

Divorce? or Not?

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Today we live in a crazy, mixed-up world and so many different and strange things are happening, and it really causes a lot of problems. What I want to focus in on today is *to divorce or not*. It seems as though this whole world being plagued with divorces and weirdness and strangeness, even in the Churches of God. One of the largest Churches of God now is saying that you can divorce for almost any reason, as long as it's a legitimate reason. What do you mean 'legitimate reason'?

Let's see where Jesus was talking about this day; talking about this time where all of the strangeness and stupidity that human beings are doing is going on.

Luke 17:26: "Now as it was in the days of Noah, so also shall it be in the days of the Son of man.... [just before He returns He describes them] ...They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day *that* Noah went into the ark, and the Flood came and destroyed *them* all" (vs 26-27).

Then He also talks about Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah and all the things that were going on there. We also know that Jesus called His generation 'an evil, a wicked and an adulterous generation.'

When you pick up the paper, you find some very strange things going on. Here is an article: When Couples Call it Quits: It talks about the different divorce situations that people go through. Here was a situation where there was a marriage that was ready to be divorced and the divorce lawyer took on this client because her husband now fancied himself as Elvis Presley and dressed up like Elvis Presley, looked like Elvis Presley and tried to walk and talk and sing like Elvis Presley. What are you going to do with this stupid show of vanity and nonsense?

Then there was one where a black man came and said, 'I need to have custody of my son.' But the problem was he was married to a white woman before, and since they divorced she married a white man and he's saying, 'Well, I've got to teach my son multiculturalism; how can he learn it by being half-black and living in a white family.' You've got that strangeness.

Then you have another one where in Los Angeles a woman went to consult an attorney about divorce and she wanted to know should she divorce her husband before or after the sex-change operation. You talk about weird and strange, that sure is there!

Then there was another one where it relates where there was a so-called 'amicable' divorce and everything was just peaceful and fine in divorcing and separating until they came down to this little treasure trove of a teacup. Then everything all started coming unglued at that point.

Then it goes on with some of the things concerning the different problems that they have in marriage and divorce. It brings up this:

When Couples Call it Quits:

More people are willing to dissolve their marriage as they would a business partnership.

Because there's no love, no commitment, '*no knowledge of God in the land*'! Some of them try and have the situation where they downplay the emotional side. It seems that no matter how clean—from a divorce lawyer's point of view it looks like on paper—there are still emotions involved. It points out one of the things that really is a key into why there are so many divorces: it's the women's changing role. It says concerning that:

"The common order in the past was that the mother had custody and the father had visitation rights," said Judge Stewart. "Now there's a tendency to work out a co-parenting plan." That seems to be a workable solution say lawyers until one hooks up with a new lover, a new mate, then it all comes apart.

Now they have to where in marital relations women are ruling over men and it really gets to be quite a desperate and difficult situation. Divorces are also being instigated with more frequency by women, because Satan likes to play upon the women:

- it's unfair
- your husband is cruel
- women's rights

Unlike women of past generations, they are less likely to tolerate unacceptable behavior in their husbands.

Of course, what is acceptable and not acceptable becomes another question. All the standards are being moved around and changed. It's kind of like 'button, button, where's the button' under the little walnut shells—guess where the button is and that's what the rules of marriage are.

As women become more educated or earn higher wages and become more prominent

in the business world, they sometimes outgrow the men that they married in their youth.

That's another whole problem. Marriage was not meant to be as an ecstatic 17 or 18-year-old all through your life. So, that becomes another problem.

Modern women are more apt to leave men who can't get past a drug or alcohol problem or couldn't remain faithful.

Well, there are some reasons for divorce!

- What is the reason for divorce?
- Can people in the Church divorce and remarry?

That all depends, so let's see what the Bible says about it, and let's find out what it is to divorce or not. There are some people that say there should never ever be any divorce at all, that Christ will not sanction any divorce once a person is in the Church. Well, let's see if that may be true or not true.

Matthew 19:3: "Then the Pharisees came to Him and tempted Him, saying to Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?'"

- he's unhappy with her
- she cooks a meal wrong
- doesn't wash his laundry
- she challenges his authority
- she fights and picks at him all the time
- Can a man put away his wife for *any* cause?
- Can a woman put away her husband for *any* cause?

Verse 4: "But He answered them, saying, 'Have you not read that He Who made *them* from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause... [for the very fact of the creation of God] ...shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, **what God has joined together, let not man separate**'" (vs 4-6). *That becomes a very important key! What has God bound? If God has bound it, man is not to put it asunder or give divorce.*

Verse 7: "They said to Him, 'Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?'"

Originally, even in the commands of Moses it was for uncleanness and that uncleanness was not any little mark or blemish or anything. It was uncleanness because of a sexual disease more than anything else.

Verse 8: "He said to them, 'Because of your hardheartedness, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.'"

We will see that a lot of the problems that are happening within the Church today is **because of the hardness of the heart** of the individuals involved. Not because they may or may not have grounds for divorce, most of them don't.

There's even one Church of God that says if your mate leaves this Church of God and joins another Church of God—which believes in Christ, believes all the same things that this Church of God does—because they're not in this corporate structure, therefore you can divorce the one in the other Church of God and marry someone in this Church. ***I tell you, that is causing people to live in adultery!***

That is not correct! That is absolutely wrong and completely intolerable and not according to the Word of God. You need to define what is a believer and a non-believer. It's not based if you're in this corporate structure or in another corporate structure. It is what is the Word of God? So, from the beginning God did not want there to be any divorce.

Verse 9: "And I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, **except it be for sexual immorality...**"—'pornea'—any sexual immorality whatsoever, even including adultery. Why was 'pornea' the word that was chosen here, used by Christ, or was preserved and written for us in Greek? *You couldn't say that you put them away just for adultery alone!* Even in that time there was homosexuality, bestiality, adultery and all of these things are wrapped up in the term 'pornea.'

To prove this to you, let's go to 1-Cor. 5 There are some people who say that 'pornea' only means *sex before marriage*. That is not correct! Absolutely not correct! It can include it, but it's not restricted to that. Unfortunately the English word for *fornication* generally means *sex before marriage*. But the Greek word 'pornea' does not mean the same as the English word *fornication*.

Here we have a situation of incest in 1-Corinthians 5:1: "It is commonly reported that there is **sexual immorality** ['pornea'] among you, and such immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—*allowing* one to have *his own* father's wife."

It's called 'pornea' and it includes the act of both the male and the female. The man was committing incest with his stepmother—called 'pornea.' She was committing incest with him—called 'pornea.' Her act was not called 'adultery' because it's sexual immorality. To restrict it just to the English meaning of *fornication is not correct*.

Let's see what else Jesus said about this. Since God is the One Who binds a marriage, who is the only one who can loose it? *God!* What is used to loose a marriage? *The very grounds that Jesus said would loose a marriage!*

Matthew 5:31—Jesus said: “It was also said *in ancient times*, ‘Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.’ But I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, except for the cause... [the reason for divorce allowable by God] ...of sexual immorality... [‘pornea’—which includes any immoral sexual act] ...causes her to commit adultery; and whoever shall marry her who has been divorced is committing adultery” (vs 31-32).

That's why Jesus said it was an evil, wicked and adulterous generation, because of what they were doing.

The only way a marriage can be loosed within the Church... We're not talking about in the world, because the world, with the hardness of their heart and all of their morals and things that are so bad that they will divorce for any reason. We're going focus in on what about it *within the Church*.

- How does God look at it?
- What is it that is something that God *looses*?

It's got to be the ground on what Christ said, and it has to embody ‘pornea’; not just for any reason at all, but for ‘pornea’ or sexual immorality.

- that does not include arguments
- that does not include problems with finances
- that does not include where you want to live
- that does not include what kind of work that you have

None of those are involved in ‘pornea’!

Let's understand something also about marriage: *Marriage is a legal and a binding contract, which is not loosed or bound necessarily because of love or the lack thereof!*

Many people say, you've got to have love to make a marriage binding. No, you have to have love to make a marriage work. *A marriage is binding by God whether there is love or not, as long as it is entered into legally* and

- there is accepting of one another
- there is co-habitation with one another
- there is living together as husband and wife

There's nothing in the Bible says that if you don't get along with your wife put her away.

Nothing in the Bible that says if you don't get along with your husband put him away. After all, what guarantee do you have that you're going to get along with anybody in the marriage estate? Maybe the difficulties that you have are a result of problems in selecting a mate in the first place, *but that doesn't give grounds for divorce!*

Let's look and see how God even obeyed His own Law in relationship to the covenant that He had with Israel. I tell you, if there was any cause to put away Israel, God had plenty of cause to put away Israel. What are some of the rules of Bible study? *What does it say! What does it not say! Etc.*

Romans 7:1: “Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law) that the law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?”

This doesn't say that you run your life by emotions and you can make legal decisions based on emotions. *You cannot!* Decisions of law are based on law, not emotions.

I think there would be a whole lot more people much more willing to work things out and get along *if they understood that they were bound by God*, and they don't have an excuse, a reason, to divorce, and before God they need to work out their problems. Divorce is not the solution! You are bound by the Law of God. What is the Law of God? *Spiritual! Holy! Just!* Isn't it? *Yes!* That's what He says (Rom. 7:12_[transcriber's correction]).

Verse 2: “For the woman who is married is bound by law to the husband as long as he is living; but if the husband should die, she is released from the law *that bound her* to the husband.” *It works both ways!* You can substitute the words back and forth.

Verse 3: “So then, if she should marry another man as long as the husband is living, she shall be called an adulteress...”

That's exactly what Jesus said; *except for the cause of sexual immorality* there is no divorce that is granted. In other words, we need to ask the question not whether to divorce or not divorce, but what are the grounds that God looses a marriage? And we will see that even by choice then—even by choice and example of God—that can be overridden.

“...but if the husband should die, she is free from the law *that bound her to the husband*, so that she is no longer an adulteress if she is married to another man. In the same way, my brethren, you also were made dead to the *marriage law of the Old Covenant* by the body of Christ...” (vs 3-4).

In order to loose the whole Old Covenant—

even though God put away Israel, even though God put away Judah, ***gave her a bill of divorcement***—did God enter into a covenant with anyone else until He legally ended that covenant marriage relationship? *No, He did not!*

Because God is loving, kind and merciful did not destroy all of Israel, which He could have. That would have loosed the covenant, but He didn't do it that way. He came Himself and He died to *legally* dissolve and end that covenant relationship with Israel and Judah. That's very key and profound, and you need to understand that in relationship to what God has said viewing marriage and divorce.

He Himself even lives by His own Law. He did not go out and commit adultery after having divorced Israel and Judah, by entering into a covenant relationship with another nation or another people. He Himself sacrificed Himself to die so that that relationship could be ended legally and properly so God would keep His own Laws. Did He have every reason to put her away? *Yes, He did!*

1 Cor. 7 tells an awful lot concerning marriage and divorce and what there is in the Church. We'll go through this in quite detail. Most of the chapter is the divorce and remarriage and problem chapter as it were.

1-Corinthians 7:7: "For I wish *that* all men might be even as myself..." You can understand why the Apostle Paul did not have a wife. There may have been a time when he had a wife before God called him, because he was a rabbi in Judaism, but that is really neither here nor there.

He did not carry around a wife, because you examine his whole life and how terrible it was going here and there and preaching the Gospel. But he said he wished "...*that* all men might be even as myself..." so that they could devote themselves to God.

"...But each one has his own gift from God; one *is* this way, and another *is* that way" *v 7). *Not everyone is able to be eunuchs for the Kingdom of God as Jesus described it!*

Verse 8: "Now I say to the unmarried and to the widows *that* it is good for them if they can remain even as *I am*."

We find out a little later that he commanded the widows to marry and the young women to marry, because when he was writing 1-Cor. 7 we understand that they were expecting the Lord to return at any time.

Verse 29: "Now this I say, brethren: the time *is* drawing close. For the *time that* remains, *let* those who have wives be as if they did not have wives."

In other words, He thought that it was so urgent the return of Christ was so near, 'don't get bogged down into the problems and difficulties and things of marriage. Look to Christ for He's going to return now. Didn't happen that way.

Verse 9: "But if they do not have self-control, let them marry... [even here he had to give an escape hatch for it] ...because it is better to marry than to burn... [that is to sin, live in adultery, commit fornication and so forth] ...*with sexual desire*. And to those who are married I *give this charge, yet* not I, but the Lord..." (vs 9-10).

Here are people who married who were in the Church. People who believe that Jesus Christ is Savior. People who believe that the only way of salvation is through the name of Jesus Christ.

This is a command from the Lord, v 10: "...Do not let the wife be separated from her husband"—*which is the same problem we are having today I just read from the newspaper!* Same problem they were having in Corinth, because they had the great Babylonian liberated society back then, too.

If it does happen that there is separation, v 11: "(But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried..."

If it gets down to irreconcilable differences and there is not sexual immorality involved causing the problem and there is a separation, you are not to remarry. It's exactly what Paul says, 'I'm not saying this, but the Lord is saying this.' You're not be remarried

"...or be reconciled to *her* husband.) And *the* husband is not to divorce *his* wife" (v 11).

Very key, important thing! Too many times people come to loggerheads and it's hardheadedness that causes the difficulties with marriage, rather than sexual immorality. There are times, even within the Church, that sexual immorality takes place. It's possible then to 'put away' a mate because of that. But it's also, upon repentance, to accept them and bring them back. That's also possible.

Just because sexual immorality does occur does not mean that divorce is necessarily automatic. *It is the choice of the offended mate!* That is the choice. God said under these circumstances 'I will allow divorce.' We're going to see that even God gave us an example in the book of Hosea on how he handled that. That's pretty clear cut.

Verse 11: "(But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband.) And *the* husband is not to divorce *his* wife. Now to the rest... [those not in this category] ...I, not the

Lord, say *this*: If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she consents to dwell with him, let him not divorce her” (vs 11-12). *Today we have a little bit different problem*:

- What is *believing* in Christ?
- What is *not believing* in Christ?

Back then it was very clear. You had Christ and the way of the Bible, or you had paganism, with no in-between. Today, there are a lot of Protestants who believe in Christ. We’re not going to judge God and say that they cannot come into the Kingdom of God if God so decides that they will. I’m not convinced that all Protestants are going to be able to come into the Kingdom of God. However, I’m not so convinced that all Protestants are going to be excluded either.

What if you have a situation where you have a Baptist wife who believes in Christ as Savior, but maybe doesn’t keep the Sabbath and Holy Days? Are you going to count her as a non-believer? Are you going to judge God and say she is a non-believer just because in keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days you feel you are a greater believer? *I wouldn’t want to make that judgment!* I would never advise anyone under those circumstances that you could divorce and remarry. If your problems are so difficult that you have to separate for a while, that’s one thing.

If one of them has been in the Church for a long time, maybe you’ve been married for years and years—25-35 years, maybe 40 years—and you’ve never really gotten along, does that loose your marriage? *No, it doesn’t! It doesn’t loose it!* You need to think about that, because you’ve taken upon yourself an awful lot if you put yourself into that category.

“...If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she consents to dwell with him, let him not divorce her” (v 12)—*to marry someone in the Church!* That’s the next thought that comes along.

Verse 13: “And *if* a woman has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to dwell with her, let her not divorce him.”

This shows that there are binding marriages that God has bound which are not necessarily under the sanctity of the Church.

Were all these people pagan before? *Sure they were!* I’ve heard people say that God doesn’t enter into a pagan marriage. It’s not whether it’s pagan or not; it’s a marriage.

- Who created male and female? *God did!*
- Who binds them? *God does!*
- Who looses them? *God does!*

- Is God interested in all human beings? *Yes, He is!*

Many of these excuses that people have had in the past, that’s what they are, they’re excuses. Human rational, human justification to get your own way.

Verse 14: “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband; otherwise, your children would be unclean, but now they are Holy. But if the unbelieving *husband or wife* separates, let him *or her* separate.... [If they just up and leave, once there is conversion, at the time of conversion then he says]: ...**The believing brother or sister is not bound in such cases**; for God has called us to peace” (vs 14-15).

Then he says there’s still room for doubt here; v 16: “But how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?”

In other words, by your loving attitude, by your kindness and everything, by your patience and forbearance lead them to a situation that they would become converted and be saved.

Verse 17: “Let each one walk only as God has apportioned to him, according as the Lord has called him; and this is what I command in all the Churches. Was anyone called being circumcised? Do not let him be uncircumcised. Was anyone called in uncircumcision? Do not let him be circumcised. *For* circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; rather, the keeping of God’s commandments *is essential*. Let each one abide in the calling in which he was called” (vs 17-20). *There are certain circumstances you can’t change!*

Verse 21: “Were you called *as* a slave? Don’t let yourself fret. But if you are able to become free, by all means do so. For he who has been called in *the Lord, though he be* a slave, is a free man in *the Lord*. In the same way also, he who has been called as a free man is a slave of Christ; *for* you were bought with a price. **Do not become slaves of man**” (vs 21-23).

Don’t be used, don’t be manipulated by men, by their ideas and so forth. You’re bought with a price by Christ.

Verse 24. “Brethren, in whatever *state* each one was called, let him remain in that with God.”

Paul goes on talking about the category of the unmarried virgins and, of course, that would apply to the unmarried chaste men.

Verse 25: “Now concerning virgins, I do not have a command from *the Lord*; but I give *my* judgment, as one who has received mercy from *the*

Lord to be faithful. Therefore, I think this *judgment* is good because of the present distress... [for the present time and difficulties that we are in] ...that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is. Have you been bound to a wife? **Do not seek to be loosed.** Have you been loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife” (vs 25-27).

Yet, people are doing both of these things at the same time. They find themselves, if they can't get along with their husband or wife, and they're not really willing to try and do the things to be reconciled as Paul said. So, they're seeking to loose and seeking to remarry. I tell you, it's getting crazy, even within the Church.

Verse 28: “However, if you have married, you have not sinned; and if a virgin has married, she has not sinned. Yet those *who marry* shall have distress in the flesh, but I *wish* to spare you.”

Of course, some the circumstances that were there because of the historic setting that they were living in were pretty trying times.

Verse 29: “Now this I say, brethren: the time *is* drawing close. For the *time that* remains, *let* those who have wives be as if they did not have wives; and those who weep, as if they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as if they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as if they did not possess; and those who use this world, as if they did not use *it* as their own; for this world in its present form is passing away. Now I desire you to be without anxiety.... [or carefulness or worry] ...The man who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord” (vs 29-32). *He's only saying this for that short period of time that they were in!*

Verse 33: “But he who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how he may please *his* wife.”

And you have to; that's not saying it's wrong. You must! If you're married, you're to provide for your family and provide for your wife.

Verse 34: “There is *also* a difference in *attitude* between a wife and a virgin. An unmarried woman is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be Holy both in body and *in* spirit. But she who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how she may please *her* husband.”

Nothing wrong with either one of those. This does not sanction virginity forever, to have nuns and have priests on the other hand. This was just for that short duration of time.

But, it is true many times when you want to get closer to God, what happens? *You really can't do it the way you ought to, because of the family and*

the children and everything! Paul says a little earlier that if you want to get close to God and fast for a season, go ahead and do that, that's fine, but come together again as husband and wife.

Verse 35: “Now, I am telling you this for your own benefit; not to place a snare in your *way*, but to *show you* what *is* suitable, *so that you may be* devoted to the Lord without distraction. But if anyone thinks *that his* behavior toward his virgin is not right...” (vs 35-36).

In other words, if they're engaged and the passions are running hot and he can't contain himself.

“...and if she is in *the prime of life*, and so *thinks* he ought to *marry*, let him do as he desires; he is not sinning. Let them *marry*” (vs 35-36). *It's better to marry than burn!*

Sin is still sin all the way through. People have taken this to give every kind of excuse under the sun to marry/to not marry; to divorce/to not divorce; and really not see what the Apostle Paul is saying. This is really quite a profound chapter in relationship to marriage and divorce and so forth.

Verse 37: “However, he does well who remains steadfast in *his* heart, not having the need to *marry*, but has control over his own desire, and has determined in his *own* heart to keep himself chaste. So then, the one who marries does well, but the one who does not marry does better” (vs 37-38)—*for the present distress!*

Wouldn't be too convenient to marry right in the middle of war. It wouldn't be too convenient to marry right in the middle of famine. But if you marry, you haven't sinned. He's not abolishing marriage. What he's doing is saying to keep everything in perspective, because when you marry you do have responsibilities. When you're not married, you still have responsibilities.

Verse 39: “A wife is bound by law for as long a time as her husband may live....” It's not based on love. Be nice if everything were based on love, but that is not the basis for dissolving a marriage. *It is law!* The Law of God that is what binds and looses a marriage. By the decree and determination of God, not by any whim of men.

“...But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whomever she desires, (*but only in the Lord*)...” (v 39). I've seen where that doesn't happen and it creates problems and difficulties, too.

What if you have an unbelieving mate that leaves?

(go to the next track)

You come home one day and say, 'I'm

following God, I'm going to keep the Sabbath, I'm going to do all of these things, and they say, 'Hey, I can't stand that. Good-bye!'

All right, *you are free to marry* according to what the Apostle Paul said here. That's a very narrow circumstance! What if you've lived with an unconverted (so-called) mate for years and years; maybe you've been in the Church 20 years, and you've had your ups and downs. What if there have been threatenings to go, come or stay, whatever; does that give you cause to up and leave? *Well, I don't quite think so, because you have an obligation the longer you have been married!*

Let's see where we have that, and let's see where God says concerning this. There are just too many people going around and swapping husbands and wives. I even know of a case of a man and a woman being in the Church, being baptized, got married. He was ordained as a minister; and another man and his wife, same circumstances. They knew each other. They decided that they wanted to swap wives.

Couple #1 is going to divorce and the wife of couple #1 marries the husband of couple #2, and the wife of couple #2 marries the husband of couple #1. ***Obviously, they are living in adultery!*** You cannot sanction that at all in the Bible or say that that is a proper, legally loosed marriage by the definition of God.

Let's talk about marriage and divorce as God does. First of all he starts out with the priests and he says that you have corrupted God's way:

Malachi 2:6: "The Law of Truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips. He walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and turned away many from iniquity, for the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and *the people* should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But you have departed out of the way..." (vs 6-8).

That's what's happening. ***People are leaving the way of God to do their own thing***, to go their own way.

"...you have caused many to stumble at the Law..." (v 8). There sure are a lot of ministers that are causing many people to stumble at the Word of God so that these people can be given a license to fulfill their own lust.

"...You have corrupted the covenant of Levi,' says the LORD of hosts" (v 8). ***We can say today you have corrupted the covenant of Christ by giving allowance of divorce and remarriage when God did not say those were the grounds.***

Verse 9: "Therefore I have also made you contemptible and base before all the people, just as you have not kept My ways but have been partial in the Law."

Have not people done that, been partial in the law? 'Oh yes, we'll loose this marriage. Just because they belong to another church over here, that means you can go ahead and put them away, because you found another man or another woman here in this congregation. What are you going to do when they get down the road and they say they don't love each other and they're going to put them away, too.

You just start the whole wellspring opening up to human lust and human desires, rather than asking what is God's way first. Then you be "...partial in the Law."

Verse 10: "Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously, each man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?"

There is treachery! There has been treachery in the ministry toward the people. We're going to see treachery in marriage.

Verse 14: "Yet you say, 'Why?'.... [Why is God giving us all this correction?]. ...Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, ***against whom you have dealt treacherously...***"

- Do you think that God is not going to hold you responsible if, after you've been married for 20-30 years or longer?
- That just because you have family spats and fights, maybe even every day?
- What if you argue every day, is that going to loose the marriage?
- Has there been sexual immorality so that you have where that God looses the marriage? *No!*
- What if it's most difficult to get along? Does that still loose your marriage? *I would not want to say that it does!* I don't see that in the Bible!
- Have you not provoked some of these things yourself?
- You husbands or you wives toward your mate so that you can create a cause? *A lot of you have!*

A lot of you have created the cause so that you can come crying and wimping to the minister and try and get some sort of excuse so that you can divorce and remarry. I tell you, just as Christ said, you are causing people to live in adultery. That's not the way that God intended.

Are you going to allow people to deal *treacherously* with the wife or the husband of their youth just to satisfy the hardness of their hearts? ***I don't think you're going to tell God what to do! No way!***

“...—yet she *is* your companion and your covenant wife. And did He not make *you* one?...” (vs 14-15). **In other words, when you were married, were you not bound as one?**

“...Yet the vestige of the Spirit *is in* him. And why one? That He might seek a Godly seed. Therefore, guard your spirit, and do not act treacherously *against* the wife of your youth” (v 15).

That becomes very profound and it becomes very corrective, too. Did God mean that because you're converted, maybe have a wife or a husband who is not necessarily converted—maybe a Protestant—that that gives you the right to have the attitude to dump her or dump him just simply because you can't get along? Is that sexual immorality? **No!**

What is the command of the Apostle Paul? ***Remain separate! Remain unmarried! or Be reconciled!*** That's what you ought to do. Too many people dealing *treacherously* because they live in this Sodom and Gomorrah and they think that they're going to have the happiness of the Kingdom of God right now. If you think you're going to have the happiness of the Kingdom of God right now, you may have another thought coming!

{Note sermons: *So You Think You have Suffered* #s 1 & 2}

Maybe you ought to take the other tact. Maybe you ought to look at it, maybe this marriage is binding. I've been married for X number of years, no sexual immorality has been connected with this marriage, so therefore, *it's binding before God*. Now, I better find a way to get along! Whole different attitude—right? ***Yes, indeed!***

“...do not act treacherously *against* the wife of your youth” (v 15). That goes above and beyond many different things that are contained in the Word of God.

Let's see what if there is sexual immorality involved, does that necessarily loose a marriage? It can be grounds for loosing a marriage. Remember what the Apostle Paul said, 'What? Know you not that he who is joined to a harlot is one flesh?' He's referring here to the book of Hosea.

- here's a prophet of God
- called of God
- preached the Word of God
- wanted to serve God?

- having the Spirit of God?

Absolutely!

Let's see what God tells him, Hosea 1:1: “The Word of the LORD that came to Hosea, the son of Beerai, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. The beginning of the Word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, ‘Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredoms...’” (vs 1-2).

God said to go marry a whore; plain as day! Does that offend you? I don't know how to please you, but there it is in the Bible.

“...and children of whoredoms, for the land has utterly committed great whoredoms, departing from the LORD.’ So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, who conceived and bore him a son” (vs 2-3).

The long and short of it is this: ***God bound Hosea to a whore***—they lived together and they had three children—to show that these are not ‘My people’ that these are children of whoredoms and to teach a lesson.

Furthermore, when you come to Hosea 3^[corrected] you find something else really incredible. Here are some grounds for committing divorce, even though he was married to a prostitute. Here's what God said to Hosea to teach a lesson. I'm not saying that every marriage that goes through this is bound by God. What I'm saying is, just because it may happen *does not necessarily mean that the marriage is automatically loosed!* That's what you need to understand, because too many times people will go ahead and *create their circumstances to fit a Scripture in the Bible* so they have cause to do what they want to do in the first place.

That's at the heart and core of a lot of the divorce and remarriage that's going on with people within the Church of God! Here's what God said; God said this! This may be shocking to you, but He did say it:

Hosea 3:1: “And the LORD said to me, ‘Go again. Love a woman beloved by a friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who turn to other gods, and love raisin cakes.’ So I bought her for fifteen *pieces of silver*, and *for an homer of barley and a half homer of barley*” (vs 1-2). *He went out and paid a prostitute to 'lay with him.'*

- You think on that!
- Maybe you never even thought it!
- Maybe you never even read it!

God was going to teach a lesson with it!

Someone will say, ‘Oh, it’s there! Oh good, I can go! I can go out on the town on Saturday night and I’ll find a woman. Yes, it’s in the Bible! Yes, God said...’ ***NO!*** Someone will surely say they can go out and commit adultery by paying 15 pieces of silver and get ourselves a woman of the street and lay with her. ***It’s not what it’s saying!*** The principle here is that even though there is sexual immorality, *it may not be sufficient cause* to end the marriage. That’s what it’s saying. Maybe *a* cause, but I tell you what, after God put Hosea through that:

- Do you think God is going to look kindly upon people who lightly treat their marriages?
- Do you think that God is going to look kindly on people who are not willing to help reconcile someone who is caught in a time of weakness?
- Do you think that God is going to look kindly upon you divorcing someone just because you have fights?

I’ve had fights with my wife! It’s not okay inasmuch as I don’t like them. She doesn’t like them, but it’s happened. So what do we do? Get all in a huff and run off and get mad and live with anger forever? *Of course not!* You can look back there and see even where Abraham and Sarah had their little tiffs now and then. Those things happen.

We’re talking about what *binds* a marriage. We’re talking about the grounds to *loose* a marriage. We’re talking about it may not be so broad as one may think, and it may not be so easy as one may think.

Today we’re living in a situation that, with all the AIDS that is going around today, and with the difficulties and problems of sexual immorality and disease, that even if you are willing to accept a mate back after having committed adultery or fornication, you’d better have a test before you do anything.

I’m telling you, if it is AIDS—and it’s going to happen to someone in the Church, I just know it’s going to happen to someone in the Church. I know it’s already happened to someone who has been in the Church who either were homosexuals and never really gave it up, or became homosexuals after being in the Church, and they died of AIDS. *That I know!* I know of at least one verified case myself. So, it could happen within the Church!

If it does happen, and you’re still of a mind to be reconciled, you’d better get some kind of test so you know what you’re into and you know what the circumstances are. Maybe you’d better give yourself a little time so that you know whether it is really there or it really is not there. We’re living in a

treacherous world! We have to talk about these things at this level because this world is so evil, unfortunately!

Let’s see what all of this leads to; see where all of this permissiveness comes to; the end result. The Bible says ‘consider the end.’ It seems so innocent when it begins.

Hosea 4:1: “Hear the Word of the LORD, children of Israel, for the LORD *has* a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, ‘There is no truth... [no Truth of God, no morality, no understanding of anything] ...nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and the committing of adultery they break out; and blood touches blood’” (vs 1-2).

- Have we solved anything with all the divorce and remarriage in the land or in the Church? *No!*
- Have we solved anything by condoning children outside of wedlock? *No!*

We’ve bred a whole breed of bastards for a generation that just keeps people in poverty, swill, crime and wretchedness, and part of it by their own choice because they don’t want anyone saying that if you have children you’d better be married.

You look at the society around us, and then we bring that society into the Church and we be like the society. We put away our wives and put away our husbands. I tell you God is not going to stand for that, and don’t you think for any one minute that you’re going to come before God and wipe your face clean and say, ‘God, I found it in Your Word.’ God is going to say:

- Where is your endurance?
- Where is your patience?
- Where is your understanding?
- Where is your forgiveness?
- Where is your love?

There better be a lot more than just thinking twice about it!

Verse 3: “Therefore, shall the land mourn, and everyone who dwells in it shall languish, with the beasts of the field and with the birds of the heavens. Yes, the fish of the sea shall also be taken away. Yet, let no man strive, nor reprove another, for your people *are* as those who strive with the priest. And you shall stumble in the day, and the prophet also shall stumble with you *in the* night, and I will destroy your mother. **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge....**” (vs 3-6).

And partly in the Church because ministers are not willing to stand up and tell people what the Truth actually is!

It's just like anything else, I tell you one thing, if the Jews and the Arabs can sit down and start working out their family feud—even though it's nearly impossible—surely a husband and wife ought to be able to sit down and work out their own problems and difficulties, you would think.

- I mean, can it be so totally irreconcilable? ***or*** Are you making it irreconcilable?
- Is your heart tender and humble before God? ***or*** Is it hardened because you want your own way?

I tell you, God is going to judge you on your own heart.

If things are so bad that you can't live together, and you have to separate, you'd better absolutely know before God if you have ideas of getting remarried. You'd better know before God that God has loosed that marriage. Otherwise you're going to be living in adultery and it says that 'no whoremonger or adulterer is going to be in the Kingdom of God' (Rev. 21:8).

“...Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being as a priest to Me. **Since you have forgotten the Law of your God, I will also forget your children**” (v 6). You need to think about that very deeply in relationship to your own circumstances.

Loosing a marriage is not all that easy and simple! There are too many people going around and taking the Word of God, making a judgment on their own to go ahead and do what they want to do in the name of God, when God never gave it and God never sanctioned it, and God had no part with it. All they're doing is going to end up living in adultery. We can't be acting and behaving like the world and expect God to give us salvation. *It isn't going to happen!*

- we're to be called out of this world
- we are to live differently than the world
- we are to live with the Spirit of God

not with the hardness of our own hearts! Divorce and remarriage is a very serious thing.

Let's cover one other aspect of it. It's possible that this could happen: What if you have someone that becomes a drug addict? *Possible today!* What if they totally, absolutely give up on God and fail to provide for the family? Now what are you to do?

Here is a principle, 1-Timothy 5:8: “But if anyone does not provide for his own *needy* relatives—and especially *members of his* household—he has denied the faith and is worse

than an unbeliever.”

I've seen a minister take that and say, because a man was unemployed, you can divorce him, because he's not providing for you. It's not what that says! This means in an extreme case of total dereliction. I have yet to run across a man who isn't willing to get out and work and provide for his family who is in the Church.

Now, we're coming across some tough economic times; maybe there is going to be unemployment. Maybe you are going to lose your home. There are going to be some, bound to happen! Is that cause for divorce? *No, it is not cause for divorce!*

This is only in the case of *total dereliction*. Maybe if they run off and they're a cocaine addict and they blow their minds and they're a heroin addict and they 'shoot up' all the time, steal money, waste everything and destroy the family, yes, then God would loose that because they're worse than an infidel (unbeliever) and have denied the faith—absolutely! *But, those are extreme circumstances!*

Not just any cause that comes along. So to divorce or not divorce, I tell you what, you'd better really know your Bible and you'd better do a lot of fasting and praying before you undertake what you may have in your hardness of heart to do, and you'd better be sure about the minister who is giving you counsel. Maybe he is not really giving you the Word of God the way that it ought to be given. Maybe he is leading you into a situation where he is going to bring upon you the judgment of adultery for putting away your wife and 'dealing treacherously with the wife of your youth.'

You need to understand that! ***We're talking about eternal life here!*** We're not talking about sex or not sex. We're not talking about arguing or not arguing. ***We're talking in the final analysis what about salvation and eternal life!*** That's where you really need to understand and know the Word of God and not take upon yourself to divorce just simply because of circumstances that are a little difficult.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 17:26-27
- 2) Matthew 19:3-9
- 3) 1 Corinthians 5:1
- 4) Matthew 5:31-32
- 5) Romans 7:1-4
- 6) 1 Corinthians 7:7-8, 29, 9-39
- 7) Malachi 2:6-10, 14-15
- 8) Hosea 1:1-3

- 9) Hosea 3:1-2
- 10) Hosea 4:1-6
- 11) 1 Timothy 5:8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 7:12
- Revelation 21:8

Also referenced: Sermons: *So You Think You have
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