda\iota\sigma\lambda$ – falling]! For it must be that the occasions [of falling ($\sigma\theta\lambda\iota\sigma\tau$)] come, but woe to that person through whom the occasion [of falling ($\sigma\theta\lambda\iota\sigma\tau$)] comes!

So the man is certainly not guiltless in this case, concerning his wife’s adulterous remarriage. Indeed, “woe” to her, but more-so “woe” to him for causing her!

Also note that, though it is not specifically said here that it would be adultery for him to remarry, it is clearly shown that it would be by the fact that the two (the divorcee and the divorced) are still married after the divorce, (regardless of the wife’s innocence or guilt in the divorce). If this were not true, it could not be said that she commits adultery for remarrying. A remarriage can only be adulterous if in fact the first marriage is still intact. The sin of “Adultery” with someone necessitates a third party to whom one of the adulterers is lawfully married.

If you have enough integrity to take the Bible at face value even in this case, as you ought to, you will then have to say that “innocence or guilt,” and “faithfulness or unfaithfulness” have no bearing in this issue to “free” a spouse to remarry. If you then squirm to be free of this striking reality, you will only have the alternative of saying that Jesus was giving the man more permission to remarry than the woman, because immediately following this he says, “...whoever marries her that is divorced commits adultery,” (Mat 5:32b **KJB** / Mat 19:9) – and there are NO exceptions given to this at all. And if men and women are on equal ground in this respect then, “whoever marries [him] that is divorced commits adultery” which is confirmed by Mar 10:11-12.

So if you go on trying to say that the husband has more rights from Jesus’ commands to remarry than the wife, you will sadly be found a fool who has not taken the Gospel of Mark to heart. This is because

the ~~men~~ are exempt” or ~~different~~” interpretation is in all practical effect struck down by what Jesus said in Mark to clearly and finally set men and women on the same plane in this respect:

Mar 10:11-12 CAB ...Whoever should put away his wife and marry another commits adultery^{G3429} against her. 12 And if a wife should put away her husband and be married to another, she commits adultery.”

We can see clearly that Jesus puts the man and the woman on the same level in this issue of the permanency of marriage. There is no excuse for concluding that men and women have different ~~rights~~” to marry: Both equally commit adultery upon remarriage as long as their previous spouse lives, and this is exemplified by the statement about the woman saying ~~—~~. **whoever** marries her that is divorced commits adultery” so that if we combine Matthew and Marks accounts, we find that neither differences in sex nor differences in guilt or innocence change the rules of the permanency of the marriage covenant.

The Ridiculous Attempts to Apply The Exception to the Second Half of the Verse

There are those who try to apply the exception (in the first part of the verse) to the woman who remarries (in the second part). This is wrong because it requires unwarranted re-interpretation rather than a consistent progressive reading. Despite this, it is very common among church leadership to confuse, mix up and regroup this verse in order to present a permissive interpretation. But to understand this practice, let me first give you a visual help:

Mat 5:32 KJV [**1st Statement**: ...whosoever shall put away his wife, (exception: saving for the cause of fornication,) causeth her to commit adultery]: [**2st Statement**: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery]

- Note that the first statement deals with the sin of divorce, and the second deals with the sin of remarriage
- The sin of divorce has an exception in it, while the sin of remarriage has none
- This passage twice addresses ~~whosoever[s]~~,” but only once makes an exception
- Note that the exception is within the first statement, and so permits an exceptive divorce, and is not in the second statement permitting an ~~exceptive~~ remarriage”
- The second statement stands alone without exception.

Liberal church philosophers try to cross the exception over from permitting an EXCEPTIVE divorce (in the first statement), to a GENERAL permission to remarriage (imposed upon the second statement).

So although the verse says this:

Mat 5:32 KJV [**1st Statement**: ...whosoever shall put away his wife, (exception: saving for the cause of fornication,) causeth her to commit adultery]: [**2st Statement**: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.]

The second part is treated by liberals like it says this:

~~—~~. and **whoever** marries her that is divorced commits adultery [*unless she was divorced for committing fornication*]

But moving the exception to the second statement ends up backfiring in a very noticeable way: The exception clearly does not belong when applied to the second statement, because that would say that one divorced for fornication does not commit adultery when she remarries, but the innocent one does. Is the immoral person found more innocent before God to be allowed to remarry? Is such a person less defiled? But in fact, this even causes a problem for liberal thinkers. So to resolve this confusing predicament, they then reverse the exception as well as its location to say:

—...and **whoever** marries her that is divorced (*for committing fornication*) commits adultery”

In this way, an unfounded re-interpretation has been adopted as the standard Protestant interpretation for this verse. But as they do this, did you notice that in order for them to place the small exception within a sentence that addresses the majority of situations, they also have to completely drop out the exceptive words for it to make any sense at all (i.e. *—unless she was...*)? What was said in the first statement as an exception, is lawlessly reapplied in the second as a common, normalized practice that addresses the majority of people looking for a way out of their marriage, and to do this you actually have to take out the specifying word *—except*” for it to fit! This is because of the dynamic of the terms *—whoever*” and *—except*.”

If anything contrary is added to an otherwise all-inclusive statement (such as *—whoever*”) it requires that this addition addresses a small minority (such as, *—except for this case...*”). This dynamic is frustrated in the standard protestant interpretation because the exception (which belongs as an exception within the first statement) naturally finds no *—exceptive*” room in the second statement, because the second statement is deliberately structured to address *—whoever*,” which includes an innocent divorced wife who was introduced in the first statement.

However, even if the exception seamlessly fit when inserted into the second statement, in any case, you are still adding to Jesus’ Words what He never said if you do this. This alone in and of itself is wrong, and we ought to easily recognize this.

The permission for remarriage must be present for a liberal *—exception clause*” to work. But in this passage the innocent wife is said to commit adultery when she remarries, and so does the second man who marries her. But because the guilt that the man bears for causing the adultery in his wife’s remarriage is the primary issue here (because it is patterned out of the same issue addressed in Deuteronomy 24:1-4), the first husband’s potential for committing adultery with his own body by remarrying after a divorce is not specifically addressed until later ([Mat 19:9](#); [Mar 10:10-12](#)). But for the wife’s adultery which the man has become guilty of causing, notice that EVERY remarriage referred to in Matthew 5 is called *—adultery*,” and the man becomes guilty of causing it in every one of these cases.

If we will be honest it is very clear, even in English, that the exception does not allow remarriage in Matthew 5. Because of this clarity in Matthew 5, what should we expect to find in Matthew 19?

7. None of the Ancient Source Text Variations of Matthew 19:9 Permit Remarriage

A Brief Overview of the Major Textual Variations for [Mat 19:9](#)

We have seen how the exception in Matthew 5 definitely does not allow remarriage, and now we need to consider the exception in Matthew 19. The tragic difficulty about this is that there are some source text variations for the exception here, but despite this, the great assurance for our particular needs here

when grappling with the marriage issue is that virtually every considerable source text variation we have for Matthew 19:9 agrees in not allowing remarriage after divorce.

Note 1: We intend to not only go over the most likely textual variations for Matthew 19:9 here, but initially we intend to even include notable textual variations that are very unlikely, in very unreliable versions (that is, poor and inaccurate copies of the Greek New Testament). – Just because we cover certain textual variations for the sake of being thorough and complete does not in any way imply that such textual variations are really worthy of being considered as realistic possibilities of the most authentic version of the exception clause in Matthew 19:9.

Note 2: Because I do not know of another way to meet these challenging and ignored needs, this section of the book tends to be a lot more technical than the rest of the book. These subjects are both morally and even academically challenging, but please do not become overwhelmed with this! I know the things we are about to summarize can feel like way too much to bear (especially for the average reader), but there is a reason I have chosen to take such a difficult path.

Just because nearly all English versions simplify many difficult complications throughout the Scriptures does not mean that this is all we are responsible for considering. It is faithless and treacherous to not face the difficult reality of some of the problems that are out there when it comes to a few particular passages of the Bible. By being upfront and honest, and diligent with great difficulties, we make ourselves candidates to be crowned as those who have sought and obtained truth without fear.

By starting with the –Source Text Variations in Matthew 19:9,” we are beginning with the most difficult aspect of this verse we possibly can, and advancing to a sharper and more defined focus as we progress. Our aim is to start with the chaotic problem and progress to solidity as God helps us in endurance with much faith and confirmation.

Further Notes

Note 3: There is a massive amount of information which I am effectively summarizing in this section for the purposes of this book. If at any point you need to see the original documentation for the summaries given here, including images of original ancient documents, you are free to browse through the massive amount of very technical research I have compiled and documented in the appendix entitled, –Exception Clause Research”

Note 4: I have researched over countless hours and numerous years seeking to make this section as complete and accurate as possible. As usual, If you know of any reliable information or resources that may help improve this section I deeply appreciate your feedback.

Variation #1: The *Textus Receptus* and Other Traditional Sources Allow Divorce, But Not Remarriage

What difference does the exception word make in Variation #1, and what ancient sources support it?

For the purposes of this book, up until this point, when briefly referencing [Mat 19:9](#) we have generally used the traditional Greek text of the New Testament called *The Textus Receptus*¹. This is the Greek text which the [KJV](#) is based on, and all of the Protestant reformers used. This is one of the first *Critical Greek Texts*¹ that was standardized from the textual variations which were available and published with the printing press and widely distributed, and as it continued spanning over numerous revisions and editions, was commonly considered the most authoritative compilation of the Greek New Testament from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century*.

[* i.e. during the 1800s, most scholars started to shift over to *Alexandrian*-type texts for the GNT, as it is to this day]

Variation #1 basically says:

[a man may divorce] –only* upon prostitution” ([Mat_19:9-TR Jos.Trans.](#)) [Greek: εἰ μὴ ἐπὶ πορνείᾳ]

[* **Translational Note:** The brief representation of –εἰ μὴ” (*ei mē*) as –only” involves many details which are covered in some of the following sections]

The distinctive aspect of Variation #1 is that it includes the Greek word $\text{--}\epsilon\iota$ (*ei*) which makes this version of the exception basically say only^c [$\kappa\eta$ vs. $\epsilon\iota$ $\kappa\eta$]. Without this small word (*ei*), [Mat_19:9](#) would simply deny a man the permission to divorce upon prostitution (see [Variation #2](#)).

Variation #1 is an exception allowing divorce for prostitution [*or fornication*], but not remarriage. Despite this, this version of the exception has been misrepresented as allowing both divorce and remarriage by most Protestant English bible versions. [Note: this is the same translational issue which we just briefly referenced in the -- Translational Note⁷].

Variation #1 is supported by...

- What is commonly called the *Textus Receptus*, which includes most every traditional, critical compilation of the Greek New Testament¹ (i.e. *Critical Greek Text*), which in turn has current support from...
- The marginal note in *Codex Leicestrensis*² – that is, *Leicestrensis* (a copy of the Greek New Testament dated to the 1400s) has a correction off to the side of [Mat_19:9](#)'s text which specifies *ei mē* as the correct reading, as well as...
- A number of early quotes from church leaders³, and
- Most every Latin copy⁴ throughout history (from ancient to modern) many of which were naturally made from much older copies of the Greek New Testament than we have available today.

[Note 1: Please remember to familiarize yourself with some of these basic concepts about the Greek New Testament in the Bibliography under -- GNT⁷ if you have not already.

The rest of these notes very briefly reference the basis for Variation #1, which is usually ignored:

Note 2: The issues surrounding *Codex Leicestrensis* are covered in the -- Exception Clause Research.”

Note 3: Leaders within the early church who more or less support Variation #1 include: Clement of Alexandria (150 – 215 AD), Origen (About 184/5 – 253/4 AD) – who explicitly said that Variation #1 [which he quoted as $\text{--}\epsilon$ λ $\kappa\eta$] indicated only^c [η $\kappa\acute{o}\lambda\eta$ $\pi\nu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}$], and (after the *Nicene Apostasy*) the one who is called -- Basil the Great⁸ (329-379 AD). (These quotes are documented in the -- Exception Clause Research,” under, -- A Number of Early Church Quotes Support Variation #1”).

Note 4: $\text{--}\epsilon\iota$ $\mu\eta$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota$ $\pi\omicron\rho\nu\epsilon\iota\alpha$ ” (GNT-TR) = $\text{--}\mu\iota\varsigma\iota$ ob fornicationem” – This Latin version of *ei mē* is supported by nearly every Latin version (from ancient to modern) including the very ancient *Old Latin* versions (including *Codex Vercellensis* – the oldest Latin copy we have, dated from the ~300s AD), the officialized Latin Vulgate itself (400s), the Clementine Vulgate (1500s), and the modern Nova Vulgate (since 1979). – Also, please be aware that I have very thoroughly documented and summarized the indisputable, direct correlation between the Greek $\text{--}\epsilon\iota$ $\mu\eta$ ” (*ei mē*) and the Latin $\text{--}\mu\iota\varsigma\iota$ ” in the -- Exception Clause Research” under, -- .Support For Having *Ei Mē*...”, “The Latin Vulgate, and Other Latin Versions” (etc.), and, -- .The Latin Vulgate Affirms *ei mē* in Matthew 19:9”

Note 5: Variation #1 has quite a bit more support than many people admit. Although it is very certain that this is a very ancient textual variation, many today have tried to discredit it by more or less acting like it was -- invented” in the 1500s by the gross humanist, Desiderius Erasmus, which is very irresponsible and inaccurate. Although I do not necessarily consider this textual variation to be the most authentic, I do insist that we at least be honest and have some integrity about this variation (unlike many irresponsible and irrational -- scholars”) and because of this I have very thoroughly documented a significant number of sources that support it in the -- Exception Clause Research” (as referenced in Note 4).

Note 6: In a few cases (mostly in Latin), Variation #1 sometimes includes a -- word” of prostitution as seen in [Mat_5:32](#), while still retaining a distinct text in [Mat_19:9](#) (and this is agreed with in Greek by Clement of Alexandria, as seen in our -- Exception Clause Research”). In an even smaller number of cases, a -- word” is sometimes added to some of the following variations as well].

Variation #2: The Byzantine Majority Text And Some Alexandrian Texts Say “Not Upon Prostitution”

Most all Greek texts do not actually have an “except” word at all in Matthew 19:9

If the textual variation in the Majority of the Greek Texts we have is more accurate, then Matthew 19:9 would read a bit different.

Variation #2 basically says:

[a man] may not divorce upon prostitution” ([Mat_19:9-Byz Jos.Trans.](#)) [Greek: $\mu\eta$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota$ $\pi\omicron\rho\nu\epsilon\iota\alpha$]

[Note: the word -- divorce” (lit. *loose away*) has been reordered here for English purposes]

Variation #2 is supported by...

Divorce and Remarriage Repentance Revolution - www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com

- The majority of the Greek copies of the New Testament that we currently have, including...
- Most every Greek copy of the *Byzantine Majority Text Type**
- Some Alexandrian Texts**
- Most other classes (or ~~families~~) of Greek texts

[* As represented in the various critical Greek compilations of the New Testament commonly known as *The Byzantine Majority Text*. – This is essentially the same as the *Textus Receptus* (as seen in Variation #1) except they compile it differently (for example, *The Byzantine Majority Text* often puts less weight on certain sources, especially non-Greek sources such as the Latin Vulgate, when deciding between textual variations).

** –Some Alexandrian Texts” support Variation #2 – Most notably, *Codex Sinaiticus*, (but not *Codex Vaticanus*, which has Mat 5:32’s exception as seen in Variation #3)]

With the Majority of Greek texts, if we take the negative Greek word ~~ἄ~~ (mē), ~~not~~,” as it is normally used throughout the Greek New Testament, instead of allowing an exception for divorce, mē would negate even the possibility of divorcing a wife for prostitution or ~~fornication~~” in [Mat 19:9](#), since there would be no word at all that could indicate an ~~exception~~” to begin with. Mē would not just exclude remarriage, but it would not even allow divorce. If we consider mē to be the most reliable variation in [Mat 19:9](#) (as most modern professionals do today), in Greek this makes it even more farfetched to say that some ~~exception~~” also allows a remarriage, since (if it is taken as it is usually used in the New Testament) it would then even negate the permission to divorce.

Although most all versions today have switched over to using this Greek variation (especially since it is also in some Alexandrian texts) yet only a few have actually been honest and consistent enough with this decision to switch from saying ~~except~~” to “not” in English with [Mat 19:9](#)!

Important Greek Grammatical Note: The same grammar in [Mat 19:9](#) (called the *Subjunctive Mood*) is commonly used in countless places throughout the Greek New Testament using this same negative word (mē) to deny permission as a negative command (for example, [Mar 10:19](#)/ [Luk 18:20](#); [Mat 5:17](#); and many others).

[**Technical Reminder Note:** These texts are documented in the appendix entitled, *–Exception Clause Research,*” especially under the small title that says, *–Sources that Support _Not Upon Prostitution_”]*

Variation #3: A Minority of Alexandrian and Caesarean Texts Have Matthew 5’s Exception in Matthew 19

There are a minority of Greek copies of the New Testament that have Matthew 5’s exception in Matthew 19. Some only do this in part (compare [Variation #4](#)), but others have the entire text of Matthew 5’s exception in Matthew 19. So far, I do not know of any bible version or any Greek commentator who has actively promoted this version of the exception as the most authentic textual variation. Most people I have read consider this tendency to be the result of irresponsible copyists. The accidental mistake and or intentional crime of making two different texts look alike is called *–Assimilation,*” and this is what most people consider Variation #3 and [Variation #4](#) to be a result of.

The most notable text to include Matthew 5 in Matthew 19 is *Codex Vaticanus*, which is one of the principle Alexandrian texts used today, which actually **disagrees** with *Codex Sinaiticus* here (the other principle Alexandrian text). The other primary family of Greek texts that provide support for this (which is commonly considered unreliable) are sometimes called *–Caesarean texts,*” but virtually no one would compile a critical Greek New Testament based on prioritizing these texts.

It is not that it is impossible that Matthew 19 originally read exactly the same as Matthew 5, it is just that no one that I've read so far has been able to present notable, authoritative support for this, except the consideration that *Codex Vaticanus* has it, and that there are possibly a few quotes from some early church leaders that may somewhat imply that Matthew 19 might have been the same as Matthew 5. Nevertheless, there are a number of documents that support this reading which are documented in the appendix entitled, [–Exception Clause Research](#),” especially under the small title that says, [–Sources that Purely Support Mat_5:32’s Exception in Mat_19:9.](#)” If anyone does find notable, authoritative support for this variation, [I would really like to know!](#)

This textual variation currently has so little support among textual professionals that basically none of those who have compiled the major Alexandrian-based critical Greek New Testament texts consider this textual variation to be the most accurate by having it as their base text. This includes the critical compilations done by [Westcott and Hort](#), [Nestle-Aland](#), the [United Bible Societies](#), (and more recently) the [Society of Biblical Literature](#) (i.e. the SBLGNT), and a few others.

Although this variation is typically considered a very unlikely variation, if we did conclude that Matthew 19:9’s exception has exactly the same text as Matthew 5:32’s, then this entire issue would be extremely simplified: you could only divorce for ~~–a~~ word of prostitution” and it would be absolutely clear that you could not remarry without it being adultery. – Even *Codex Vaticanus* clearly says “. . . and the one who marries her who is divorced commits adultery,” ([Mat_19:9b Codex Vaticanus](#)) **Note:** We do not need to cover this textual variation anymore than we have here, especially since we have already covered Matthew 5’s exception in the previous section entitled, [–Matthew 5 Shows that the Exception Does Not Allow Remarriage.](#)”

Variation #4?: Mixed-up Versions that Allow Remarriage?

For the most part there are no copies of the New Testament that have an exception that allows remarriage, except in the misrepresentations found in English and other irresponsible versions. The closest thing that comes to this in Greek (which is almost not worth mentioning) is a great minority of very haphazard and unreliable texts like *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis*, but the only way *Codex Bezae* actually does this is by recklessly jumbling up the Greek text by mixing Matthew 5’s exception in with Matthew 19’s Greek text*.

It seems that a great number of people have noted the great number of problems for *Codex Bezae*, and I do not know of anyone who currently thinks its many textual variations are authentic. Virtually every study I’ve read on *Codex Bezae* considers its textual variations to be textual corruptions. Nevertheless, there are a number of documents that support this reading which are documented in the appendix entitled, [–Exception Clause Research](#),” especially under the small title that says, [–Sources that Confuse and Mix Mat_5:32’s Exception Together with Mat_19:9’s Exception.](#)”

Codex Bezae and texts like it are so unreliable that, so far...

- The only way this variation even rarely makes it into any Bibles is through detailed footnotes
- The liberal critic *Karl Lachmann* (1793-1851) is the only one I know of that has integrated this type of a variation as the base text in his edition of the Greek New Testament
- I have only found one person so far who even had the nerve to translate *Codex Bezae* into English: *The Primitive New Testament*. Stamford and London, 1745 – By William Whiston, (1667-1752)

Please Note: the only texts of the Greek New Testament that have an exception that could allow remarriage are very unreliable texts like *Codex Bezae*, which are constantly noted for having many obvious mistakes! Virtually no one accepts these textual variations (or rather, *corruptions*) to be original. – This includes everything from the numerous quotes from original Christianity and even the

analysis of many professionals in charge today. Especially because most everyone recognizes that Variation #4 is simply a typical corruption very much like so many other problems commonly found in a few careless Greek texts like Codex Bezae, there is not much of a practical need to cover this textual variation much further.

[* Note: To see the original faded text of *Codex Bezae* for Mat 5 and 19 (in Latin and in Greek), plus a very thorough Greek analysis of its mix up of Mat 5 and 19's text, see the appendix entitled, "Exception Clause Research"]

Variation #1 and #2 – The Two Primary Exception-Options

From all of these (sometimes overwhelming) details about the textual variations for the exception in [Mat_19:9](#), we basically have two primary possibilities:

Variation #1: You can divorce **–only**" [εἰ μὲν (ei mē)] for prostitution/ –fornication."

This is according to *the Textus Receptus*, most every [Latin copy](#) (from ancient to modern), a number of [early quotes from church leaders](#), and a few other sources in Latin and Greek.

Variation #2: You can **–not**" [καὶ (mē)] even divorce for prostitution/ –fornication."

This is according to the Majority (and some Alexandrian) Greek Texts

Basic Summaries and Considerations about The Two Primary Exception-Options

- Remember that we do not need to expand much more on [Variation #3](#) because (1) As far as I have seen so far, it does not currently have much support among authoritative copies of the Greek New Testament, and this is currently reflected by the position of most all textual professionals and or church leaders in general, and (2) it is exactly the same as Matthew 5:32's exception, and [we have already thoroughly considered](#) how this exception cannot in any way allow remarriage.
- Beyond [Variation #1](#) and [Variation #2](#) most people would say that there are not really any other variations that are practical candidates for the most authentic text of the "exception" in [Mat_19:9](#). ([Variation #3](#) is only occasionally included in the footnotes of some versions).
- Virtually every textual professional agrees that Matthew 19's "exception" is one of these two variations, and currently most agree that [Variation #2](#) is the most likely reading to be authentic.
- Traditionally [Variation #1](#) has been preferred, but currently [Variation #2](#) is now preferred among professionals.
- [Variation #1](#)'s primary support is in the near uniformity of virtually all ancient Latin copies (with a few ancient sources in Greek) and [Variation #2](#)'s primary support is from the majority of all Greek copies of the New Testament we have today (including the most ancient Greek copies we have).
- Notice that the differences between [Variation #1](#) and [Variation #2](#) which we are discussing here is the small Greek word *ei*, [Variation #1: εἰ μὲν" (ei mē) – "only"; Variation #2: καὶ" (mē) – "not"].
- Notice that in both of these primary textual variations, there is not any permission at all given for remarriage. In both cases, it is clear that all remarriage after divorce is adultery, which is exactly what is taught throughout every other New Testament passage on remarriage*.

[* See especially: [Mar_10:10-12](#); [Rom_7:2-3](#); [Luk_16:18](#); (etc)]

8. So What Should We Do With All Of These “Exception Variations”? – Summaries of Solid Proclamations from Matthew 5

The Main Points to Consider From All of these Challenging Textual Questions

Although it is clear that there is a lot to consider when grappling with the source text variations for [Mat_19:9](#), yet for the sake of integrity and honesty we should always remind ourselves that, in the end, basically no matter what source text a person uses, there is no permission to remarry.

From Mat 5 to 19 – Repetition of the Exception Proves that Remarriage is Not An Option

What can we learn and say about the two times that the exception is applied by Jesus in Matthew?

Before we consider source text variations, let’s consider some things that are even more basic no matter what text you use.

If the exception does not have to do with remarriage the first time in Mathew 5 why should we think the second time in Mathew 19 it would include remarriage? It is only logical to say that the same teaching recorded by the same author, quoting the same person, in the same book, concerning the same specific subject matter, referencing the same Old Testament passage, containing the same exception, would retain the same meaning and the same rules for such an exception. If such an exception clearly does not give the right to remarry in the first passage, then we should not think that it would adapt to include the right of remarriage in the second passage.

Now please understand that it is unavoidable that Matthew 5 makes **no provision** for remarriage no matter how you translate it or which source text you use, but it only allows for divorce for only one case. Why then was it so easy for the early Church to conclude that Matthew 5 and 19 were saying the exact same thing, if in fact, the second occurrence permitted remarriage as we so commonly understand and preach in our churches today?

The only reasonable conclusion from early Church history, from reading the actual Greek, and even the proofs carried over into English is that the exception cannot include remarriage, not in Matthew 5 nor even in Matthew 19. Whatever we understand about [Mat_19:9](#), we cannot conclude that it introduces something contrary to the absolute rule previously laid down in [Mat_5:32](#). We should understand [Mat_19:9](#) as a repetition of the same teaching as previously seen in [Mat_5:32](#), not an innovation to now allow remarriage.

Matthew 5 Helps us With Matthew 19

When there are a number of possible textual variations for [Mat_19:9](#), it is important to not branch out on one of these textual variations and establish conclusions that are somehow “different” and contrary to the solid declarations found in Matthew 5 which basically have no major variations between any Greek text. We basically know for sure what [Mat_5:31-32](#)’s primary, original Greek text is, and no major Greek source text disagrees with this, therefore it would not be advisable to base our conclusions on marriage based on any textual variation of [Mat_19:9](#) with an understanding that is somehow strangely different from what we already know that Jesus teaches in Matthew 5.

You do not even need faith to see that a conclusion supposedly based on [Mat_19:9](#) that is contrary to [Mat_5:32](#) is flawed. Even if you do not believe in the Truthfulness of Jesus’ Words, yet, if you have even a little “literary honesty” you know that it is unreasonable to suppose that Matthew would record

his Hero as changing His mind and being inconsistent and irrational when teaching on marriage. Any textual variation that does this is clearly wrong, and anyone who concludes this is certainly being irresponsible with the facts set before them.

If we know that Matthew 1 and 5 taught that divorce must only happen for *porneia*, can we honestly understand that Matthew 19 has a different standard? And if remarriage after divorce is always adultery in Matthew 5, we should know for sure that it is the same for Matthew 19, and this fact in particular is confirmed over and over throughout the New Testament so that it cannot be missed by anyone eager to obey the laws of God on marriage.

As for the divorce exception, it is sure that the man is not guilty for divorcing his wife in [Mat_5:32](#) for “a word of prostitution,” but (as some ask) though the man is not “guilty” for her remarriage, are we sure this divorce is *really* righteous for him? But Joseph’s actions in [Mat_1:18-19](#) prove that this divorce is righteous, and there are no textual variations that can obscure his righteousness! Should we even need to mention here that this same standard is practiced by God all throughout the Old Testament as declared by the mouth of the Prophets? How should all of this affect our understanding of [Mat_19:9](#)?

Whatever we do with [Mat_19:9](#), we should be sure that we are understanding that it is consistent in affirming the same things established in [Mat_5:31-32](#), and then we can be safe from making unreasoning conclusions as we consider and search for which textual variation is the right original Greek text for [Mat_19:9](#).

Matthew 5 – The Divorce and Remarriage Teaching in The Sermon on the Mount

[Mat_5:31-32](#)’s teaching on marriage is found toward the beginning of the most defining sermon ever preached in history, which is commonly called *The Sermon on the Mount* (Mat 5 – 7). Jesus taught us that the Words in The Sermon on the Mount were a rock that we could build our entire life upon and never fall ([Mat_7:24-29](#))*. Because of this, [Mat_5:31-32](#) should have the preeminence in determining marriage for several reasons:

- It is part of the “Sermon On the Mount,” therefore we know that it is the starting place and entire bases for the whole New Covenant
- **The “Sermon On the Mount” is by far the most important passage for summarizing and defining the entire New Covenant in all of Scripture**, including the issue of divorce and remarriage
- This is how the Early Church before Nicaea always used this sermon, and this was what they nearly always quoted for the teaching against divorce and remarriage
- None of the early Church ever saw any conflict or difference between what was taught in Matthew 5 and 19
- There are no major differences in any of the main texts in [Mat_5:32](#). Virtually every text clearly says that divorce and remarriage is always adultery (even when the exception allows divorce).

I thank God that basically no one really can claim that we do not have the original words for [Mat_5:32](#), and because of this, no one who has read The Sermon on the Mount can make any real claim on Judgment day that they did not know that divorce and remarriage was adultery.

[* It goes without saying that [Mat_7:24-29](#) applies to all of Jesus’ Words, by extension. However, when Jesus referred to obeying “these words of mine” that were like building your house on a rock, this promise was initially spoken over everything He had just taught them in The Sermon on the Mount, including His declaration that divorce and remarriage was adultery]

9. Recognizing More Specifically *Why* None of the Variations of Matthew 19 Allow Remarriage

Explaining and considering the details of the exception variations

We have considered many details about the major textual variations for [Mat_19:9](#), but now we need to particularly answer *why* they do not allow remarriage, and eventually, we even need to especially answer this for [Variation #1](#) since this is the primary variation which has been most commonly high jacked by the lawlessness of Protestants to allow remarriage after divorce.

[Mat_19:3-10](#) KJB And the Pharisees also came to Him, tempting Him and saying to Him, –Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for every cause [αἰτίαν (same as v. 10)]?” 4 And he answered and said to them, –Haven’t you read, that at the beginning He which made *them* made them male and female, 5 And said, For this cause a man shall leave *his* father and mother, and shall cleave G4347 to his wife: and the two shall be one G3391 flesh? 6 Therefore they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has fastened [or yoked] together, let man not separate G5563. ” [Greek: let man not put space in between] 7 They said to him, –Why did Moses then *give* command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?” 8 He said to them, –Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses permitted you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. 9 And I say to you, any one G3739, G302 divorces G630 his wife, only G1508 for prostitution G4202 [i.e. fornication]. And if he marries another, he is committing adultery: G3429 [κνηῦται]– Present Tense] and whoever marries her who is divorced G630 is committing adultery G3429, [κνηῦται]– Present Tense] 10 His disciples said to Him, If this is *the cause [*ἡ αἰτ α – lit. the one cause (i.e. which a man can request, as mentioned previously by the Pharisees in v. 3)] of the man with *his* wife, it is not good to marry....

This is straightforward enough, but a great problem has arisen with the way that this is usually represented in English, since most versions misrepresent the exception in [Mat_19:9](#) as though it allows remarriage:

[Mat_19:9](#) KJV And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

Matthew 19 Translation Appeals Before We Go into More Details

Please heed the following warnings when wrestling with the right representation of the Greek of [Mat_19:9](#) in English:

- Much of what is commonly said in English about the teachings of Matthew 19 cannot actually be supported in Greek (no matter what variation you use).
- A lot of people say and believe a lot of things about Matthew 19 today, and seem to often find partial support for their heresy in the faulty aspects of irresponsible English bible versions, but these faulty conclusions do not actually have the same support in the original Greek.
- Whether it is the lawlessness of –~~KJV~~–only” proponents, or (even worse) the astonishing apostasy and sloppiness of those who praise versions like [NIV](#) or even the wicked, so-called [NLT](#), as for **you** (the reader), please don’t have a wicked heart and say, –I love my English translation that man has given me more than God’s Words (as recorded in Greek) that God has given me.”

- It doesn't matter how you have been raised or what distorted views you or I may be inclined to cling to, none of them change the fact that God's Words (in the **truest** sense) have been **perfectly** recorded in Greek, and are often imperfectly represented in English. The perfect gift in Greek is far superior to the imperfect representation in translations, and you would be foolish to sacrifice the true substance for a distorted shadow.
- Be loyal to God, not to translations. They mean nothing if they don't align with what God says.
- Please thoroughly hear these things all the way through:
Pro_18:13 Jos.Trans. Any [one] *who* answers a word [λογον (logon)] before *he* hears [ἀθὴν σαη(hakousai)], *it* is thoughtlessness [ἀνζυσύλε – senselessness/ ἤγ. foolishness/ recklessness] and reproach to him.

Matthew 5 vs. Matthew 19 – The Difference Between Exception Words in Variation #1

The need to represent *ei mē* in English is probably the most decisive distinction to make when translating Matthew 19:9 from **Variation #1**. When the two Greek words, ἐἰ (*ei* – G1487) and ἢ (*mē* – G3361) are combined they produce the compound word, ἐἰἢ (*eimē* – G1508). This is the very reason why translations often render this compound as one word – typically either ἐξέτι or μόνον . It does not directly, literally mean ἐξέτι or μόνον but it is often used that way by context, so translators often represent it this way. Because of this we have to ask ourselves which way it functions in Matthew 19. Understanding *Ei mē* is enough of a challenge in and of itself, but these things are even more complicated when you consider that it is a completely different story when it comes to Matthew 5!

We should keep in mind that it is only because this compound word (*ei mē*) is often translated as ἐξέτι in Matthew 19 that most people incorrectly think that it is the same ἐξέτι word found in Matthew 5. But let the reader know that they are two completely different words!

When you look in a typical English version and see:

Mat 5:32 WEB ...**except** for the cause of sexual immorality...

and

Mat 19:9 WEB ...**except** for sexual immorality...

These are two completely different words that must not be confused as the same word! The following chart helps clarify this:

The Two Exception Words Used in Matthew

Scripture Reference	The Greek	A Compound of...	Short Definition
Mat_5:32	παρἔκτος ^{G3924} (<i>par-ektos</i>)	παρἔκτος ^{G3844} + ὄχι ^{G1622}	–Besides” (what is) –outside” (of what we are talking about); (except)
Mat_19:9	εἰμὴ ^{G1508} (<i>ei-mē</i>)	εἰ ^{G1487} + μή ^{G3361}	–If” + –Not” = “Except”/ –only” (when used that way)

Mat 5:32 – παρἔκτος [next to/ aside (from...)] + ὄχι [outside/ other than/(except)]

Mat 19:9 – εἰ [if] + μή [not]

We can see that the pieces that make up the two ἐξέτι words are totally different. Because of this, the rules that govern each word are also different. The exception word in **Mat_5:32** [lit. *next to (and) outside of*] is quite naturally used to speak of ἐξέτι in just about every context, but did you know that the ἐξέτι word in **Mat_19:9** is very different?

Throughout the Greek New Testament $\epsilon\iota\ \mu\bar{\epsilon}$ ” (*ei mē*), as used in **Matthew 19:9** (**Not in Mat 5:32**), almost always means **–except**” or **–only**” (depending on the context and grammatical setup). – Because of this, if we use **Variation #1** (the primary variation Protestants have used to allow remarriage), we need to determine if *ei mē* is used as **–except**” or **–only**” in **Mat 19:9**. – Please pay attention here! These are two very different words with very different linguistic rules that apply to them, and we need to be conscientious as to how we comprehend the differences between Matthew 5 and 19!

The problem with bible versions using *ei mē* as **–except**” in Matthew 19:9 is that an exception like this would basically require an absolute statement preceding it for it to mean **–except**” in this case. This principle is somewhat true in English, but it is much more so the case with this Greek compound word because **–ei mē**” in and of its self does not independently mean **–except**,” but it is used this way when the surrounding elements demand this upon the term.

The Early Church’s Understanding of the Greek of Mat 19

As documented in the appendix entitled, **–The Historical Church Teaching**,” all of the early church leaders read pre-English versions of the Bible. When they read Matthew 19, most of them read it in the original Greek:

ΛΕΓΩ ΔΕ ΤΜΙΝΟΣΙΟΣΑΝ
 ΑΠΟΛΥΣΗΣΗΝΓΤΝΑΙΚΑ
 ΑΤΣΟΤ ΕΙΜΗ ΕΠΙΠΟΡΝΕ
 ΙΑΚΑΙ ΓΑΜΗΣΗ ΑΛΛΗΝ Μ
 ΟΙΥΑΣΑΙΚΑΙ ΟΑΠΟΛΕΛΤ
 ΜΕΝΗΝ ΓΑΜΗΣΑΣ ΜΟΙΥΑ
 ΣΑΙ

(**Mat 19:9** GNT-TR*)

[* **Note 1:** I have formatted this text to most closely match the ancient manuscripts used in the first century (i.e. ALL CAPS; no spaces)

Note 2: Although I happen to be using the TR (*Textus Receptus*) as a base text, this should not be understood as a particular approval of Variation #1. Notice that I have grayed the word **–ΕΙ**” – As we have already said, Variation #1 would say **–ΕΙΜΗ**” (*only*) while Variation #2 would simply have the exception as **–ΜΗ**” (*not*); Nevertheless, virtually every single early church writer before the 300’s taught as though they were reading Variation #1 by unanimously allowing divorce **–only**” for prostitution (without remarriage) so it may be appropriate to represent this as their reading for this reason]

Those in the early Church read **Mat 19:9** with clearer eyes than we have today among those who read Greek, since not only were they significantly less removed from the original language by time and culture, but even more than this they had not yet been polluted with the theoretical theologies of theologians and modern christianity. I often thank God when reading them, because they are neither **–Catholic**” (in the modern sense of the word) nor are they **–Protestant**,” but the earliest Christians are actually amazingly **Biblical**. Since most English-speaking people cannot read this verse (morally or linguistically), help from courageous sources such as these can often be very vital.

It is **extremely** noteworthy that these church leaders, who had a better chance to read the Scriptures more accurately than we do, repeatedly said that the exception in Matthew was **only** for divorce and **not** remarriage. Even after tragic corruptions, **numerous** early Church writings (from saint to heretic) unanimously show that when they read **Mat 19:9**, they did not see in the Greek text of Jesus and Paul’s teachings any permission whatsoever to remarry. – Even those who wavered some on other issues and points unanimously confirmed that divorce and remarriage was never allowed, even if the exception applied to their situation:

–According to our teacher... they are sinners who contract a second marriage, even though it is in accord with human law...”

(Justine Martyr, First Apology 15)

–That scripture counsels marriage, however, and **never** allows any release from the union, is expressly contained in the law: “You shall not divorce a wife, except for reason of adultery.” And it regards as adultery the marriage of a spouse, while the one from whom a separation was made is still alive.”

“Whoever takes a divorced woman as wife commits adultery,” it says; for “if anyone divorce his wife, he debauches her;” that is, he compels her to commit adultery.”

–And not only does he that divorces her become the cause of this, but also he that takes the woman and gives her the opportunity of sinning; for if he did not take her, she would return to her husband.”
(Miscellanies 2:23:145:3)

It is not until around the time leading up to the great apostasy of the Council of Nicea (325 AD) that you even hear of people trying to get permission to allow remarriage in the church, and even then remarriage was opposed by every leader and writer within the Church that we have record of before Nicea.

General Problems with Matthew 19:9 in English Versions

We see that numerous early references to the teaching in Matthew 5 and 19 all consistently understood that the exception was for divorce alone and not for remarriage, no matter what the circumstances. How can this be this way when most versions in English* do not seem to even allow this understanding? As we noted earlier, the **KJV** (like most other English versions*) says, “...except *it be* for fornication, **and shall marry another**...” Most English versions* have a curious habit of connecting the exception to remarriage, and this is especially peculiar and noticeable if you are used to reading Greek or even Latin throughout history and hearing the general teaching of the church before Protestantism*.

Please be Aware of this Historical Note: Many movements related to Protestantism and various “re-formations” were largely responsible for putting the Bible into English, but this was not without a number of various doctrinal scandals in the process! May I alert the English reader that **Mat 19:9** has also been misrepresented in this way? But who would dare to call the bluff on this hoax in this adulterous generation?

The way that Matthew 19:9 is Commonly Represented in English today Has Many Problems!

- (1) Our representation of **Mat 19:9** disagrees with **every** early (Greek and Latin) Church leader (from saint to heretic) who ever wrote on this subject, (especially before the corruptions around the 300’s).
- (2) It disagrees with six other clear, New Testament Scriptures which unquestionably present the law of divorce and remarriage to give **absolutely no permission for remarriage** as long as the two live (with or without fornication, adultery, or divorce). – This is including the parallel passage in the very same book: **Mat 5:32**. Even if you stay within the very same book and compare Matthew 19 with Matthew 5, chapter 5 very clearly does not allow remarriage whatsoever for the divorced woman without charging her with adultery. Can we reasonably make a conclusion about Matthew 19 that actually contradicts Matthew 5?
- (3) Even if you stay within Matthew 19, allowing remarriage would contradict the very same chapter and verse itself: If we set the chapter (not to mention the very verse itself) to contradict itself we have definitely violated the doctrine of the infallibility of Scripture, (**Psa 12:6; Pro 30:5-6**;

Rom_3:4; 2Ti_3:15-17; 2Pe_1:21). If we say that this verse allows an exception which permits divorce and remarriage, we say that it teaches something contrary to the rest of the chapter:

Mat_19:6 KJV ...What therefore God hath joined [σπλ δεπμελ – fastened/ yoked] together, let not man put asunder.
- **No exception!**

Mat_19:9c KJB ...whoever marries her who is divorced^{G630} is committing adultery^{G3429} .”
- **No exception!**

With these examples, it is certain that there is no exception for the innocent, chaste, divorced wife, because –whoever” marries her –is committing adultery,” (Mat_19:9c KJB). But the fact that we now have so many versions claiming that Mat_19:9 –“excepts” and or –“changes” this absolute standard is actually an unnecessary contradiction which has basically never really posed a difficulty before Protestant versions of the Bible were produced.

Today, most church people would desire to have the first part of Mat_19:9 say that there is an exception allowing for remarriage, despite the fact that the second part of the verse (and the rest of the Bible) clearly and directly says that there is not. But despite the common misrepresentations of the exception in English, the Greek actually does not support applying the exception to allow remarriage, especially when held next to the context of the chapter it is found in.

The Parenthetical Nature of The Matthew 19:9 Exception Clause

(1) Context Proves the Parenthetical Nature of the Exception Clause

Have you ever noticed or considered that there is a parallel passage recording the same events in Mark 10 as seen in Matthew 19 when Jesus teaches against divorce and remarriage? Have you ever wrestled with the fact that, although there are variations in the details presented, the two accounts still give essentially the same teaching except for the big fact that Mark does not include anything about divorcing for prostitution at all? What is more is that Luke 16 also repeats this same phrase in a different scenario, and although it is nearly identical to the wording of Mat_19:9, it does not have any form of an exception clause!

One of the very strong proofs that the fornication note in Mat_19:9 has to be a parenthetical statement is that basically the exact same teaching is used in Mark 10 and the same wording is used in Luke 16 without any exception. Now, if Mark and Luke understand and present the exact same saying without an exception as inspired Scripture, it is clear that the basic saying itself is fully capable of standing on its own as an absolute statement without a critical and defining need to always mention an exception.

It is absolutely clear from this, from both the immediate grammar and by the extended comparison of parallel passages, that the fornication note in Mat_19:9 is a side statement (about divorce) that cannot by any means overthrow the absolute rule (against remarriage) as given in Mark 10, Luke 16, and the rest of the Bible.

If we can understand this as a parenthetical divorce note (as it always has been understood since original Christianity) then it is very easy to see how this does not alter the clear rule that divorce and remarriage is adultery. But if we high jack this saying in a fragmented, English misrepresentation of Mat_19:9 (as most have done) and present it as a defining and altering exception allowing remarriage, then we have created a new –“problem” where the Scriptures now seem to disagree with each other, and we are forced to change our theology and break Jesus clear and absolute law against divorce and remarriage.

(2) What Exactly is a *Parenthetical Phrase*?

Obviously, Koine Greek¹ does not have parenthesis marks [i.e. –(–) – a type of punctuation for written language] as we do in English today, but as with most languages, it did have *parenthetical phrases*, which essentially accomplish the same purpose without punctuation.

A *Parenthetical Phrase* or *Statement* is a saying or note that temporarily breaks the train of thought and digresses off topic in the middle of a sentence in order to make side notes, distinctions, and or clarifications that the listener or reader may not be aware of. The goal of such statements is —to ~~stea~~ parenthetical phrase off from its root sentence”² and make —a digression (or a clarification).”² A *Parenthetical Phrase* is —when you want to quickly insert a detail without distracting the reader”² and give —a subordinate clause: a nonessential phrase.”²

One of the ways that you know that a statement is a *Parenthetical Phrase* is when you can temporarily remove it and the sentence still remains intact and does not change or distort the point of the speaker. – When we apply this to divorce and remarriage, I need to ask you a very important question: When you remove the exception clause from Jesus’ divorce and remarriage teaching, does it radically alter the message that Jesus has about divorce and remarriage? If so, I’ve got news for you: Mark and Luke in their Gospels **already “removed” it**, and you need to make a decision whether or not you consider their writings to be authoritative Scripture! It is extremely clear that Mark, Luke, and the entire early Church (from saint to heretic) understood the prostitution note in Matthew as a parenthetical phrase by frequently quoting the marriage teaching without it! How about you? Are you willing to **submissively** quote the marriage teaching along with Mark and Luke and believe that it is still perfectly true with no critical need to —clarify” or embellish something to give people a way to escape the charge of adultery for remarriage? Mark and Luke clearly treated the exception as —a nonessential phrase.”² and I am pleading with God that you also would be found in their glorious company!

If Jesus’ teaching is drastically altered when you remove the exception clause, then you’ve got the big problem of a contradiction of Scripture, but if in fact, Matthew is simply including a parenthetical phrase which does not alter the message of Jesus’ teaching, then the Scripture still perfectly agrees in Matthew 19 as well as Mark and Luke, but we have to deal with English translations which have misrepresented Jesus’ teaching. So you need to make the basic decision up front of whether you consider the Gospels themselves as being more authoritative and reliable or if you consider that English translations have faithfully and accurately represented the Words of Jesus in Matthew. As for me, I will go with the original Words of Jesus any day over the shameful apostasy of modern christianity, and I will set my ambition on the hope of attaining to the righteous legacy of original Christianity which constantly stood against the adultery of divorce and remarriage, even if every English Bible version today disagrees!

So we see that the parenthetical nature of the fornication note in Matthew 19:9 can be seen in the Greek grammar, but this can also be seen by compelling evidence that is even carried over into English.

[(1) Koine Greek – the common Greek language used in the LXX (Greek Old Testament) & GNT (Greek New Testament), which was in use around 300 BC to 300 AD. (See Bibliography)

(2) Source: www.dailywritingtips.com/parenthetical-phrases/
Retrieved 10/27/11

“Only Upon Prostitution” Grammatically Accomplishes Something

Greek Grammar Shows that the “Exception” actually accomplishes something “upon [ἐπι] prostitution,” rather than moving on to Allow Remarriage

No matter which Greek variation of the Matthew 19:9 exception that you may go with, there is something inherently *parenthetical* about its posture which has been embedded in the sentence structure surrounding it. Although it is even easier to demonstrate the same principals in [Variation #2](#), I am ambitious to show these things with greater security by focusing particularly on the more challenging wording found in [Variation #1](#), so that we may answer the most difficult questions first, and at the same time, also know for sure that it applies in all of the more simplistic cases as well.

In [Variation #1](#), the words *ei mē* are the Greek words for “if not.” But just because *ei* basically means “if” and *mē* basically means “not,” that does not at all mean that “if not” means the same thing in Greek as it does in English.

In Greek this compound *ei mē* has an extremely “flexible” and dynamic capacity to make a qualification when it is positioned to relate to two things that a speaker wishes to affect each other. *Ei mē* does not mean “except” by itself, but if it is put in the position to except two things it has the linguistic capacity (or technically, it has the *semantic range*) to do this in Greek. **Simply put:** The way you make it “except” something is by putting it into the position where it **has to** make an exception between two things. But this is not all it can do.

Ei mē is so flexible in its ability “to make a qualification” between two things, that it can also specify one thing upon another, much like saying “only” in English. Whenever *ei mē* is qualifying two things but it is not clearly in the position to “except” them, it nearly always makes a specification instead. (You may want to read the examples we are about to give and then come back and read these three paragraphs again to fully understand all of this).

Cases* that Make *Ei Mē* “Except” Something

(A) Make *Ei Mē* to be Preceded By An Absolute Statement and Followed By An Exception

That is: Absolute Statement + *Ei Mē* + Exception

Example: All humans go to hell, **except** [lit. if (they are) not (of)] those who obey the Bible

(B) Make *Ei Mē* Begin a Sentence, Add an Exception, and Then Tag an Absolute Statement onto The End

That is: *Ei Mē* + Exception + Absolute Statement

Example: **Except** [lit. if (they are) not (of)] those who obey the Bible, all humans go to hell

When Does *Ei Mē* Function as *Only*?

To help this make a bit more sense, let’s compare [Case A](#) with *ei mē* when it is used as “only”:

- [Any Object – Absolute Statement] + “ $\epsilon\iota\mu\epsilon$ ” (*eimē* – if-not) + affected Object, can make *ei mē* function as “**except**” ([Case A](#) exception)
- [Any Object – Not an Absolute Statement] + “ $\epsilon\iota\mu\epsilon$ ” (*eimē* – if-not) + affected Object, can make *ei mē* function as “**only**” (a specification)

Example of *ei mē* as “only”: A human may escape going to hell **only** if they obey the Bible

Greek Note: Yes, “if not” (*ei mē*) can actually be used as “only” in Greek sentences like this. I know that can be hard to grasp, but that is just one of the ways Greek works which is much different than English.

Did you notice that the words, “**All** humans go to hell...” form an absolute statement but the words “**A** human may escape going to hell” do not form an absolute statement? This is why *ei mē* would function as “**except**” if it followed the words “**All** humans go to hell...” ([Case A](#) exception) but it would definitely function as “**only**” if it followed the words “**A** human may escape going to hell...” (a specification).

[* Numerous examples of *ei mē* making exceptions and specifications throughout the entire Greek Old and New Testaments (LXX and GNT) can be seen in the appendix entitled, “Exception Clause Research.” (We are about to go over some examples where *ei mē* specifies things in a moment); **Also note:** it is nearly impossible to represent *ei mē* directly and literally in English whenever it functions as “only” in Greek because we do not usually have anything that even comes close to this in our language.]

Because Matthew 19:9 has an action verb preceding it (i.e. one may divorce...), and it does not begin a sentence, we can focus on Case A for the purposes of determining what is being said in Matthew 19:9. But have you noticed that the words, one may divorce... do not make an absolute statement? This means that the “exception” *ei mē* is actually a *specification* in Matthew 19:9 because (without a preceding absolute statement) it has to specify the next object that follows, which in this case is “prostitution.” It is not put in the posture where it **has to** make an exception between two things” therefore it simply specifies one upon the other, and this is the way *ei mē* is consistently represented in most all Bible versions, except when it comes to Matthew 19:9! But truly, *ei mē* functions as a specification in this passage, just like it does in every other passage that is like it!

Mat 19:9 ... anyone may divorce his wife [an action-verb – but not an absolute statement!] **only** [εἰ κἢ (*ei mē*)] upon prostitution. And if he marries another woman, he commits adultery. And the one who marries one who has been divorced commits adultery [No Exception!]

Grammatically speaking, this is exactly like our previous specification-example, which we can somewhat expand here to conform to **Mat 19:9**:

*A human may escape going to hell **only** if they obey the Bible. And if they go back to a life style of living in sin they will go to hell. And everyone who does not repent of living in sin will go to hell.*

Because Matthew 19:9 precedes “εἰμη” (*ei mē*) by an action-verb but does not precede it with an absolute statement, it does not function as “except” in Greek. It is reasonable to represent it as “only” in such a case, but most bible versions would not dare do this because it would mean that readers of English Bibles would be able to see that the one case where divorce is allowed it does not permit remarriage, and what a catastrophe this could cause!

***Ei Mē* Does Not Tackle Three Objects At Once**

Because *ei mē* has the linguistic capacity to make a qualification between **two** things, it can only deal with **two** objects at once when being used this way. It cannot go ahead and add the **third object** of remarriage into this equation, because it has already accomplished its grammatical function when it specified that divorce was for prostitution. The exception word in Matthew 19:9 is placed between **two** objects so that it modifies the preceding action verb “divorce” onto [or lit. upon (ἐπί)] the following object of “prostitution.” *Ei mē* never tackles the third object (of excepting remarriage) like most English versions want so desperately to falsely make it look like. *Ei mē* makes Matthew 19:9 have a *specification* allowing divorce, it does not except the following adultery of remarriage.

If anyone wants to represent *ei mē* as though it is making an exception allowing remarriage, I demand that they produce at least **one example** like this in the entire Bible (LXX or GNT) where *ei mē* tackles **three** objects at once like this, so that after specifying divorce upon prostitution it might also go on to “except” remarriage, and I can affirm after thoroughly searching every single reference possible in the entire Bible*, that I have not seen even **one** example of *ei mē* being used like this!

[* I have documented every occurrence of *ei mē* in the entire Greek Old and New Testaments (the LXX and the GNT) and I have documented this thorough research in lists of references and their analysis in the appendix entitled, “Exception Clause Research”]

Some Natural Examples that Agree With the Parenthetical Nature of the Exception Clause, Even in English!

Whether it is [Variation #1](#) or [Variation #2](#) the “exception clause” has a *parenthetical nature* which does not allow it to permit remarriage, even if divorce is allowed in [Variation #1](#). In Greek it is easy enough to see that even with the exception clause in [Variation #1](#), *ei mē* is a side-statement permitting divorce, which does not overthrow the entire statement as a whole so that it also allows remarriage as most represent it in English.

Not that long ago in 1957 some of these Greek considerations were published in a book which was endorsed by the head leader (called the *Superintendent*) of the Assemblies of God (which had been one of the fastest growing denominations in the United States). As we have quoted in the appendix entitled, [“The Historical Church Teaching,”](#) in 1957 the General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, Ralph M. Riggs, wrote the *Foreword to Does Divorce Dissolve Marriage?* (by Milton T. Wells) in which he fully approved and encouraged this thorough book on marriage that also taught that, in the Greek, the exception does not alter the phrase, “and marries another.” After reading this book many years ago, a few years later not only did I see this to be true by learning to read the Greek myself, but I also confirmed these details by other people who speak Greek, some of whom even teach it.

Contrary to the agenda of most modern religious professionals today and their mistranslations, the Greek has stayed consistently disallowing remarriage from the beginning, which is why this has actually been the historical Church teaching from the very earliest writers we have on this issue!

If it is not surprising enough to see this coming through a main-line denomination with the approval of its leadership in 1957, of all the even more unexpected things to happen, after so much compromise and apostasy, even more recently a few bible versions have come out that represent the English consistently this way, showing these verses to actually be consistent with the early church view! (...at least partly in the way they represent the exception in [Mat 19:9](#)):

NCV – New Century Version (1987)

“I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman is guilty of adultery. The only reason for a man to divorce his wife is if his wife has sexual relations with another man.” (NCV on [Mat 19:9](#))

[NCV (like nearly all modern versions) is based on Alexandrian Texts of the New Testament (specifically, *the third edition of the United Bible Societies* [see GNT in the Bibliography for more]) – based on this, they should theoretically be representing Variation #2, but they are still representing this verse as if it were Variation #1]

BWE – Bible In Worldwide English New Testament (1996)

“But I tell you this. No man may send his wife away unless she has committed adultery. If he does, and if he marries another woman, he commits adultery. And if a man marries a woman who has been sent away by her husband, he commits adultery.” (BWE on [Mat 19:9](#))

[Source: “Taken from THE JESUS BOOK - The Bible in Worldwide English. Copyright SOON Educational Publications, Derby DE65 6BN, UK. Used by permission.” – I have not yet been able to determine which variation this may or may not reflect, especially since, from what I have read, it seems to be unclear if the original goal of this version was really much more than simply “teaching English” by providing an easy-to-read version. But for what it is worth, it is interesting to see the exception being understood in a clear way that does not allow remarriage.]

NIrV – New International Reader’s Version (1998)

“Here is what I tell you. Anyone who divorces his wife and gets married to another woman commits adultery. A man may divorce his wife only if she has not been faithful to him.” (NIrV on [Mat 19:9](#))

[NIrV is naturally based on Alexandrian Texts of the New Testament, especially since it is based on NIV – this means that it is supposed to be representing Variation #2 (even though the wording is really that of Variation #1). (Note: For what it is worth, NIrV claims to have continually referred to the Greek when updating this version from NIV to NIrV)]

Do you see that in these versions the exception is presented as allowing divorce alone, but not remarriage? Although it goes without saying that none of these are really authoritative versions as a whole, yet on this one point I would commend their rendering of Matthew 19:9 inasmuch as it breaks from modern assumptions about some theoretical “exception” which allows remarriage, and this is extremely unusual for a modern version to do! This is very surprising, not because it represents some *new teaching* that no one has ever thought of before, but an unexpected acknowledgment of a very ancient one, which finally gives us something in English which is somewhat consistent with the actual Greek, which has always been taught for countless years before Protestantism, and which even dates back to the early church, which is embraced at least here on this one point by modern versions. Though these versions are by no means superior bible versions, it is intriguing that the exception is not directly linked to remarriage, and in this one respect, they are more accurate than many other more literal translations.

Of course, just because others are reaffirming this, it does not in any way make it true. But I do hope you will consider the evidence in this point and all of the proofs that I am showing in the preceding and following points and consider all of these resources which I have made and compiled to help bring things to you directly from the Greek!

Examples Where Translators Know that *Ei Mē*, Specifies Rather than Making an Exception

I am providing some extremely important examples here from my research that demonstrate why I represent the exception word in [Mat 19:9](#) as “ohy.” Note: As a basis for this point, I have gone through every single occurrence of *ei mē* in the entire Bible (LXX and GNT) and documented this in the appendix entitled, “[Exception Clause Research](#).” The following are only some of the more important examples that I collected from this.

You may also be interested to know that I have not only carefully considered these passages in the Greek of the LXX, but I have also consulted multiple English translations of the Septuagint (including CAB* and NETS) and compared them when compiling and providing these examples.

[* Also note: CAB is essentially the same as the classical Septuagint (LXX) translation done by Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton (1807-1862) originally published in 1851”; (see Bibliography)]

(1) Examples Where *Ei Mē* Specifies as “Truly” or “Surely”

[1Ki 20:23 CAB](#) ... *but if [* ε̅ ν̅ δ̅ε̅] **we should** [theoretically] **fight against** [πολεμήσομεν^{V-AAS-IP} – Subjunctive Mood (same grammar as used in [Mat 19:9](#))] them in the plain, **verily** [εἰ κῆ] we shall prevail against them.

[2Ki 5:20 CAB](#) And Gehazi... said... as the Lord lives [εἰ^{V-PAS-3S} – Subjunctive Mood (same grammar as used in [Mat 19:9](#))], I will **surely** [εἰ κῆ] run after him, and take something from him. [Lit. Grammar: *if the lord lives (a grammatically ‘theoretical’ setup), then I will surely () do this...*]

These first two examples are extremely important because they are using the very same grammatical structure as [Mat 19:9](#). If you will carefully consider these two examples ([1Ki 20:23](#) and [2Ki 5:20](#)) you can see that if we represented [Mat 19:9](#) the same way as these verses use *ei mē*, there is no way that any exception could allow remarriage! We can return to this consideration toward the end of this point, but for now let’s continue to look at many more examples related to this!

2Ki 9:26 CAB **Surely** [εἰ κή], I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, says the Lord...

Job 22:20 CAB **Verily** [εἰ κή] their substance has been utterly destroyed, and the fire shall devour what is left of their *property*.

Note: Some compilers of some LXX source texts consider this verse to be a latter addition to the LXX, but either way it is still an example in the Greek language where *ei mē* is used as a specifying affirmation rather than making an exception.

Jer 15:11 CAB Woe is me, *my* mother! You have born me as some man of strife, and at variance with the whole earth. I have not helped *others*, nor has anyone helped me; my strength has failed among them that curse me. [i.e. those that persecute Jeremiah for prophesying] 11 Be it so, ~~Lord~~ [ἐσπντα – ruler (i.e. addressing God)], in their prosperity; **surely** [εἰ κή] I stood before You in the time of their calamities, and in the time of their affliction, for *their* good against the enemy.

Although the language can be very difficult to follow here, Jeremiah is saying that he **truly** interceded for them when they were being troubled by their enemies, but now these same people are persecuting him ~~in~~ their prosperity,” and now he is venting to God about this. (See the rest of this chapter for the context, such as Jer 15:15, etc.). – In this passage *ei mē* affirms the reality of Jeremiah’s intercession, it clearly does not make an ~~exception~~” for anything.

Jer 48:27 CAB ~~For~~ [θαὶ – and] **surely** [εἰ κή] Israel was to you a laughing stock, and was found among your thefts, because you fought against him.

[Translational Note: Although CAB has this as ~~surely~~” here, NETS represents it as a question instead: ~~And if not~~ [εἰ κή], was Israel a jest for you?” (NETS). Either way you represent *ei mē* in English (as ~~surely~~” or as a question), the Greek *ei mē* is specifying in this case, not excepting (especially in light of the surrounding context).]

Eze 5:11 CAB Therefore, *as* I live, says the Lord; **surely** [εἰ κή], because you have defiled My holy things with all your abominations, I also will reject you; My eye shall not spare, and I will have no mercy.

(2) Examples Where *Ei Mē* Basically Specifies as *Only*

Job 42:8 CAB ...And My servant Job **shall pray** [εὔμεταν– lit. *request* (a basic root for the Greek word for *prayer*)] for you, for I will **only** [εἰ κή] accept him...

Note: Some compilers of some LXX source texts consider this verse to be a latter addition to the LXX, but either way it is still an example in the Greek language where *ei mē* is used as a specifying affirmation rather than making an exception.

[Also note: there is a lot more to consider with the Greek of this passage, but I have focused in on the most critical aspect]

- Did you notice that *ei mē* is preceded by an action verb (~~shall pray~~”), but this verb is not an absolute statement?
- Did you notice that *ei mē* does not make an exception in this ~~prayer~~”?
- *Ei mē* is used to specify ~~him~~” (Job), not to make an exception.
- This passage could have said something like, ~~I will not accept anyone’s prayer for you, except~~ [εἰ κή] Job’s,” but instead, because the actual verb ~~shall pray~~” is not an absolute statement, it has to specify the following object (~~him~~” – Job).

- This is a slightly different way of using *ei mē* that does not make an altering exception to an absolute rule, but simply specifies one thing within an absolute rule.
- Can you see similarities with the way this passage uses *ei mē* and the way [Mat_19:9](#) uses it?
- [Job 42:8](#) uses *ei mē* to specify “~~Job~~” and [Mat_19:9](#) uses it to specify “one reason to divorce,” but neither is really making an “~~exception~~” in the proper sense from everything else that is being said in each passage.
- Because [Mat_19:9](#), is specifying (much like [Job 42:8 LXX](#)) it cannot be “~~excepting~~” to also allow remarriage.

[Eze 20:39 CAB](#) And *as for* you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord, *even* the Lord: Put away each one his *evil* practices, and hereafter ἴ [$\epsilon\iota\ \kappa\eta$] – i.e. something like, only if or surely if] you hearken to Me, then shall you no more profane My holy name by your gifts and by devices.

Although this case is hard to categorize for representation in English, did you notice that it is clear, no matter how *ei mē* is represented there is no exception here, but *ei mē* is clearly specifying Israel’s obedience to God as the solution to their sin problems. No one is making an exception to either “~~doing evil~~” or “~~obediently listening~~” to God, but instead, listening is specified as the solution, and the [LXX](#) uses *ei mē* to accomplish this specification. Do you see how [Mat_19:9](#) (TR) uses *ei mē* to specify prostitution as the “~~only~~” reason to divorce, and we have no real reason for insisting that it makes an “~~exception~~” that this divorce permission should also extend into allowing remarriage?

(3) Examples Where *Ei Mē* Specifies a Question

[Isa 40:28 CAB](#) And now, *have you not known [$\ast\ \nu\acute{\iota}\theta\ \epsilon\gamma\lambda\sigma\sigma\iota$]? ***Have you not heard** [$\ast\ \epsilon\iota\ \kappa\eta\ \eta\theta\nu\pi\sigma\alpha\sigma\iota$]? The eternal God, the God that formed the ends of the earth, shall not hunger, nor be weary, and there is no searching of His understanding.

We can see in this example that *ei mē* can be used to raise a rhetorical question*. In this example *ei mē* does not make an exception to “~~hearing~~,” nor does it make an exception to God being the eternal God (and anyone with a little orthodoxy knows that!). It is clear that (1) they have heard, and (2) God is the eternal God! *Ei mē* does not make an exception to any of these things, it actually specifies these facts.

Additional, Possible, Specifying Question Examples:

- In some texts *ei mē* is used in [Job 12:10](#) as a question, but in all texts it specifies rather than excepting.
- As seen previously, [NETS](#) considers *ei mē* in [Jer 48:27](#) to be asking a question rather than making an affirmation

Although the grammar of [Mat_19:9](#) does not particularly allow us to specify “~~prostitution~~” within a question**, these “~~question~~” examples still generally show us another way which *ei mē* repeatedly specifies what follows. *Ei mē* does not make an “~~exception~~” in any of these examples, but it specifies what follows, much like *ei mē* works in [Mat_19:9](#) ([Variation #1](#)).

[* In Greek grammar this is sometimes referred to as, “The power of *mē* to raise a question”]

[** My understanding so far is that the use of the “~~Subjunctive Mood~~” for the theoretical scenario in [Mat_19:9](#) means that Jesus was most likely not “~~Specifying a Question~~,” (as seen here) since that usually requires a different mood called the “~~Indicative Mood~~”]

Important Grammar Considerations for *Ei Mē*

In Greek there is a special grammar for communicating theoretical scenarios, and this grammar is called the “~~Subjunctive Mood~~.” This is the “~~Grammatical Mood~~” Jesus speaks in, in [Mat_19:9](#) when

describing a theoretical scenario of ‘A man possibly divorcing [ἀπολύσῃ] his wife.’ It is in the grammar of this theoretical scenario which Jesus gives the exception. While the use of the –Subjunctive Mood” does not appear to allow us to –Specify a Question” (as some of the examples we saw) it does allow us to specify as –trly” or –only” in Mat_19:9, especially since this is very similar to the first two examples we already looked at that also use the –Subjunctive Mood” in this way. That is, 1Ki 20:23; 2Ki 5:20; Mat_19:9 all use the –Subjunctive Mood” and specify their theoretical scenarios by using *ei mē*. When both 1Ki 20:23 and 2Ki 5:20 even use the same grammatical setup as Mat_19:9, it makes it really hard to insist that Mat_19:9 is making an –exception” that allows remarriage, since it is very obvious that it would be impossible to conclude that *ei mē* is used like this in 1Ki 20:23 and 2Ki 5:20.

Summaries of How *Ei Mē* Often Specifies Rather than Excepting

All of these examples prove that *ei mē* can definitely *specify* the object that follows it. It does not always work as an –exception.”

No matter how you represent *ei mē*, if you represent it consistently with the principals demonstrated in these examples, it is clear that the divorce exception can in no way allow remarriage. Whether it is used as –trly” or –only,” especially when *ei mē* is proceeded by an action-verb which does not accomplish an absolute statement, it consistently specifies the object following it instead of making an exception, and that is exactly what the case is in Mat_19:9 (Variation #1). In fact, the first two examples given (1Ki 20:23; 2Ki 5:20) go so far as to even use the same grammatical set up that Mat_19:9 uses!

No wonder no one in original Church history ever considered the –exception” to allow remarriage! Whether they were using the original Greek or the ancient Latin translations (which definitely had *ei mē* represented as *nisi* [as seen in Variation #1]), they were not using dishonest English versions and they were not surrounded by the perversions of modern christianity! Whether it was in Greek or even Latin, they all knew the exception did not allow remarriage!

Ei mē specifies prostitution as the –only” allowed divorce in Mat_19:9 (Variation #1), just like it specifies so many different things in the numerous examples we have just seen. It is only reasonable to conclude that *ei mē* is used to specify the reason to divorce in Mat_19:9 and not to except the adultery of remarriage, and this is just like *ei mē* is used in the many examples shown here, and this is just like the –exception” was always understood by original Christianity, no matter what language they spoke.

We are obliged to repent and conform to such truth!

[* **Reminder Note:** I have gone through every single occurrence of *ei mē* in the entire Bible (LXX and GNT) and documented this in the appendix entitled, –Exception Clause Research”]

Origen Confirmed that “Only” Is A Reasonable Representation of *Ei Mē* for Matthew 19:9

As we said in a small note previously, Origen (About 184/5 – 253/4 AD) explicitly said that *ei mē* (which he quoted as –ἐ λ κῆ”* – *ean mē*) indicated only prostitution (–ἡ μόνῃ πνεύματι”). – Origen used a slight variation of Variation #1 and as he discussed it, he paraphrased it with an alternative word for –only”/ –alone”/ –one” – κόλη (*monē*), (where we get “mono” from).

We see that Origen, who spoke and read Greek fluently (along with numerous other languages), understood a phraseology almost exactly the same as Variation #1 [ἐ λ κῆ ἐπὶ πνεύματι] to indicate only upon prostitution.”

[* –ἐ λ κῆ” (lit. *if maybe not*) in Greek is almost the exact same compound word as –εἰ κῆ” (lit. *if not*)]

Charting the Greek of Mat 19 Helps Us More Exactly Understand This Verse

Matthew 19:9 Translational Chart

Note: Word-order is according to the original Greek, not the English

KJV	Greek	Significance	More Accurately
I say	ι εγω ^{G3004}		I say
And	ε ^{G1161}		but
unto you,	πκηλ ^{G5213}		to you
	ντη ^{G3754}	A setup for what He is about to say; often works as quotation marks in English	that
Whosoever	νο ^{G3739} αλ ^{G302}	one (νο) + may be (fig. any), (αλ)	one may [fig. anyone]
shall put away	απνι ποσε ^{G630}	<i>divorce</i> – in the “Subjunctive Mood” (i.e. may divorce...)	loose away
	τελ ^{G3588}	–the” (specific)	the
wife,	γπλαθη ^{G1135}	Lit. <i>woman</i> ; functionally: <i>wife</i> (because of –ελ” and –ηπνυ,” as seen in the next row)	woman
his	απνπ ^{G846}	Lit. <i>of him</i> – qualifies the preceding word, –γπλαθηα” as meaning <i>wife</i> rather than simply <i>any woman</i>	of him [his wife]
except	εικη ^{G1508} [ει ^{G1487} + κη ^{G3361}] (Variation #1)	A compound word meaning –except” or –only.” In this case it means <i>only</i> , because it is not preceded by an absolute statement.	only [or may not unless...]
it be		Added by KJV for old English readability	
for	επι ^{G1909}		upon
fornication,	πνξληα ^{G4202}	Pronounced: <i>porneia</i>	prostitution [i.e. <i>fornication</i>]
and	θαη ^{G2532}	Does not work as a conjunction the same way –and” does in English	and
shall marry	γακεσε ^{G1060}	The –one who commits” an action is often implicitly present in the action words of many non-English languages	<i>the one who marries</i>
another,	αι ι ελ ^{G243}		another
committeth adultery:	κνηρατη ^{G3429}	Present tense indicates ongoing action	<i>is committing adultery</i>

So from examining the Greek, we can summarize...

[Mat 19:9 Jos.Trans.](#) ^{-functional} But I say to you, that one may divorce his wife only upon prostitution [or *fornication*]. And *the one who marries another is committing adultery*. And anyone who marries her who is divorced is committing adultery.

A Summary of Why Matthew 19:9 Does Not Allow Remarriage

We have considered an overwhelming amount of condensed information that represents many years of research so that we may demonstrate with much security that none of the variations of Matthew 19:9 allow remarriage.

- We ought not to complacently settle with the dishonest scandals of our current, Protestant English versions any longer, especially when they introduce apparent “~~exception~~-contradictions” among the Gospels as well as the epistles that were never there before in church history.
- We ought to carefully and thoroughly study all of the details throughout Matthew 5 and 19 to be sure and know what Jesus’ fornication note is saying.
- We ought to reverently consider that, although divorce was allowed “only upon prostitution,” original Christianity never permitted any nonsense about some “~~exception~~” allowing remarriage that nearly every church teaches today.
- We ought to reasonably consider that Matthew 5 had already clearly given a parenthetical divorce exception (no matter how you translate it), so we have never really been entitled to add a remarriage exception to Matthew 19 to begin with.
- We ought to carefully consider the *parenthetical nature* of the exception clause, which is not only noticeable in the immediate grammar of the Greek text of Matthew 19 itself, but is also undeniably confirmed by Mark, and Luke, and the rest of the New Testament and all throughout original Christianity (from saint to heretic).
- We ought to understand that this *parenthetical nature* holds true for every variation of Matthew 19:9, and even with [Variation #1](#), *ei mē* specifies as “~~only~~” allowing divorce and not remarriage (as even Origen described it from Greek).
- We ought to consider that with [Variation #1](#) these *specifying* principles of *ei mē* are, at times, demonstrated not only by a few more recent versions when representing Matthew 19:9 in English, but they are also scattered all throughout the Greek Septuagint (LXX) and consistently represented by multiple translators in English as specifying something rather than excepting, (and some clearly *specifying* examples of *ei mē* even use the same grammatical setup as [Mat 19:9](#)).

From all of these things it is abundantly clear that no matter what exception variation you choose, Matthew 19:9’s fornication note does not by any means allow remarriage, and if you question Mark and Luke’s authority to state it this way, then I question the safety of your soul.

[Mar 10:10-12; Luk 16:18]

10. The Spiritual Parallel Confirms Both Betrothal and No Remarriage

Husbands and Wives Specifically Reflect Jesus and the Church

God’s Engagement is a Betrothal!

Jesus proposed to us an engagement by taking the communion cup ~~and~~... saying, “...drink all of it,” ([Mat 26:27 Jos.Trans.](#).)” If a Jewish wife-to-be did not drink all of the drink in the engagement cup that

Jews sometimes used, then she was saying that she did not want to marry the man who offered it to her. Jesus proposed to us in this same way for a reason.

Betrothed Church

Jesus' Bride	Scripture Reference
We who obey the Biblical Gospel are called the sons of God,	Mat_5:44-45; Joh_1:12; Rom_8:4; Gal_4:5-7; Heb_12:7; 1Jn_2:29-1Jn_3:1-3; Phi_2:15
but still, we are not all the way adopted yet.	Rom_8:19-23; Eph_1:5
In the same way, we who obey Jesus are even now corporately called the Bride of Christ,	Isa_62:5; Hos_2:19-20; Joh_3:29; Rev_22:17; (also see the verses in the next rows...)
And just as marriage makes people One "Flesh," so also God's Church is presently One "Spirit" with Jesus.	1Co_6:16-17; Eph_5:22-33, especially: Eph_5:30-32
The True Assembly of Real Christians currently makes up Jesus' bride, and is in covenant with Him even to the point that we are presently called one "spirit" with Him, yet the marriage supper has not yet happened but is instead prophesied to be an event coming in the future.	Mat_22:1-14; Mat_25:1-13; Rev_18:4, Rev_18:20, Rev_18:24; Rev_19:1-14; Rev_21:2, Rev_21:9;
This is because Jesus' Assembly is bet rothed" to Jesus in a one spirit covenant relationship, but is not yet co habiting" in the Ultimate Spiritual Marriage.	— ...for I have betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ," (2Co_11:2 CAB)

Please note this reality: At no time has anyone experienced a consummated marriage relationship with God, whether it be [National Israel](#), the Church, or the Apostles. Not even those who have been made perfect in heaven (Compare: [Heb_7:19](#); [9:9](#); [10:1](#); [11:40](#); [12:22-23](#)) have been exalted to the point of consummation with Jesus yet. In fact, these very people, from the Old as well as the New Testament, are scheduled to be at the marriage supper that is yet to come ([Mat_8:11](#); [Luk_13:28](#)) and are waiting in the meantime (ex. [Heb_12:1](#); [1Th_4:15-17](#); [Rev_6:9](#)).

It is surprising to me how many well-meaning people have mistakenly thought that Israel entered into a ~~wed~~ded" marriage relationship with God the Father, when Scripture directly says that they were in a **betrothed** relationship ([Jer_2:32](#)*) just as the New Testament saints are said to be in betrothal ([2Co_11:2](#)).

[* compare [Jer_2:2](#) MT]

Jer 2 – Divorce is Possible During Betrothal to God, But Not After The Marriage Feast

So many countless multitudes have completely ignored the fact that God was clearly in a betrothal when He divorced Israel in the Old Covenant:

Jer 2:2-3 CAB I remember the kindness of your youth [νεότητός], and the love of your betrothal [τελειώσεώς], **3** in following the Holy One of Israel, says the Lord, Israel was holiness [ἁγιος] unto the Lord, *and* the firstfruits of His increase...

Jer 2:7 CAB ...you went in, and defiled [ἐμίανατε] My land [a clear reference to the defilement of remarriage as seen in Deu 24:1-4 as well as Jer 3:1-3], and made My heritage an abomination.

Jer 2:9 CAB Therefore I will yet **plead-with you** [ζητήσομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς – *have judgment toward you all*; fig. *take you to law/ the (local) court*, i.e., culturally: take you to the leading rabies of the city and bring the accusation that you have been with another man, and then let them judge you accordingly], and will **plead-with** [ζητήσομαι – *have judgment / law toward*] your children's children.

Jer 2:21-29 CAB Yet I planted you a fruitful vine, **entirely of the right sort** — how are you a strange vine turned to bitterness! **22** Though you should wash yourself with lye, and use much soap, *still* you are stained **by** [ἐν – in] your **iniquities** [ἀδικίας – unrighteousness-es/ injustices] before Me, says the Lord. **23** How will you say, I am not polluted, and have not **gone after** [ἐπορεύθην – somewhat related to –*πνέξλε α*” (*porneia*); (same as v. 25)] **Baal?**... **24** **she has extended her ways** [ἐπλάτυνεν] over [ἐφ’] the waters of the desert [note: –waters” are typically an image for *the peoples* (i.e. that she prostituted herself with)]; **she was hurried along** [ἐπλεπκατνυνξείτην – difficult Greek: lit. *she is carrying herself along (by) spirit*; or –*she was wind-borne*” (NETS), fig. *blown around by the wind* (see ALS p. 230; 450)] **by** [ἐν – in] the lusts [ἐπιθυμίας – same as Mat_5:27-30] of her soul; she is given up *to them*, who will turn her back? None that seek her shall be weary; at *the time of* her humiliation [ταπεινώσει – i.e. very clearly: *when she is cheapened by filthy prostitution*; (this word is often used to describe *rape*, but in this case the –*humiliation*” is *voluntary!*)] they shall find her. **25** Withdraw [ἀπόστρεψον – turn away] your foot from [ἀπὸ] a rough way, and your throat from [ἀπὸ] thirst: but she said **I will strengthen myself** [Ἀνδρῶμαι – lit. *I will act myself (as) a man*; fig. *I will encourage myself*] — for she loved strangers, and went after them [ἐπορεύετο – (same as v. 23)]. **26** As is the shame of a thief when he is caught, so shall the children of Israel be ashamed; they, and their kings, and their princes, and their priests, and their prophets. **27** They said to a tree, You are my father; and to a stone, You have begotten me; and they have turned *their backs* **to** [ἐπ’ – upon] Me, and not their faces [πρόσωπα]. Yet [καὶ – and] in the time [καιρῶ – season] of their afflictions [κακῶν – i.e. *when bad stuff is happening to them*] they will say, Arise, and save us. **28** And where are your gods which you have made for yourself? Will they arise and save *you* in the time [καιρῶ – season] of your affliction? For according to the number of your cities were your gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem they sacrificed to Baal. **29** Why [τίνα τι] do you speak unto [πρὸς – toward] Me? You all have been ungodly [ἡσεβήσατε – irreverent], and you all have transgressed [ἤλγκήσατε] against [εἰς – into/ unto] Me, says the Lord.

Jer 2:31-33 CAB Therefore hear **the word** [λόγον] of the Lord: thus says [λέγει] the Lord, Have I been [έγενόμην – become] a wilderness or a dry land to Israel? Why [διὰ τί – *through* (fig. *because of and on account of*) *what*] have My people said [εἶπεν], We will not be ruled over [κυριευθησόμεθα – *lorded over*, i.e. *as a wife under her lord/ “husband”* (Θπξηφόσει– Gen 3:16 LXX)], and will not come to [πρὸς – toward] You anymore [ἔτι]? **32** Will **a bride** [νόμφη (*nymphē*) – where we get the word *nuptial*] forget her attire [κόσμον], or a **virgin** [παρθένη – (primary *virgin* word)] her ornaments [στηθοδεσμίδα – *chest-bond* (i.e. women need this before going in public); fig. *girdle* (compare ALS p. 503)]? But My people have forgotten Me days without number! **33** What [τί] fair [καλόν – lit. *good/ well*] device will you yet [ἔτι] employ in your ways, so as to seek love [ἀγάπην]? *It shall not be* so; moreover [ἀλλὰ καὶ – but (stronger contrast) also] you have done wickedly [ἐπονηρώσω – fig. *perversely* (sounds like *porneia*)] **in corrupting** [μιᾶναι – defiling (as in 2:7, 23; 3:1-2, etc.; Deu_24:1-4; etc.)] your ways;

Jer 2:35 CAB Yet [καὶ – and] you said, I am innocent [ἄθωός]: only [ἀλλ. – but (stronger contrast)] let His wrath [θυμὸς – hot breathing; fig. anger] be turned away from me. Behold, I will ~~*plead with~~ you [κρίνομαι πρὸς – have judgment toward you], in that you say, I have not sinned.

Notice the Betrothal in Jer 2!

Although the exact wording for betrothal is not consistently established between the MT and LXX for verse 2, we do have an extremely clear reference to betrothal in verse 3.

Whether we (non-Jews) realize it or not, the words “holiness unto the Lord” very clearly speak of betrothal in Jewish culture. For example, it is recorded all throughout the ancient Talmud that when a man established a betrothal a woman was then called “erusha” or “holi-fied” or “sanctified” to the man, since she had been purchased and “set apart” to this particular man (which is what “holiness” means!). In fact, the Talmud has an extensive tract of endless discussion about betrothal and that is the very title of this entire long and extensive section – Erusha!

Verses 22-23 are a clear reference to tainting betrothal (i.e. their “Holiness”) and defiling it with intimacy with other “men” (in this case *other gods*).

At the very beginning of Jeremiah 2 it is very certain and definite that God speaks of Israel’s betrothal to Himself. In Jeremiah 3 God speaks of divorcing Israel during this betrothal time. From this and countless other passages like it, it is abundantly clear that God is willing to divorce during betrothal, and constantly speaks in this way throughout the prophets. But God also speaks of a time that is coming when He will have a “marriage feast” with all His people, and after this **there is no divorce** (Rev 19-22)!

How this Correlates with the Betrothed Bride in the New Covenant

We, who are the “Bride of Christ,” have not been to the marriage supper yet, nor have we been “consummated” yet. We are waiting to be found faithful. Only on this side of eternity, do we have to watch ourselves so that we are not divorced from Jesus. But people who do not understand this, do not understand the issue of divorce and remarriage.

I once had a roommate who was asked, “If the exception is about the engagement and not consummated marriages, then why did God divorce Israel?” and this is a very good question: Would God ask us to do more than He is willing to do? If He commands us never to divorce after consummation then why did He divorce Israel? If we can understand the principles that are missing behind this question then we can gain a lot of understanding.

We must realize that the original societal practices surrounding marriage were strategically retained by the Jews during the times of the Bible, because these Jewish ways of celebrating the marriage covenant directly reflect the way God offers salvation through the New Covenant to relate to mankind. In other words, Jews used to do marriage very differently than we do, and God has chosen this as a model, parable, and physical representation for how He has offered to relate to mankind, including Jewish betrothal.

So what does all of this say? God’s divine and mysterious, pre-wedded, spiritual, marriage relationship with His Church shows us how we ought to be doing marriage among ourselves as humans here on earth. If we are only allowed to divorce before being wedded, then it will be reflected in God’s relationship with mankind. Do you expect that it is possible at all for God to ever divorce His people after entering into His eternal Kingdom after the wedding feast? If not, then neither should we defy such a truth by thinking that it is ever permitted for us to divorce a spouse after our wedding day. If we do this anyway, then we violate the Holy image that God left for people on the earth, and we will have to answer to Him who is in Love with His Bride on Judgment Day, as those who have lied to all of mankind against His bride, and against His unending faithfulness to her, by marring such an image of

His spiritual wedding that is yet to come, by securing a divorce here on earth after cohabiting with a spouse. The image of marriage that God left here on earth is serious business!

If we are expected to understand that humans are ever to be allowed to divorce after marriage, then the same would have to hold true with God's relationship with mankind, since marriage is a divine picture of the redemption of mankind.

For some reason, we want the comforting thought of being eternally excepted by God with everlasting acceptance and security in eternal goodness, but we think we can also allow divorce and remarriage among our married couples. But on the contrary, we see very clearly from these Scriptures that God was only willing to divorce his people before marriage, during the betrothal stage. Hopefully it is easy for us to see that there is no possibility of divorce between God and his people after "The Marriage Supper of the Lamb." Since the wedding represents this consummated relationship with God, we ought to learn from the example that God has shown us that we are not to divorce after we are wedded. We are in deep trouble if we violate the parable of marriage that God has given us by allowing divorce after being wedded, because it was given to us representing His relationship with mankind. We are not simply marring marriage, we are disrespecting God's image of salvation and the redemption of the human race unto Himself. We are opposing the very idea that humans ought to turn from their sin and honor God when we spit on the picture of this by sanctioning divorce and remarriage.

It is bad enough to divorce, but if we go even further by remarrying, we are committing ourselves to the distortion of the image of marriage that God left us to point to a relationship with Him. If we remarry after divorce, then, by virtue of our actions and positions, we are communicating a rebellious lie that says God is unfaithful to His wayward bride, and promoting His bride to waywardly remain in the idolatry of remarriage:

God is Not Looking for Others to Marry After Divorce

Is God ready to divorce humans in order to marry others? No Way! There is only one Bride of Jesus, and He has no other suitable alternatives in mind. In the same way, even by divorcing during betrothal, Jesus has no other in mind to marry, and neither should we. It is true that a number of the members of the Body will be cut off and wither because they become cancerous vines in the Divine Root ([Rom 11:17-22](#)) which must be cut out to avoid polluting the whole Body with sin. A wife may cut out and remove cancerous members because of problems in her body, but this does not change her identity as the wife of her husband. In such a cancerous case, the member was of the same nature and essence of the body, and continued as part of it until the essence and nature of that member turned contrary and destructive to the nourishment of the whole, in which case, it was better to be permanently disunited with it than to allow infection and destruction also to the other members. From this point on she becomes bereaved of a piece of flesh that once was a part of her being but now lays dead outside of her. At the same time she is grateful and relieved for the greater good of her body that the wicked cancer is removed which had clung and overtaken the previous member.

All of this mention of cancer is to say that, although we see certain members who would have inherited heaven who have now fallen by the wayside, this is no evidence at all that God has changed his mind about His overall bride. He Loves her eternally with unquenchable Love, ([Son 8:6-7](#)) and will do all that it takes to see her healthy and cancer free, because no matter what may transpire in the mean time, He will see to it that He marries her, and that she ends up being His precious and glorious bride, cohabiting with Him forever.

There is still only One Body ([Rom 12:4-5](#); [1Co 10:17](#); [12:12-25](#); [Eph 2:16](#); [4:4](#); [Col 3:15](#)) and one Bride ([Rev 21:9-27](#)) that Jesus has in mind, whether they be from the Old Covenant or the New. Ultimately not even premarital unfaithfulness will change His mind and ultimate determination as to what bride He has chosen for Himself for eternity. In the end, she will be pure, and God will never

change His mind so as to consider another even in the face of needing to temporarily divorce her in the mean time. He is eternally faithful, and because of this, so should our faithfulness infinitely endure to our spouses, until death do us part.

The Jewish Surprise Marriage

And just as the Jewish wife did not know when her husband would come and take her home to be his wife, so also we wait not knowing at what hour Jesus will return:

[Mat_24:42-44](#); [25:1-13](#); [Mar_13:33-37](#); [1Co_16:13](#); [1Th_5:6](#); [2Ti_4:5](#); [Rev_16:15](#); (and Compare with: [Mat_1:18](#))

Temporary Divorce: The Only Option Allowed and Exemplified By God Himself

The question arises, —“Why does Jesus permit divorce at all if God so clearly opposes it?” The answer is actually very powerful. Let’s start by remembering again the scene where God divorced Israel:

Jeremiah 3 Shows the Sins For which God Officially Divorced Israel, and God’s Determination to Take Her Back!

[Jer_3:1 CAB](#) ...But you have played the harlot with many shepherds, and have returned to Me, says the Lord.

[Jer_3:20 CAB](#) But as a wife acts treacherously against her husband, so has the house of Israel dealt treacherously against Me...

[Jer_3:7 CAB](#) ...**Turn again to Me**...

[Jer_3:8 CAB](#) And I saw that (for all the sins of which she was convicted, wherein the house of Israel committed adultery, and I put her away, and gave into her hands a certificate of divorce)...

[Jer_3:14 CAB](#) **Turn**, you children that have revolted, says the Lord; for I will rule over you...

Did you notice that God called for reconciliation in this passage? Do you recall that this whole scene took place during God’s betrothal to Israel? Israel’s hardhearted divorce, ([Mat_19:8](#)) which God opposes, ([Mal_2:14](#)), is different from the exceptive divorce which God Himself exemplifies and Jesus allows ([Mat_5:32](#)).

Long before Jesus gave an exception clause, God previously exemplified this type of divorce, which included an official divorce certificate (as seen previously in [Isa_50:1](#) and [Jer_3:8](#)) by temporarily divorcing Israel during their spiritual betrothal. This *temporary divorce* during betrothal which even calls for reconciliation is the softhearted divorce which Jesus allows. If we will digest this definite distinction, this can help us comprehend how God in no way approves of hardhearted divorce which happens after consummation, and is intended to be permanent. In showing this heart of *temporary divorce* during betrothal, what does God say to His people after He divorced them?

[Jer_3:7 CAB](#) ...Turn again to Me...

If we are honest we can see that this is much different than the divorce which we usually have in mind today in our sinful and adulterous generation, because unlike us, God has reconciliation as His great plan for Israel, so that His divorce is only temporary, and He only does this during betrothal, and never for remarriage.

Real Christians (Who Go to Heaven) Follow God's Example

[1Jn_4:17 CAB](#) By this love has been perfected with us: that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because just as He is, we also are in this world.

And if God does not divorce and remarry, then He shows us that we do not have this right either.

[Joh_13:16](#) Jos.Trans. truly, truly, I say to you, no slave is greater than the lord of him [his lord/ master]... Joseph faithfully followed in this example which God gave, and today Jesus demands that we do the same.

11. The True Exception Has to be Consistent With The True Revolutionary

Jesus Taught Something Revolutionary

In teaching on marriage, Jesus did not simply clarify the Old Covenant, nor did He teach the filth of human theology spread about by Rabbis. He taught a profound revolution that shocked people and challenged them to the core of everything they knew and believed in life.

Two Schools of Thought Regarding the Law

The liberal views of today that people suggest Jesus to have preached, were already around in His day. Everyone knew about the divorce controversy. Two significant schools of thought were Shammai (the conservative) and Hillel (the liberal). Both of their theological teachings centered around Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Please consider the big-picture implications if we suggest that Jesus simply aligned Himself with the mortal religious philosophers of His day. Or consider the irreconcilable complications if we say that Jesus was merely clarifying what Moses had already said in the Law, when Jesus Himself directly showed us that He was NOT teaching what Moses taught, but rather some greater standard, ([Mat_5:31-32](#)).

Remember these theologians and their stances interpreting the Deuteronomy divorce passage:

Hillel – You can divorce your wives for anything including burning your food

Shammai – You can only divorce for big things like sexual sin and adultery

These two views of Deuteronomy 24 were prevalent then, and it is amazing that they are also prevalent today, and this prevalence is primarily in the church! Someone is considered “conservative” if they were to agree with Shammai’s interpretation of the Old Covenant, (**which Law we are not supposed to be under**).

Jesus Was Not Teaching Shammai, Hillel, or Repeating the Law

People seem to miss this all-important big-picture point: Jesus could not have taught Shammai, Hillel, or the Law of Moses for that matter, given the reaction of His disciples. There is no reasonable explanation for the reaction of Jesus’ disciples apart from a totally new, revolutionary (and stringent) teaching that seemed impossible to keep:

[Mat_19:10 KJV](#) His disciples said to him, **–If this is the case** [Greek: *the one cause* (as opposed to the many causes mentioned previously by the Pharisees in v. 3)] of the man with *his* wife, it is not good to marry!”

Understand that the disciple's reaction reflected the sense of what Jesus was saying, and He authenticated the accuracy of their conclusion ([Mat 19:11-12](#); [Mar 10:10-12](#)).

For what it's worth, John Gill says it correctly:

–Being surprised at this account of things, it being quite contrary to what they had been taught, and very different from the general practice and usage of their nation..."

(John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible; on [Mat 19:10](#))

And also others say:

–Christ's doctrine on marriage not only separated Him *toto caelo* from Pharisaic opinions of all shades, but was too high even for the Twelve (Bruce, -a well-known commentator-).

Such a rigid marriage law was too high for their loose Jewish ideas. It seemed to them as if it would be impossible to live up to so high an ideal. If a man could not get rid of his wife, if he [got] tired of her, it were better not to marry."

(The People's New Testament (1891) by B. W. Johnson)

If what Jesus was saying was already a socially acceptable Jewish norm, then the disciples had no explanation for being so shocked.

We rebelliously care to subtract every bit of potency and wonder out of Jesus' teachings, but these hard teachings were what caused His renegade band of disciples to turn the world upside down ([Act 17:6](#))! It is ridiculous and vain to try to negate the **revolutionary** significance of Jesus' teaching on divorce and remarriage by relegating it to the predictable interpretations and teachings of that day.

So understand this: if the disciples took Jesus' use of *porneia* to be a "general term" for all kinds of sexual immorality, as so many pastors propagate, and we can divorce and remarry if your spouse cheats on you, then Jesus' doctrine was no greater or profound than Shammai, or Hillel's teachings that were already around. Today's dishonest pastors indicate that Jesus was simply saying, "I agree with Shammai, it has to be a sexual immorality to divorce and remarry;" or "I agree with Hillel;" or "I'm telling you what Moses meant;" instead of accurately representing Jesus' teaching as the Bible records it to be: "You have heard that it was said... But I say to you!" ([Mat 5:27, 32](#))

There is a reason for the contrasting word **–BUT.**" It distinguishes and contrasts what follows from what precedes. And remember it says that Jesus did not come preaching the Law but the kingdom (as seen in: [Mat 4:17](#); [Luk 16:16](#)).

Jesus certainly could have made his speech so much briefer by referring to these philosophies, and interpretations as the Pharisees certainly expected Him to do in one way or the other. Certainly Jesus would have used such an explanation if His goal was to establish the weak standards we have today! But please notice that He didn't do anything like this! He courageously declared what their fleshly theologians had never dared to teach before: **A Divine Revolution!**

Will We be The Same Old Pharisees, or Revolutionary Disciples?

If it is true that a person can divorce their spouse if they cheat on them after marriage, and find a new person, then everyone still has many ways out of the commitment of marriage. This is what many from this generation have all heard all their lives if they were raised in church, and this is what the disciples and the rest of the Jews in their day had also heard their whole lives. If Jesus had reiterated this same lifeless, predictable teaching allowing remarriage as they had heard over and over, then there would be nothing impressive about this scenario, just as today, there is certainly nothing impressive or

challenging about the majority of modern christianity. It is bad enough to be dead and compromising today, but let us have at least some integrity to admit that Jesus was not this way! But it is obvious from the Scriptures that the interpretation that the disciples left with was quite different from everything that they had ever heard their whole life, and if we also would believe it today, it would also revolutionize us in the same way it did the disciples. It is no wonder why most churches today struggle in sin, compromise and death without the revolutionary life of the disciples, because we preach and promote the same death of sin the Pharisee's taught and the disciples previously heard! As to our obedience, life, and Love for God, we have come to be no better off today in church than before Jesus ever came and overthrew the doctrine of the Pharisees.

CHAPTER 4 – FIRST CORINTHIANS

SEVEN

We are currently developing the bulk of this chapter in the appendix resource entitled, “A Translation and Analysis of the Primary Divorce and Remarriage Passages.” In the mean time we have included the most critical elements here for this chapter.

1. Summaries of First Corinthians Seven

v. 1-5 – Commands for frequent intimacy between spouses.

v. 1-2 – Prostitution/ fornication vs. ~~having~~” a spouse (sexually)

v. 3-4 – Give over mental [εὐλόγημα (v.3)] affection as being indebted [υψηλῶς], and bodily [ἰνερτικῶς (v.4)] affection as being without personal ~~rights~~” [ἐμπροσθὶ δεῖ]

v. 5 – It is stealing* if you don’t obey this [* ἀπνοστεξεῖτε – lit to *deprive away*, fig. as a criminal taking’ or cheating’ someone out of what is theirs]

v. 6-8 – Celibacy is best for the ~~unmarried~~” (v. 8) if that is their spiritual gift

v. 9 – ~~Marriage~~” [used twice: γακεσ τσσαλ/ γακησση] is preferred over (& contrasted with) ~~burning~~”; (correlating with the marriage vs. prostitution/ fornication in v. 2)

v. 10 – The no separation’ command (do not separate your women from you) is applied to married people (v. 9, not to betrothal scenarios’ [compare v. 6-8]) and is clearly referencing the specific teaching of Jesus (Mat_19:5-6; Mar_10:7-9)

v. 11 – Passively receiving Separation from marriage (v. 9-10) means being without marriage’ [i.e. *cohabitation* (as mentioned in the next verse)] yet still being obligated to that spouse [i.e. by one flesh], as being commanded not to marry another; [note: just because you are ~~without marriage~~” (i.e. *cohabitation*) does not mean you are without ~~one flesh~~” and are allowed to marry another!]

v. 12-16 – Continue cohabitation [σπλ...νιθειλ κερ’ – lit. *together...habit with*, i.e. fig. *marriage* (as directly said in v. 11)] with an unbelieving spouse if possible [note: The experience of ~~marriage~~” is directly linked with *cohabitation* here in v. 11-16]

v. 14 – You can be one flesh with an unbeliever, and even clean their pagan flesh by faith*! (So this is certainly a lawful marriage) [* i.e. like David did for Michael]

v. 15 – If the unbeliever leaves, then be content to live in peace (i.e. the ~~singleness~~” in v. 11) [i.e. one flesh still exists! – you are not permitted to marry another]

v. 16 – But if you can remain with an unbeliever then you might save them

v. 17 – Live in the particular (morally neutral [v. 19]) life scenario God gives you

v. 18 – Circumcision vs. uncircumcision is another example of individual states of life to remain in; (1st example is v. 12-14)

v. 19 – This is because these things are ~~Nothing~~” [νὸ λ ἐστιν] morally speaking, as opposed to observing the commands of God which actually matter as ~~something~~” moral before God.

v. 20 – Remain in the **one calling** [τῆ κλήσει ἢ ἐκλήθη] (repetition = **emphasis**) given by God

v. 21 – Being a slave is an example of something to remain in (unless you can get free, then go ahead and do that instead)

v. 22 – To God, all who were slaves of men are now free in Jesus, and all who were free from men are made slaves of Jesus

v. 23 – Avoid physical slavery

v. 24 – Remain with God in the one calling in which you were called

v. 25-26 – In light of a particular need [ἐλεστώσαλ ἄλ γ θελ], it is good (but never commanded) for virgins to remain unmarried

- v. 27-28 – For those passively bound by God: do not seek a ~~loosening thing~~” [1 σ η]; for those passively loosed by God: do not seek a woman, however, marriage is not sin (though it has troubles in this life)
- v. 28-35 – Cohabitation and marriage can be an emotionally involved experience in this life when caring for one’s spouse
- v. 29-31 – How even married people can live without being indulgent in this life
- v. 32-38 – The benefits of singleness, and how to perceive if it should be for you

How to Remain in Morally Neutral States of Life

The *morally neutral* [οὐδέν – nothing (19)] states of life that we are instructed to remain in (v. 17, 19-20, 24) include:

- (1) v. 10-11, 15 – Remaining single after passively letting an unbeliever leave (Notice that this scene is given **twice**, not just once)
- (2) v. 12-16 – Remaining in cohabitation when married to an unbeliever
- (3) Remaining either circumcised or...
- (4) v. 18-19 – uncircumcised [i.e. remain either Jewish or non-Jewish; don’t become a proselyte by changing your flesh]
- (5) Being content to remain a slave (v. 21-23), (if you do not have an occasion to gain your freedom)
- (6) v. 25 – Remaining as female virgins
- (7) v. 26 – Remaining as a male virgin
- (8) v. 27 – Remaining passively bound by God
- (9) v. 27-28, 39-40 – Remaining passively loosed* by God [* 1 1π σαη(v. 27); ἐλευθέρω ξα (39)]

Since God’s commands count (1Co_7:19) it goes without saying that such morally neutral states of life that one may find themselves in do not include dreadful sins that condemn a person to hell, such as: killing, stealing, lying, hating people, gossiping, committing fornication, committing adultery, and so on. It is abundantly clear that remaining in a particular calling from God cannot include keeping your neighbor’s wife in an adulterous remarriage, since Jesus clearly said that this was **adultery** that would send a person to hell (Mat_5:27-32). Committing adultery by divorce and remarriage is obviously not morally ~~nothing~~” when Jesus and Paul call it ~~adultery~~.” The command, ~~thou shalt not commit adultery~~” is a **command** from God, therefore, breaking that command (Mat_5:27) by continuing to do what Jesus called adultery (Mat_5:31-32) cannot by any means be called a morally neutral state of life to remain in, because Paul clearly said in this very same statement that keeping God’s commands counts (1Co_7:19). It goes without saying that if you remain in adulterous remarriage, you are not remaining in a calling from God but the sin which God has clearly demanded that all men repent from.

2. 1Co 7 – Paul vs. “The Pauline Exception”

A. What is it? – Defining the “Pauline Exception”

When people use Matthew 19:9 as a way out of the permanent one flesh marriage bond (as discussed previously), they call it ~~“A Matthean Exception Clause,”~~ but as can be expected, once you go this far it is only a matter of time before you expand that exception to include more reasons to reinforce divorce and remarriage.

What people call, ~~“A Pauline Exception”~~ is yet another very popular addition to the ever-increasing list of ~~“exceptions”~~ and excuses why it’s now considered ok to get remarried after a divorce. By the time church leaders in a particular church start talking about ~~“The Pauline Exception”~~ you can get divorced for just about whatever reason you want, since now there are the made up grounds of what

they call ~~abandonment~~.” Most church people today quickly flock to 1st Corinthians 7:12 & 15, which say:

1Co_7:12-15 KJB ...If any brother has a wife that does not believe, and she is pleased to dwell with him, let him not *put her away* [lit. *leave her*]^{G863, G846}, 15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is **not under bondage**^{G1402} in such *cases*: but God has called us to peace.

But being unsettled with this, and being filled with the humanistic propaganda propagated by **Desiderius Erasmus**, today’s sick paraphrases, such as the NIV, have misrepresented it as:

~~But~~ if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is **not bound** in such circumstances...” (The misrepresentation of 1Co_7:15 in NIV).

If you follow the trends and actually read the background information on versions like NIV, then you can see how intentional and strategic their misrepresentations can be. In general, the translational patterns of the NIV very actively liberalize the stringent teaching that the Bible gives us about remarriage. Others have done even worse in mutilating the Scriptures:

—Under these circumstances a Christian man or Christian woman is **not bound by a marriage vow**...”

(The forgery against 1Co_7:15 by the so-called ~~bible~~ version” under the false name (pseudonym): ~~GW~~” by the so called, ~~GOD’S WORD~~ to the Nations Bible Society”).

Now I hope you can see by this point how sick and dishonest ~~bible~~ versions” can be and to what level they are willing to lie when misrepresenting the Bible.

The tragedy here in 1Co_7:15 is that most church people replace the phrase, ~~under bondage~~” (being enslaved) with the word ~~bound~~” to say this verse is referencing ~~being married~~,” or ~~bound~~ to a wife...” instead of retaining the actual sense of the word. So in this idea, if someone is not “bound” to a spouse then they are not ~~married~~” anymore to the one who deserted them. Many of the people that promote this teaching have so foolishly said,

~~Paul~~ states explicitly that this is a **modification** which he enacts **on his own** Apostolic authority...”
<http://www.womenpriests.org/wijngaards/divorce.asp> (Emphasis added)
Re-retrieved 6/9/11

But the big problem with this statement is that Paul did not have authority over Jesus, but Jesus has authority over Paul. Paul cannot and would not ever seek to usurp authority over Jesus and change His perfect covenant which He established and purchased with the blood of His cross. But people who believe Paul rebelled against Jesus and changed His law on marriage are only raving heretics who care nothing about reverencing the absolute and perfect authority of Jesus. At the very basis of this theology called a ~~Pauline Exception~~” most theologians believe that even though Jesus only gave one exception, Paul decided to change this and give his exception too.

B. The Fact That Paul Uses Two Different Words Disproves It

The reason that this is wrong is that Paul uses the correct word for being bound to a wife in that same chapter:

1Co_7:39 WEB A wife is **bound**^{G1210} by law for as long as her husband lives; but if the husband is dead, she is free to be married to whoever she desires, only in the Lord.

But if you simply look at the Strong's numbers associated with the words, you can see that they are **not the same word**.

1Co_7:15 – A brother or a sister is **not under bondage**^{G1402} ...

1Co_7:39 – A wife is **bound**^{G1210} by law... [in marriage]

And here are the Greek definitions from Strong's:

(1) Under Bondage^{G1402} (From 1Co_7:15)

–G1402 δουλόω **douloō** *doō-lo'-o* From G1401; to *enslave* (literally or figuratively): - bring into (be under) bondage, X given, become (make) servant.”
(Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries)

(2) Bound^{G1210} – by the Law of Marriage (From 1Co_7:39)

–G1210 δεῶ **deō** *deh'-o* A primary verb; to *bind* (in various applications, literally or figuratively): - bind, be in bonds, knit, tie, wind. See also G1163, G1189.”
(Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries)

Is Marriage Slavery?

I don't think I'll ever forget when one of my high school teachers illustrated marriage by drawing a ball and chain on a person's foot on the marker board. He was being sarcastic, and while this probably indicates an unhealthy view of marriage, what's worse is when most church people think that the Bible would stoop to such a level by using a word for enslavement to describe the marriage covenant which God loves! How is it that we feel justified in painting a dreary picture of what God **Loves, cherishes and supports**? It is reasonable to expect that my high school teacher would have a warped view of man's obligation to honor the one flesh God made, but it is sickening that anyone would think that the Bible also has such a view of the one flesh covenant!

What is more honest is to take note that we are so estranged from God and the things that He loves, that we project our unhealthy beliefs onto the Bible so that we are even replacing God's Words with our own sick ideas and philosophies about one flesh and marriage in modern versions. If we pay attention, we may be able to perceive a very revealing indication of deep rooted problems in our church leaders and translators today. But for those who are alive by faith in what God says about being committed to one flesh, obeying Jesus' commandments and commitments is freeing to those who are led by the Spirit.

But If We Get Back To Greek Details We Can See The Following

These two words have considerable differences in their meaning, and are not universally interchangeable! In fact this word “under bondage^{G1402},” is used eight other times in the New Testament, and **not one of them has anything to do with the one flesh covenant**, or even the cohabitation of marriage. Each of these instances has to do with slavery and servants:

Act_7:6; Rom_6:18, 22; 1Co_7:15; 9:19; Gal_4:3; Tit_2:9; 2Pe_2:19.

If we look at the details of the Greek and the way these terms are used throughout Scripture, we can be sure that this word has nothing to do with being bound into one flesh and obligated unto marriage.

C. The Context of First Corinthians 7 Disproves It Beyond Any Doubt

Even if you don't care about the Greek realities that these words are not the same at all, the context shows that he is not talking about the bond of marriage when he says, ~~under~~ "bondage." Please observe that the reverse of ~~not~~ "being under bondage" is not remarriage! If we simply look at the context it is very clear that ~~being~~ "enslaved" is the opposite of being ~~at~~ "peace."

[1Co_7:15](#) KJB ...A brother or a sister is not under bondage^{G1402} in such *cases*: **but** God has called us to peace.

Real Peace, Not Remarriage!

Paul is clearly contrasting being ~~under~~ "bondage," with what we are called to as Christians. He doesn't say, ~~God~~ "has not called us to stay bound to a departed spouse, but to be free to remarry," as many affirm, but he says that the opposite of being ~~under~~ "bondage" is God's call to ~~peace~~.² Sadly, if we are ~~free~~ "to remarry" in such cases, then it is because we are free from the obligations of righteousness that forbids remarriage, ([Rom_6:20-23](#)) not because the Bible has said it was OK. In this state we are not in ~~peace~~" as God has called His followers too, but freedom from righteousness is in fact bondage to sin:

[Rom_6:20-21](#) CAB For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. **21** So what fruit did you have then of which *things* you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

Heretics Love to Believe The Opposite Of The Obvious – Paul is not Double-Minded

The idea of the ~~Pauline~~ "Exception" assumes the **opposite** of the obvious. There is no doubt that Paul affirms twice in this same chapter that remarriage after a divorce is absolutely not an option. In the beginning he affirms it, and if there were any question about everything that he discussed throughout the chapter, he ends reaffirming this same absolute prohibition (i.e. [1Co_7:10-11](#), 39). How illogical and double-minded to present this verse as though he contradicts himself in the middle of the chapter, and then reverses his stance again when he ends it?

The Underlying Assumption

Perhaps then the advocates of this ~~Pauline~~ "exception" think that **marriage** is in fact **bondage** because when they read Paul write about bondage they think he is talking about marriage. Let me point out what is obvious, especially to those who Love the Bible: marriage is not ~~bondage~~" but a blessing! Shall I insult your morality and care for God by listing all the innumerable verses?

Even if marriage seemed to be bondage in the flesh, it says in this same chapter, ~~Whoever~~ "is called in the Lord being a slave is Christ's freedman." Physically binding situations never make you a slave in the spirit, but what you choose to believe and live out in Jesus makes you a slave or free. Many try to avoid taking responsibility for their own miserable hearts by pretending that their misery is because of their circumstances, instead of saying, ~~I~~ "can do all things through Christ [χριστός – anointed one] who strengthens me," ([Phi_4:13](#) CAB). Irresponsible people blame their sin on external circumstances to avoid taking responsibility, admitting their faults, and facing their errors.

D. That Which Motivated, Predated that Which was Created

Though it was originally the gross humanist, *Desiderius Erasmus*, who pioneered the final form of the doctrine in the church's mind based on liberalizing what Augustine said allowing remarriage for the

cause of abandonment, as the alleged ~~Pauline Exception~~,” this same spirit was at work within King Saul many thousands of years beforehand.

Saul was demonized (1Sa_16:14-23) with which he tried to kill David (1Sa_18:10-11; 19:9-18) and his own son (1Sa_20:32-33) and by which he chased David out of the kingdom for many years until the day of his death (1Sa_19:10; 20:42; 21:10; 2Sa_1:1; 12; 2:1).

Since David ~~abandoned~~” his wife to save his life, Saul saw it fit to use this to justify remarrying his daughter unto another man named Phaltiel, as we have already mentioned, (1Sa_25:44). And we have also mentioned that this was not God’s desire as expressed by righteous David, therefore Michal was restored unto him until the day of her death (2Sa_3:14-16; 6:20; 23). We also see this wicked application of abandonment used by the pagan Philistines against Samson earlier (Jdg_14:19- Jdg_15:2). Although David was obviously wronged, the Scripture describes the pagan Philistine father as though he actually thought that Samson abandoned his wife, and this is still considered a grave sin. Whether it was David’s or Samson’s case, please note that both times where ~~abandonment~~” is specifically used by people in the Scriptures for a reason to remarry, God’s judgment fell on them!

The demonized, murderous King Saul and the pagan-worshiping Philistines used ~~abandonment~~” as a cause for remarriage, and their use predated the one that was actively (re)created by the lawlessness of *Erasmus* unto the Protestant church by this perversion against the Bible. The same spirit motivated all of this in history. Can you swallow the idea of doctrinally following in the footsteps of such examples? Are you teaching people that abandonment ~~looses~~” a spouse to remarry? Is ~~the~~ spirit of Saul, the Philistines and Erasmus” motivating you? Beware lest the same destruction fall upon you that fell upon Saul and the Philistines (1Sa_31:2-4; Jdg_15:4-6) for stacking up the same atrocious guilt of *Erasmus*.

E. Summaries and Conclusions About the “Pauline Exception”

So what people call, ~~a~~ Pauline Exception” is more properly deemed ~~An Appalling Exception~~” because it absurdly suggests that Paul made an addendum to the divorce and remarriage law that was contradictory to Jesus’ New Testament mandate. Paul himself quoted this law of marriage twice in that same chapter, in 1Co_7:10-11 and 1Co_7:39 (and in Rom_7:2-3 as well). Not surprisingly, he did not leave any room at all for an exception clause, or for the supposed ~~Pauline Exception~~” that people accuse him of making a few verses later in verse 15. Indeed, they deceptively abuse a Bible verse to overthrow everything else the Bible says in this area, ignoring the actual words that are used, as well as the clear context which is to the contrary. The end result of this type of manipulation and heresy is always the same: To invent yet a new excuse to authorize divorce and remarriage despite the Bible’s clear prohibition on it.

The central principle of this point of the issue to grasp is that Jesus made absolute and extreme statements about which none of His servants, including the Apostles, had any right or desire whatsoever to change or contradict.

We cannot rightly say that Paul, who was closer, more in Love, and more submitted to Jesus than practically anything we understand, would ever dare to correct what his Master and Lord has declared (Joh_13:16). **Remember:** You cannot change what God says: Deu_4:2; 12:32; Rev_22:18-19; Pro_30:5-6

How hypocritical of us to quickly remind other apostate so-called churches that ~~You can’t add or subtract from God’s words~~” if we then turn around and accuse Paul of doing this very thing!

This remarriage-permitting cancer called ~~A Pauline Exception~~” was first (re)introduced in the church by Erasmus, and then it erupted in more recent times, being strategically propagated by the NIV, and based out of the spirit of Saul and the Philistines. By mistranslating this verse, ignoring the whole chapter and the rest of the Bible, and by being pushed from the pulpit, this teaching has thoroughly spread throughout all of Protestantism.

While 1 Corinthians 7:15 exhorts us forbidding bondage to the circumstances of other people's bad choices, the majority of Protestant churches have turned it into the broadest excuse ever to allow remarriage after divorce. Because of this, long gone are the days when a few minority cases were wrongly allowed to divorce and remarry on the basis of Matthew chapter 19. Now, to most Protestants, virtually any unhappy marriage situation can qualify for remarriage on the basis of "sexual immorality," and if not this, at least on the basis of abandonment.

May God quickly grant us that peace that this verse is actually talking about, and turn our hearts in repentance away from seeking to justify our own sin with the excuses that that we are so prone to.

CHAPTER 5 – APPLICATIONS OF THE TEACHING

1. Warning: Pastors are Propagating the church!

Pastors are among the primary religious propagators of this day. By feeding their –sheep” with the propaganda of adultery, they are breeding goats into wolves. If the church leaders are blindly leading today’s church goers, then they will certainly both fall into a pit, ([Luk_6:39](#))!

The Compromised church – Locked in Bondage to Death, Darkness, and Sin

Obedying the Bible is the only answer to heal the chaos that the modern church has now normalized and brought upon herself by disobeying God in this matter. But the church has continued to compromise Jesus’ clear teaching on divorce and remarriage, because so many people are getting divorced and remarried. As the church keeps changing and liberalizing its teachings and standards more and more to fit the ever degrading state of pervading normalized immorality among the people, many more onlookers feel all the more free to choose the option that has now been accommodated and accepted before their eyes. Divorce and remarriage is everywhere in the church, and it is increasing more and more. But even if pastors don’t mean it to go this far, without a true and complete repentance, there is nothing that can be done to stop it, since, in the end, you can never determine and halt the resulting extent of damage done once you have committed yourself to a breach from the integrity of truth.

Our present teachings have nearly nothing to do with Truth, but rather of pleasing people and accommodating sin for the sake of the counterfeit of –successful churches” and human –love” over the fear and love of God. But our actions are inexcusable because the Bible has clearly spoken:

Adultery Condemned

[Exo_20:14/Deu_5:18](#); [Lev_20:10](#); [Deu_22:22-24](#); [Pro_2:16-19](#); [6:23-33](#); [Jer_5:7-9](#); [29:21-23](#); [Eze_23:43-47](#); [Mal_3:5-6](#); [Mat_5:27-32](#); [19:9](#), [16](#), [18](#)/[Mar_10:17](#), [19](#)/[Luk_18:18](#), [20](#); [1Co_6:9-10](#); [Gal_5:16-21](#); [Heb_13:4](#); [Rev_2:22-23](#)... etc. Also see: [Mat_15:19](#); [Mar_7:21](#); [Rom_13:9-10](#); [Jas_2:11-12](#); [2Pet_2:14](#), [17-22](#)

Divorce and Remarriage is Adultery

[Mat_5:27-32](#); [19:3-10](#); [Mar_10:2-12](#); [Luk_16:16-18](#); [Rom_7:2-3](#); [1Co_7:10-11](#), [39](#)

And instead of warning please issued to a dead and perishing people, we so frequently enter a church building only to see and hear professional speakers playing nice religious games over the deathbeds of the condemned. We hear the demonic sounds of comforting fabrications that call church goers –God’s people” and –The house of the lord,” as though the pews were actually occupied by people who Loved the Bible enough to obey it.

When are we going to walk into churches and hear pastors pleading with their members to repent and save themselves from perishing under the unbearable weight of God’s mighty judgment and fierce wrath against their souls for living in sin ([Act_2:40](#); [20:21](#), [24](#); [Luk_12:5](#); [2Co_5:11](#); [Heb_10:31](#); [Jud_1:23](#))? When are pastors going to hold their people accountable for living in sin and fearlessly taking the name of Jesus upon them? When are we going to stop paying professional entertainers to lie

to us and tell us we are all Christians on our way to heaven? When are we going to stop calling divorced and remarried people Christians and start calling them adulterers that must repent of their immoral relationships to live, like the Scriptures say? But for the sake of those among the church who are in this state, the church and her leaders now sacrifice the Truth to give “vain comfort” to the church’s own destruction (see [Zec_10:2-3](#)).

Practically no one that really sees the modern church, except a blind humanistic fool, would even attempt to seriously say that the church as a whole is getting closer and closer to the Truth. The corruption is obvious. It is clear that we are not evolving upward, but corroding downward into sin and then finally into hell itself. It is an obvious blight against us before the church and the rest of the world that the church is slowly and sometimes rapidly declining into her state of apostasy, just as the Scriptures have said warning us over and over ([2Th_2:3, 5](#); [1Ti_4:1-3](#); [2Ti_4:3-4](#)). “Christian” television serves as an obvious reminder that the antichrist is not far off. Yes, his spirit is already in our midst preaching to us!

[Ezr_9:2 CAB](#) ...the hand of the rulers *has been* first in this transgression.

[2Pe_2:2-3 CAB](#) And many will follow after their... [Textual variation: “destructions” (απει ερηθη, (T/S Texts), or “justfulness-es” (ασει γεηαρ), (B/A Texts); (see “GNT” in the Bibliography)], because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. **3** And by covetousness they will exploit you with fabricated words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction will not sleep.

In light of the fallen state of the church, it is only reasonable to expect that if the church forsakes long-held strict hard-core positions for more complacent ones, we can be certain that in such cases it is only for the sake of sin, which is exactly what the Scriptures predict.

The pastors have become the fathers of this corruption in the modern Western church having propagated others worse than themselves, by their damnable propaganda ([Mat_23:15](#)). And why should we be surprised? The Scriptures have foretold these days, again and again they have been spoken of from the days of the prophets on through the writings of the New Testament.

Some Serious Biblical Warnings About Pastors

In every one of the following verses, the same Hebrew word is used which can, and does, get translated as either “pastor” or “shepherd.” The words “pastor” or “shepherd” are the exact same concept Biblically, but we have distinguished them culturally in English. (This same principal applies in Hebrew as well as Greek). For the sake of direct application, the following passages are all marked with the word “pastor” whenever it is not translated that way.

There are a lot of verses I am about to give you here, so if you like, you can skim through and read only the underlined portions. But in all cases, please be sober minded and clean hearted so that you may nobly consider these verses as they speak to us today, and, —. just as the Holy Spirit says: Today, if you will hear His voice, **8** Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness,” ([Heb_3:7-8 CAB](#)).

Warnings Throughout the Bible Against Pastors!

[Jer_10:20-21 CAB](#) Your tabernacle is in a ruinous state, it has perished; and all your curtains have been torn asunder. My children and my cattle are no more; there is no longer any place for my tent, *nor* place for my curtains. **21** For the shepherds [pastors] have become foolish ^{G1197}, [or messed up or senseless] and have not sought the Lord; therefore the whole pasture has failed, and *the sheep* have been scattered.

Jer_12:6-11 CAB ... **Do not trust in them, though they shall speak fair words to you.** 7 I have forsaken My house, I have left My heritage; I have given My beloved one into the hands of her enemies. 8 My inheritance has become to Me as a lion in a forest; she has uttered her voice against Me; therefore have I hated her. 9...Go, gather together all the wild beasts of the field, and let them come to devour her. 10 Many shepherds [pastors] **have destroyed My vineyard,** they have defiled My portion, they have made My desirable portion a trackless wilderness. 11 It is made a complete ruin: for My sake the whole land has been utterly ruined, because there is none that takes *the matter* to heart.

No one takes to heart the corruption in this issue, and so the church acquires cancers.

Jer_22:22 CAB The wind shall tend [i.e. *blow away*] all your shepherds [pastors], and your lovers shall go into captivity; for then shall you be ashamed and disgraced because of all your lovers. [see: 4QJerc]

Jer_23:1-4 CAB **Woe to the shepherds** [pastors] **that destroy** and scatter the sheep of their pasture! 2 Therefore thus says the Lord against them that tend My people: You have scattered My sheep, and driven them out... behold, I *will* take vengeance upon you according to your evil practices... 4 And I will raise up shepherds to them, who shall feed them... Jer_25:33-37 CAB And the slain of the Lord shall be in the day of the Lord from *one* end of the earth even to the *other* end of the earth. They shall not be buried; they shall be as dung on the face of the earth. 34 **Howl, O you shepherds** [pastors], **and cry**; lament, you rams [i.e. *male leaders*] of the flock: for your days have been completed for slaughter, and you shall fall as the choice rams. 35 And flight shall perish from the shepherds [pastors], and safety from the rams of the flock. 36 A voice of the crying of the shepherds [pastors], and a moaning of the sheep and the rams: for the Lord has destroyed their pastures. 37 And the peaceful dwellings that remain shall be destroyed before the fierceness of My anger.

Jer_50:6-7 CAB **My people** have been lost sheep; **their shepherds** [pastors] **thrust them out,** they caused them to wander on [DSS: *–they have turned back from*” (4QJer^c)] the mountains; they went from mountain to hill, they forgot their resting place. 7 All that found them consumed them. Their enemies said, Let us not leave them alone, because they have sinned against the Lord...

Eze_34:1-10 CAB And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds [pastors] of Israel... 4 The weak one you have not strengthened... and the stray one you have not turned back, and the lost you have not sought... 9 for this cause, O shepherds, 10 thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require My sheep at their hands, and will turn them back that they shall not feed My sheep... [It is good to read all of chapter 34, especially verses 1-16]

- Today’s pastors have left those diseased in their sin telling them that it is not sin.
- They have not *–brought again that which was driven away,*” [such as the time-honored Biblical Truth of this issue] neither have they *–sought that which was lost*”
- *–Therefore...* the Lord GOD says... I *am* against the pastors”

Isa_56:9-11 CAB All you beasts of the field, come, devour, all you beasts of the forest. 10 See how **they are all blinded**; they have **not known**; *they are* dumb dogs *that* will not bark; dreaming of rest, loving to slumber. 11 Yea, they are insatiable dogs, that know not what it is to be filled, and they are **wicked, having no understanding**; all have followed their own ways, each according to his will.

[Technical Source text Note: I have particularly used CAB for Isaiah, because it is based on the LXX, and this Greek source text is basically what the New Testament usually uses for Isaiah (for more, see the online version of our Bibliography under, *–Finding the Old Testament*”)]

–Every thing’s fine...” they tell us. –Everyone here is saved...” they lie – as they and their churches wallow in adultery on their way to hell.

[Zec_10:3a CAB](#) My anger was kindled against the shepherds [[pastors](#)]...

And Jesus says:

[Mat 23:13-16 CAB](#) ...you will receive greater condemnation. **14** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you shut up the kingdom of heaven before men; for you do not enter, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. **15** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you travel around land and sea to make one proselyte, and whenever he becomes *one*, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you. **16** Woe to you, **blind guides**...

And God also says:

[Isa_6:10 CAB](#) ...their ears are hard of hearing, and they have closed their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

[**Technical Source text Note:** I have particularly used CAB for Isaiah, because it is based on the LXX, and this Greek source text is basically what the New Testament usually uses for Isaiah – especially with this particular passage (as seen in [Isa_6:9-10](#); [Mat_13:14-15](#); [Mar_4:12](#); [Act_28:26-27](#); [Joh_12:40](#)), (for more, see the online version of our Bibliography under, –Finding the Old Testament”)]

We can protest all we want and say, –these Bible verses do not apply today,” but don’t they apply when it is obvious that we are living in the exact same sins?

If we will repent of our falsehood in this area and no longer except people as christians who are divorced and remarried, including pastors, then we have this promise from God concerning pastors and leaders:

[Jer_2:8 CAB](#) ...the shepherds [[pastors](#)] also sinned against Me...

[Jer_3:14-15 CAB](#) Turn, you children that have revolted, says the Lord... **15** And I will give you shepherds [[pastors](#)] after My heart, and they shall certainly tend you with knowledge. (Also remember that we quoted [Eze_34:9-16](#) and [Jer_23:4](#) a few passages ago, and you can also see these references for this same promise).

Don’t Lie About Divorce And Remarriage

If Jesus called divorce and remarriage adultery, we are in a dreadful place if we say that it is not continuing in sin:

[Isa_5:20 CAB](#) Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil; who make darkness light, and light darkness; who make bitter sweet, and sweet bitter.

[Pro_17:15 CAB](#) He that pronounces the unjust just, and the just unjust, is unclean and abominable before God.

And speaking of God’s eternal Kingdom it says,

[Rev_21:27 WEB](#) There will in no way enter into it anything profane [[θνητὸν](#) – lit. *common*; fig. *unclean/ defiling*], or one who causes an abomination or **a lie**, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

And again,

[Rev_22:15](#) CAB But outside are dogs and drug users* and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices a lie.

[* *μαζκάθει* – i.e. those who use drugs to connect with the spiritual realm, usually in reference to, [magicians/ sorcerers](#))]

We ought to fear God and not —all evil good” ([Isa_5:20](#)), and —justify the wicked” ([Pro_17:15](#)), because we know that if we do, we will be _outside with the dogs‘ for _loving and making a lie‘ ([Rev_21:27](#); [Rev_22:15](#))

Some Questions to Ask Yourself As A church Person and or Leader

First: Am I leading people to believe that main-stream christianity is going to heaven when the Bible says that it will go to hell?: [2Th_2:3](#), [5](#); [1Ti_4:1-3](#); [2Ti_4:3-4](#); [2Pe_2:2](#)

[Rom_9:27](#) CAB Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: —If the number of the sons of Israel were as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved;

[Rom_11:5](#) CAB Even so then, at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace [*favor*].

Second: Am I sinning against the honor of God and the souls of men by telling them that they are going to heaven when they are in a relationship that God calls adultery and strictly condemns?

Adultery Condemned

[Exo_20:14/Deu_5:18](#); [Lev_20:10](#); [Deu_22:22-24](#); [Pro_2:16-19](#); [Pro_6:23-33](#); [Jer_5:7-9](#); [Jer_29:21-23](#); [Eze_23:43-47](#); [Mal_3:5-6](#); [Mat_5:27-32](#); [Mat_19:9](#), [Mat_19:16](#), [Mat_19:18/ Mar_10:17](#), [Mar_10:19/ Luk_18:18](#), [Luk_18:20](#); [1Co_6:9-10](#); [Gal_5:16-21](#); [Heb_13:4](#); [Rev_2:22-23](#)... etc. Also see: [Mat_15:19](#); [Mar_7:21](#); [Rom_13:9-10](#); [Jas_2:11-12](#); [2Pet_2:14](#), [2Pet_2:17-22](#)

Divorce and Remarriage is Adultery

[Mat_5:27-32](#); [Mat_19:3-10](#); [Mar_10:2-12](#); [Luk_16:16-18](#); [Rom_7:2-3](#); [1Co_7:10-11](#), [1Co_7:39](#)

[Eze_3:18-19](#) CAB When I say to the wicked, You shall surely die; and you have not warned him, to give warning to the wicked, to turn from his ways, that he should live; that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at your hand. **19** But if you warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, and from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, and you shall deliver your soul. (Also see [Eze_33:9](#))

The mercy of God be upon those who do not do these things, and upon those who consider and repent, and the judgment and fierce wrath of God be upon those who continue.

2. The REAL Problem: Prioritizing People Before God!

Pastors and church Leaders are No Different than School Kids Who Compromise Out of Peer Pressure

Perhaps many of us remember being in Middle School and High School, and perhaps we remember how much peer pressure there is to conform to social norms, and often there is extreme pressure to do things that are foolish and wrong. Young people do what they do because they are young and they are influenced by their friends to do these things because they want to be accepted. Having been raised in typical American culture, I remember what it is like to feel like your whole world revolves around your –friends.”

We may recount how vain and foolish it can be to give yourself to –friends” in school, especially when kids give into the pressure to do bad things, and to even lie to their parents. In school you often don’t realize that in a few years most all of these –friends” will be completely gone, and then what will you have left to show for all of the foolish and sinful things you have done in your few years of pleasing your peers? Your parents whom you lied to are still in your life, but your peers you sought to please are usually all gone. This same reality is even more potent when we talk about church situations.

So many church leaders are compromising just like school kids and even lying before the Father who is over all creation in order to please the people in their congregations. For this fleeting and vain church social life, they will breach integrity over and over and fail to do what is right. But when judgment comes, where will all of their friends be whom they lied for? In that day pastors will be like school kids who have graduated only to find that all of their friends have abandoned them, and they are now left alone to face the reality of life. It is no more fun and games, but now reality must hit, and who can stand when this means judgment before God?

The cheap and fleeting false comfort of telling church goers that they are going to heaven is a social addiction that modern pastors are enslaved to. This foolish and sinful lie is based off of a counterfeit –love” which is not giving people love at all, but is really feeding a social addiction that does not tell people what is in their best interest so as to possibly save their souls from hell.

It is time some real integrity for truth hit our conscious, and we realized how vain, foolish and cheap our socializing is, and we repented for sinning against God to please the people. It is high time that we valued God over pleasing men, so as to not give our lives to fleeting lies and vanity. It is high time that we repented of being school kids pleasing our peers, so that when the reality of judgment hits, we will have some reason and bases to face it boldly with the confidence that comes from a life given to please Jesus.

The Root of The Apostasy

We often only see the problems that occur on the surface level while there are underlying roots that are made up of deeper principal matter, which cause exterior visible issues that we mistake for the main problems. If we deal with the technicalities of surface level problems and forget to remove the principal by which we erred, then we do not cleanse the heart from sin. Because of this, we must truly cleanse ourselves of the principle root of corruption, which means, before we can reasonably finish repenting of our countless sins against marriage, we must first repent of loving people more than God in the first place.

If the divorce and remarriage teaching presented in this writing seems farfetched, impractical, impossible, or inconsistent with your perception of God, I have found that it is almost always a direct result of this root lodged in a person’s heart. When you deal with this root, the truth of the divorce and remarriage teaching becomes natural and obvious. This teaching is actually very simple in its main and basic essence. It is the unfaithful heart of man that complicates these things in our perception beyond the scope of obedience.

church People Have the Same Problem that Other Unbelievers Have

I have found the same type of problem when talking to unbelievers about the subject of apologetics (mostly proving the reliability of the Bible by science) as I have had with church people who do not believe the Biblical marriage teaching. When people oppose me in apologetics, it is never the lack of scientific evidence that is holding them back from following Jesus. The evidence is clearly and certainly stacked in my favor by God: Because God truly made the heavens and earth, and this is obvious, the only reason people don't believe is because they want to continue in sin. It really comes down to not being willing to repent, change, choose to believe, and give up your life that holds people back. It is not a real need of proof. The real issue is not whether or not something has been proven, but whether or not people are willing to stop sinning and turn toward Jesus, whether the issue is apologetics or marriage.

But whether it is apologetics or the issue of divorce and remarriage, the same problem is predominant: Though there may be difficulties, problems to address, and lack of information at first, there is an abundance of proof that clearly shows up in the end and testifies with great certainty when we make our heart aright to look for what is true. Truth seekers will often go to great lengths to dig up and present the details to reaffirm the reality of what is true. But beyond this lies the main battlefield where people decide if they're willing to face the sinfulness of their cherished beliefs, and choose to believe God instead.

After questions have been addressed and truth has been clearly presented, the real issue is no longer what the Bible says, but the eagerness in the heart of people, which will either leap unto obedience or cringe backward from the cost of believing the Truth.

As long as there will be eager and hungry people, humble enough to embrace the truth, there will be revolutionaries who proclaim what the Bible says about divorce and remarriage.

Either We Repent or We Fall

It is reported that our pastors are now getting divorced more than our lay people. If the blind lead the blind, they will certainly both fall (See [Mat 15:14](#) and [Luk 6:39](#))! Though the Scriptures are clearly against such remarried pastors, they continue in their sin and even propagate it because they love their own lives in this age more than Jesus and His Words. And if we put more value on following our pastors over the Bible, then we will continue to fall into errors at faster and faster speeds.

The reason that this teaching on divorce and remarriage has abruptly become unpopular is not because it is not solidly found in the Scriptures. As I have documented in the appendix entitled, “—,” we can clearly see that the church has basically preached this hard teaching for the vast majority of her existence! The **real** problem is that we have placed a higher priority on accommodating the remarried people who come to us for answers than our loyalty to Jesus and His Word. If all that we had and desired in the church was the obedience to the truth of the Scriptures, then we would never be so pressed to come up with such disturbing compromises as have been opposed in this book.

A Right Priority for Love – It is Time We Finally Loved God FIRST!

Almost invariably we end up loving ourselves first, others second, and give God third place while we go to church every Sunday and claim, that God is first in our life. We will deny the reality of our hypocrisy claiming that we love God with sincerity, but when our beliefs about truth are tested and searched out by the Bible, we are found frauds. But to give us freedom from our facade, Jesus has arranged the two greatest commandments in this order for a reason:

[Mat 22:37-39 CAB](#) Jesus 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 first** and great **commandment**. 39 And **the second** is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

It is easy to see these two greatest commands consistently repeated in full force throughout the Old and New Testaments, from beginning to end:

Love God – Deu_6:5; 10:12; 30:6; Mar_12:32-33; Luk_10:27-28;

Love Neighbor – Lev_19:18, Mat_19:19; Mar_12:31-34; Luk_10:27-28; Rom_13:9-10; Gal_5:14; Jam_2:8

If we break these, the greatest commandments, we will certainly also break the others. And if we pervert these two by reversing their order, we will also distort the rest of the Bible to suit our perversion, and worship a pagan god in the process. If we sin so greatly against the two greatest commands, then everything beneath them will be tainted with this same idolatry.

The Solution is Prioritizing Jesus... Who is The Truth

The main problem is not with the clarity of the Scriptures but rather with many church leaders with adulterous hearts turning away from the truth for the sake of their human sympathy. They make many attempts to accommodate the apparent needs of remarried couples to stay remarried, and so often, they are even remarried themselves! In light of this, it was quoted at the beginning of this work in the [preface](#):

[Rom_3:4](#) [Jos.Trans.](#)** ...let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, that you may be justified in your words, and overcome in your being judged.

It is tragic to say, but we need this verse more and more as the days go by, because more and more people are becoming liars, both in and out of the church, in the forms of leaders and followers, and in every other form in between ([1Ti_4:1-2](#); [2Ti_2:16-19](#); [3:13](#); [2Th_2:9-12](#); Also see: [2Pe_3:3](#); [Rev_12:9](#); [13:14](#); [18:23](#)).

When you first let God be true in your heart, then you will be able to truly Love others with God's Love and not simply with the human counterfeit of sympathy. If we do not repent quickly from this attitude of prioritizing people over God, then we will fall under the same curse that was given to Eli, the high priest, when God declared that He was going to take the priesthood from him because of his sin. Even now, God's Spirit says this to church leaders all over the modern world and beyond:

[1Sa_2:29-33](#) [CAB](#) Therefore why have you looked upon My incense offering and My grain offering ... and ... **honored your sons above Me**, ... I will only honor them that honor Me, and he that despises Me shall be despised. [31](#) Behold,... I will destroy your seed, and the seed of your father's house. [32](#) And you shall not have an old man in My house forever. [33](#) And if I do not destroy a man of yours from My altar, *it shall be* that his eyes may fail and his soul may perish; and everyone that remains in your house shall fall by the sword of men...

Without urgent repentance from these things, we will not be counted worthy of Him:

[Mat_10:37](#) [CAB](#) He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

And

[Luk_14:26](#) [CAB](#) If anyone comes to Me and does not **hate** his father and mother, **wife** and children, brothers and sisters, yes, **and his own life also**, he cannot be My disciple.

Whether one loves their self or others more than God, both are sin, and both disqualify a person from being a True disciple of Jesus, and both disqualify a person from operating in God’s true divine Love. Let us embrace the truth about divorce and remarriage and repent, even at the cost of –every man.” This is the only way in Heaven’s courts that we will be said to be operating in the real Love of God on this issue.

3. Your Stance on This Issue is Not Morally Neutral

1Ti_4:16 WEB Pay attention to yourself, and to your teaching. Continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

1Ti_6:3-5 CAB **If anyone teaches differently** [ἐτεξν_η_ασθαι_εῑ – lit. *does other teaching*] and does not **consent to** [πξνσ_ξρεταη– lit. *come/ “draw” near to*] sound words, even those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to **the doctrine** [η_ασθαι – teaching] **which accords with godliness** [εὖσ_β_ηᾱ – lit. *good (εὖ) reverence (σ_β_ηᾱ)/ adoration*; see: G2150 > G2152 > G2095 + G4576], **4 he is puffed up, understanding** [ἐπηα_κελ_νο – lit. *standing upon*; fig. *establishing the mind on*] **nothing, but is morbidly concerned with** [λγσῶλ_πεξ̄ι – lit. *sick around/ “concerning”*] **disputes** [δετ_σε_η – lit. *seekings/ “questions”*] and word battles, from [ἐμ – out (of)] **which come** [γ_λεταη – becomes/ _is begotten’] **envy, strife, slanders** [βι_ασκε_αη – *blasphemies*; lit. *damage-speakings*; fig. *slander-speakings* (against God or people)], **evil suspicions** [ὕπ_λν_ηᾱη̄_πν_λεξ̄_α – ²evil/ wicked/ –perverted,” ¹under-minded-thinking], **5 constant wrangling** [η_απα_φ_τεξ̄_η_β̄α] **of men of corrupt minds** [λν_λ] and having been deprived [ἀπεστεξ̄_εκ_λ_σλ] **of the truth, supposing** [λν_κηδ_λ_τσλ] **that godliness** [εὖσ_β_ηᾱλ – lit. *good reverence*] is a means of profit. Withdraw from such *people*.

2Jn_1:9-11 CAB Everyone who **transgresses** and does not abide in the **doctrine** of Christ [τοῦ_χρ̄ιστοῦ – the anointed one] does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ, this *one* has both the Father and the Son. **10** If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house, and do not greet him; **11** for he who greets him shares in his evil works.

2Th_2:11-12 CAB And because of this, God will send them *strong delusion [*ἐνέργειαν_πλάνης – lit. *energizing of trickery/deception*], *in order for [εἰς_τὸ – lit. *into that of*] them to believe the lie [τῷ_ψεύδει], **12** so that they all might be damned [κριθῶσι – judged and condemned] who did not believe the truth, but *delighted in [*εὐδοκῶσαντες_ἐλ_τῆ – tested and approved in the...] **unrighteousness** [...to be good (in their minds)].

4. We Should Be Right Ourselves Before Opposing Other People’s Sins

An Admonition About Application

I would admonish all that have believed the Bible on this issue:

Jam_1:19 CAB ...let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger...

Be careful that you handle yourself well, —.speaking the truth in love...” (Eph_4:15 CAB).

Remember, there is,

[Ecc_3:7 CAB](#) ... a time to be silent, and a time to speak;
(Also see: [Ecc3:1](#), and see “Repent of Words” as referenced in a moment).

And there is also a time to rebuke and confront as John the Baptist, ([Mat_3:7-12](#); [14:3-4](#); [Mar_6:17-18](#); [Luk_3:7-9](#), 19) and a time to **gently** instruct!

[Heb_5:2 CAB](#) being able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and go astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.

Also see: [2Ti_2:25](#); [Deu_13:1-18](#); [18:21-22](#); [1Jo_4:1-3](#); [1Jn_4:5-6](#) (Compare: [1Jn_4:2](#))

[Jud_1:22-23 WEB](#) On some have compassion, making a distinction, and some save, snatching them out of the fire with fear, hating even the clothing stained by the flesh.

Because

[1Co_14:32 CAB](#) ...the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

And how much more self-control should you have over your spirit to avoid speaking if you are not even specifically speaking something particularly prophetic? If a man under Divine inspiration is obligated under self-control, then we do not have more rights than they do to speak out.

So practice self-control. You don't have to blast everyone who disagrees with truth. Don't be self-motivated to confront people, but actually be spiritual from God instead of your own soul and flesh. God knows when the times and the hearts are right to speak, so listen to Him.

(For more on this, see the extremely important Bible study entitled, “Repent of Words” on www.TrueConnection.org)

5. Experience – The Bible Actually Works When You Believe and Obey it

We have spent so much time to show what the Bible says on marriage, but it is yet valuable to show that this teaching absolutely touches “real life” yielding profoundly deep experiences. Though I have presented a lot of Biblical proofs, this teaching is also real in my life. It is not only a “theological belief,” but also something that I have experienced.

If anyone takes Jesus seriously at all, they end up emphasizing the infinite and perfect authority of the Bible over human opinions derived from their subjective experiences. We are not to rely on imperfect men, but on the perfect Word of God. We might be tempted to think from all of this that all experience should be disregarded, but this is not the example given in the Bible itself. The Biblical principle has always been: if it does not line up with the Bible, then reject it, even if it seems miraculous. If it is miraculous and completely Biblical then we can know that God has sent it. If you are not yet familiar with this very basic truth, it is very important to solidify yourself in it:

[Deu_13:1-18](#); [18:21-22](#); [1Jn_4:1-3](#), 5-6

Because we see this principle alive and displayed in the Scriptures, we ought to follow it as well. Whatever “experience” we may have to confirm things that are contrary to the Bible, we ought to shun

and totally cast out from our presence as a cancerous unclean thing. Such “experiences” have our death and destruction in mind. But if we have experiences that confirm the Scriptures and are of the same Spirit, then we can have God’s words confirmed and made more sure in our lives.

Unfortunately, most people use their subjective personal experiences to deny the clear teachings of the Bible, and this ought to never be done. We ought to always be on guard that our experience does not become the idol we use to keep us from the truth of the Bible.

In light of these things, I have experienced many things from God on this issue of divorce and remarriage. As my primary means a solidifying myself in truth, I must know and read what the Bible says on this issue. But with further joy, confidence, and confirmation I know that my experiences are true because they line up with the Scriptures. At the same time, I also have the Scriptures —“made surer” because they are real and alive in my life! My experiences confirm exactly what the Bible says. When the Bible prophesies it, and these very prophecies are fulfilled in my life, both are proven to be true. After strict judgment, I have confirmed my experiences by the Scriptures, and the Scriptures are confirmed by my experiences.

This teaching is engraved in me, because I have lived it.

There are too many things to mention that God has done to confirm this teaching in my life, but among other things, for many years I have repeatedly heard God testify against people, even giving Words of Knowledge to reveal that they were divorced and remarried. In these cases, no man told me that these things were so in their marital life, but they came by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and were confirmed in human terms over countless situations and relationships.

In one specific case (before I was completely solidified concerning the issue of [women speaking in assembly](#)) I was already aware of God’s over-all testimony against a certain guest speaker who had been invited again to a church that I had been attending. As I sat and listened to her I asked God (being perplexed) —“What is it Lord?? Why is this speaker off?!” And I heard God’s testimony within myself giving the answer, —“Divorced and Remarried.” And without a pause, as the words were presently burning within me, the speaker immediately said, —“...and I divorced and then married my present husband.” At the same moment as my heart was burning before God by the insertion of an answer being divinely declared within me by God, it was also immediately inserted into the speaker’s mouth without missing a beat, even though they had not discussed marriage previous to this.

Is it then so possible that God moves people’s mouths to confess their sin and confirm His Word against them without them being aware of it? I’ve experienced it. It confirms that the Scriptures are absolutely true. I have experienced so many things like this that I have become all the more convinced of the commission placed on the proclamation of this teaching. God backs me up on this teaching, because He originated it.

[Joh_7:16-17 CAB](#) Therefore Jesus answered them and said, —“My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. 17 If anyone desires to do His will, he will know about the doctrine, whether it is from God, or whether I am speaking on My own authority.

And if so many stagger in unbelief and set at nothing the consistent and miraculous testimony that I and others with me have had concerning the truth of this teaching, it is no wonder:

[Joh_5:45-47 CAB](#) Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you— Moses, in whom you have hoped. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

I would like to point out that if I said that God had revealed some inspirational, sugar-coated, easy-believism fluff to me that made everyone feel better about themselves, then most of the church would applaud me as they do most of the writers of christian books today. But because I testify that God often

reveals harsh testimonies against certain people and even sometimes specifically reveals their sin, many are my opposers from within the church. They will treat me as a prophet, even if I do not claim to be one:

[Isa_30:10-11 CAB](#) who say to the prophets, Report not to us; and to them that see visions, Speak *them* not to us, but speak and report to us another error; [11](#) and turn us aside from this way; remove from us this path, and remove from us the oracle of Israel.

Some would say that their experience contradicts mine by saying many things like, “the holy spirit witnesses that many divorced and remarried people are saved.” They will say this even though the couple continues in their second marriage while a first spouse is living, with no concern for how many Scriptures they have to trample upon in the process of defending their lawless and dreadful opinion. I have heard and read so many people saying these types of things to counter the Biblical teaching against divorce and remarriage that I am over-burdened of hearing and seeing this shameful mess of rebellion ([2Pe 2:6-19](#)).

I would point out that their “experience with the holy spirit” is contrary **to the Scriptures** as this work has shown. This shows that it is not the Holy Spirit that they gain their witness from, but some other spirit that dares to oppose the Bible. It is about time we woke up from our apostasy and stopped honoring our pagan spirits above the holy and perfect Canon of Scripture! If we will first submit to the Scriptures, then we can expect Scriptural experiences to follow. If we honor the Divine authority of the Bible above our own souls, then we can hope in gaining the (Holy) Spirit that wrote the Scriptures to flow through our lives.

6. From the End of This Book to the End of this Age

At this time in history, at any moment and with every moment things are so quickly progressing to the coming season of perfect lawlessness when Antichrist will be revealed, and his name will be known and recognized by those whom God has chosen, because they have been anticipating their glorious season of testimony all along. And while I do not know to what degree this particular book may be distributed, I do perceive that it has been set to be a defining help to God’s holy ones as much as it may reach their hands, as I have been joyed by such promises from God in the honor of serving His chosen ones, and have been caused to labor unto this Hope these many years so that you may read these things.

But though the time is quickly approaching where the Bride is longing to complete her course where she will seal her testimony in her own blood, so also the promised redemption draws near.

It is unavoidable that at some point in history real Christians will not only see wives cleaving tightly to their first spouses, but also, all at once, as many lamps coming together into one large flame, a persecuted but joyful remnant of people will wake up, come to their senses, stand on their feet, and come from all directions to be one Bride who faithfully holds tightly to her Lawful Husband. If we will hope to make it in the end, the season is here that we must first start holding fast to this hope now!

Whether by life or by death, I am laboring intensely with all that I have to be a part of that time, and it is my eager plea and hope that I will meet you there.

AN OVERVIEW OF APPENDICES

11/28/09; 12/9 – 12/29/09; 1/30/10; 2/18/10; 2/18/10; 3/16 – 3/18/10; 4/21/10; 12/25/10; 1/12/11; 5/13/11; (10/13/11)

Explanations

The Nature of the Appendices and their Development

This compilation of Appendices is a list of the extra resources available for *Divorce and Remarriage Repentance Revolution* as seen on the official website:

www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com

Though many of these extra resources are not finished yet, and are under constant development, they are all currently available online. Eventually we may add some of these resources to the printed version of this book as well in future editions.

If you check back periodically, you may be able to notice many updates and additions as we hope to have mercy from God to continually make significant improvements until this project may one day finally be completed.

Using the Links

Whether using the printed or the online version of this book, whenever you need to go to any of these resources listed below to make use of the benefits of their digital format (such as visiting the many websites that are referenced) it is generally recommended that you use the shortcut, —www.trueconnection.org/goto/appx” to get to this *Overview of Appendices* online, and then you may simply click on the links below to get to each appendix.

But if you ever have to manually enter the links below into a web browser, and for whatever reason you have problems, try adding —www.TrueConnection.org” to the beginning of the link, so that they read, —www.trueconnection.org/DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/...” rather than just saying, —DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/...” Also please keep in mind that all of our links are case sensitive for now, so that if you mistype any detail of capitalization the link may not work.

Divorce And Remarriage Track

The following divorce and remarriage track is designed to help you in your Biblical stance on this issue by summing up all of the primary Scripture references on one piece of paper, so you can have them with you at all times, as needed, or you can simply take them with you and pass them out to those who are hungry for truth.

This is available in PDF format and is designed to be easily copied and redistributed, as needed. It works best if you copy/print the exact same image on both sides of a piece of paper, and then cut the sheet into four pieces.

This PDF tract can be found at:

www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/#Resources

A Translation and Analysis of the Primary Divorce and Remarriage Passages

www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/appendix/Translation_Analysis.html

Exception Clause Research

www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/appendix/exception_cl_research.html

The Historical Church Teaching

www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/appendix/Historical_Teaching.html

Extra Notes on Church History

www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/appendix/ExtraNotesonChurchHistory.html

Marriage Statistics

www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/appendix/Marriage_Statistics.html

Works Cited

www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/appendix/Works_Cited.html

(Available both online and in the printed book)

Bibliography and Glossary

www.trueconnection.org/BibleStudies/Bibliography_and_Glossary.html

(Available both online and in the printed book)

Updates & Time Line for The Book

www.DivorceAndRemarriageBook.com/appendix/DivRem_Updates.html

Go to this resource for a record of updates to *Divorce and Remarriage Repentance Revolution*, especially when you would like to see new sections that have been added or updated since the last printing.

Bible Studies Referenced In This Teaching

Sin Lists

www.TrueConnection.org/BibleStudies/SinLists.html

Repent of Words

www.TrueConnection.org/BibleStudies/Repent_of_Words.html

Women in Assembly

www.TrueConnection.org/BibleStudies/Women_in_Assembly.html

My compilation of the Book of Malachi

www.trueconnection.org/goto/mal

Also see: my Testimony

www.TrueConnection.org/BibleStudies/Josiahs_Testimony.html

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