

# Does Matthew 19:9 Require Adulterous Marriages to Cease?

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO  
ST. MATTHEW.

## CHAPTER 1.

Book of the generation of  
Christ, the son of David,  
Abraham.  
Isaac; and  
Jacob

<sup>a</sup> Cp. Luke

3. 23-28.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. 132. 11.

Is. 11. 1.

Luke 1. 32.

John 7. 42.

Acts 2. 30.

Rom. 1. 3.

<sup>c</sup> Luke 1. 35.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. 22. 3.

Gal. 3. 16.

2. Cor. 6.

was on this wise: When  
mother Mary was espoused  
to Joseph, before they came to  
be married, she was found with child  
of a ghost.

Dave Miller

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**King Solomon Publications  
530 Pinetree Lane  
Montgomery, AL 36109**

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By Dave Miller

Cover: Dave Miller  
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Printed in the U.S.A.

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**NOTE TO READER:** The reader is urged to expend the necessary time and effort to read the considerable amount of helpful material that has been relegated to the Endnotes.

## **DEDICATION**

To Deb—  
whose positive influence on  
my life has been inestimable,  
profound, and eternal.

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## INTRODUCTION

Among churches of Christ, the subject of marriage, divorce, and remarriage has occupied considerable study, discussion, and debate, particularly in the 1970s. This concern was no doubt precipitated by the sudden and alarming rise in the divorce rate in America beginning in 1963.<sup>1</sup> What's more, the so-called "traditional" view began to be challenged. That view is one man for one woman for life, with the only exception being fornication. Only on that basis may the innocent party exercise the right to divorce the guilty party on the sole ground of fornication and then remarry an eligible partner. Several opposing books were published in the 1970s.<sup>2</sup>

One of the issues at stake pertained to whether a person **continues** to commit adultery when that person divorces his wife, for some reason other than her sexual infidelity, and then marries another woman. Two claims have been advanced on this point contrary to the conventional view: (1) Some say that the "adultery" occurs in the one-time, singular act(s) of **divorce** and **remarriage**; (2) Others say that adultery occurs when the couple have sexual relations for the **first** time, but are not guilty of committing adultery when sexual relations occur thereafter.

The primary justification for advancing these views has been the assertion that the underlying Greek word translated "commits adultery" in Matthew 19:9 constitutes a "Gnomic Present" and thus conveys "point" or "Punctiliar/Aoristic" action. They insist that this means that a couple who enter an adulterous marriage may continue that marriage without being guilty of ongoing adultery.

One of the standard responses to this line of thinking has been that Jesus' use of the present tense in the words "commits

adultery” in Matthew 19:9 refers to **continuous** action. In other words, it has been alleged that “commits adultery” could just as easily have been translated “**continues** to commit adultery.” In an article that appeared in *Restoration Quarterly* in 1981,<sup>3</sup> Carroll Osburn challenged this allegation by insisting that, while the Present tense plainly conveys continuity in other Greek moods, the Indicative mood cannot be counted on always to convey linear action. He quoted Greek grammarian Nigel Turner<sup>4</sup> who notes the distinction between “I walk” and “I am walking,” stressing that “in Greek one **seldom** knows **apart from the context**” which is intended by the Present Indicative.

Observe closely that neither Turner nor Osburn say that use of the Present Indicative **excludes** or **prohibits** continuous action. Rather, **context** must be examined to see which meaning is being conveyed<sup>5</sup>—if it can even be determined. Indeed, in Matthew 19:9, “though point action in the Greek present tense is possible, it is most **unusual**, and only **the context** could make it that way. Nothing in Matt. 19:9 points to such a meaning.”<sup>6</sup> Please consider the following eight observations that are intended to assess the “Gnomic Present” viewpoint that shed light on Jesus’ words.



## I. THE GREEK PRESENT INDICATIVE OFTEN REFERS TO CONTINUOUS ACTION

[**NOTE:** The reader is urged to be patient until the technical linguistic evidence can be set forth in this first section.]

Regardless of the viability of the Gnomic Present and other uses of the Present tense, the fact remains that the bulk of grammarians assert that the “most constant characteristic of the Present Indicative is that it denotes **action in progress**,” that “the Present Indicative is chiefly used to express **action in progress in present time**,” and that “there is, at least in the majority of words, a certain presumption in favor of **the Progressive Present**,” with the Present stem “normally denoting linear or durative action”—a “durative character which belongs to most of the special conjugation stems of the present.”<sup>7</sup> Moule illustrates the Present Indicative Active with *ballo*, “I am throwing” which he defines as a “linear event in the present,” stating: “The Greek Present Indicative normally denotes ‘linear’ action in present time.”<sup>8</sup> Monro agreed: “[A]n action which is thought of as contemporary with some other event is almost necessarily regarded as progressive.”<sup>9</sup> Moule describes the Present Indicative as “a maxim or generalization,” illustrated by “the English **frequentative** Present: *a good tree [always] bears good fruit*.”<sup>10</sup>

Vaughan and Gideon insist: “The present tense is **the linear tense**; it describes **an act as in progress**. The idea of time is not prominent **except in the indicative**, where the present tense denotes **progressive or linear action** in present time.”<sup>11</sup> They identify four uses of the Present: Descriptive, Durative, Gnomic, and Iterative—Descriptive being “the most common use of the present tense for **an act in progress**.”<sup>12</sup> They say the “Gnomic” functions “to express a general or timeless truth.... The gnomic

present therefore does not affirm that something *is* happening, but that something *does* happen.”<sup>13</sup> In other words, in the case of Matthew 19:9, adultery is not happening in the present act of divorce and remarriage; but adultery **does** happen when people divorce and remarry unscripturally. They define the Iterative Present as “used to describe that which recurs at **successive intervals**.”<sup>14</sup> They, too, caution that “gnomic presents may be **either linear or punctiliar** in force, depending on the meaning of the verb and the significance of the context.”<sup>15</sup> The word “linear” refers to continued action, something that happens habitually or repeatedly. The term “punctiliar” refers to an event that occurs at a specific point in time.

Robertson notes “the absence of distinction in the tense between punctiliar and linear action”—a “defect chiefly found in the indicative”—though “the so-called present [is] **practically always linear**.”<sup>16</sup> In the Present Indicative mood, “one Greek form covers both ideas” of the Aoristic (or Punctiliar) Present and the Durative (or Linear) Present.<sup>17</sup> Robertson subdivides the “Punctiliar (Aoristic) Present into other presents, including the “Gnomic Present.”<sup>18</sup> McCord notes two distinct kinds of durative or linear action: “One is continuous...and the other is continual or repetitive or iterative. Clearly the meaning of *moichao* in Matt. 19:9 is repetitive, beginning not with the ceremony, but with the first night, and afterwards then being repetitive or iterative.”<sup>19</sup>

A host of additional linguistic authorities could be cited to reinforce these linguistic facts. This almost universal emphasis placed by first rate Greek grammarians on these grammatical features of the Present Indicative cannot be lightly dismissed. Ultimately, however, whether “commits adultery” in Matthew 19:9 denotes continuous action is irrelevant to the subject at hand.

Nevertheless, it is certainly true that other uses of the Present tense occur in Greek. As noted, the use relevant to the present discussion is the Gnomic Present. However, one must keep ever in mind that assigning the meaning of either linear action or point action to a Greek verb remains tenuous since **the Greek forms are the same**. As already noted—and conceded by Osburn—it becomes strictly a matter of **context** and how that context is to be interpreted. One must not make the mistake of reasoning, “Since this verb is used as a Gnomic Present, the action embodied in the verb does not and cannot **continue**.” **Greek grammar does not support this unwarranted extrapolation.**

The Gnomic Present focuses attention on the punctiliar/point action of an event. It does not, however, imply that no further continuous repetition of that action follows. If I refer to a single, isolated act of jumping up and down by a two-year-old to call attention to that child’s action at a particular moment in time at her birthday party, I do not thereby imply that she did no further jumping at her party, or that she did not continue to jump from time to time subsequent to her birthday party. **There’s nothing about a Gnomic Present that precludes continuous activity following the action pinpointed and spotlighted by the Gnomic Present.** Even if *moichatai* is a Gnomic Present, continuous action is not automatically, or inherently, or necessarily excluded by that construction. The fact that Jesus pinpointed the first act of sexual intercourse as an act of adultery (which occurs subsequent to the act of marriage—“marries another”) cannot mean that all further acts of sexual intercourse do **not** constitute adultery.

In his book on Greek syntax, Daniel Wallace describes the Gnomic Present: “The present tense may be used to make a

statement of **a general, timeless fact.**"<sup>20</sup> He then quotes Fanning: "It does not say that something is happening, but that something *does* happen." Wallace continues: "The action or state continues without time limits."<sup>21</sup> The salient point to observe is that the Gnostic Present **does not exclude continuous action** of the verb. Rather, it merely expresses the timeless nature of the action of the verb—without weighing in on whether that action occurs continuously.

The fact remains that, in the words of prominent Baptist grammarian A.T. Robertson, the "present tense may be used, therefore, to express an action simply (punctiliar), a process (durative or linear), a state (perfective or perfect)."<sup>22</sup> All three of these actions are possible in any given use of the verb and cannot always be easily distinguished—which implies caution in assuming one interpretation to the exclusion of others. Yet Blass, Debrunner, and Funk emphasize the fact that, regarding the Aoristic Present, there are "**few cases** where a punctiliar act taking place at the moment of speaking is to be denoted."<sup>23</sup>

Logically, if one cannot prove decisively that "commits adultery" in Matthew 19:9 is a Present tense of continuity—neither can one prove decisively that it's **not**. Hence, for all a person knows, it **may well be linear**. "Undefined" means undefined. It is a grave error to jump to the conclusion that, even if the rarer usage of a Gnostic Present occurs, the action to which it refers cannot involve subsequent continuous action. It is equally unwarranted to argue that simply because a Gnostic Present verb exists in a verse (e.g., "I say/*lego*") that the other verbs must be Gnostic Presents as well.

Another prominent grammarian, D.B. Monro, issued that very caution: "The present is not a space of time, but a point; what

is present therefore is not (generally speaking) a whole action or event, but the fact that it is **in course of happening**.... The mere effort of regarding an action as in present time almost obliges us to give it a **progressive** character.”<sup>24</sup> Farrar rightly bemoaned the failure of Bible translators to represent the Present Indicative properly:

The translators of our English Version have failed more frequently from their partial knowledge of the force of the tenses than from any other cause, and their neglect of **the continuous meaning** of the present often loses us lessons of profound significance.... “The so-called present is a present-imperfect : ‘I am dining;’ i.e. **an action is going on, which is not yet finished.**”<sup>25</sup>

In his discussion of “Tenses of the Indicative,” Goodwin notes: “As the limits of such an action on either side of the present moment **are not defined**, the present may express **a customary or repeated action** or a general truth.... The present denotes merely the **continuance or progress of an action**, without reference to its **completion.**”<sup>26</sup> Specifically, he says the Gnostic Present is used “to denote a general truth **or an habitual action.**”<sup>27</sup>

Greek grammarians Dana and Mantey insist: “The progressive force of the present tense should always be considered as **primary**, with the Progressive Present manifestly nearest the root idea of the tense. It signifies action in progress, or **state in persistence.**”<sup>28</sup> They also note the Iterative Present which they identify as “the present of **repeated action.**”<sup>29</sup> In their allusion to the Aoristic Present, “punctiliar action in present time,” they defer to notable grammarian Ernest DeWitt Burton who describes the Aoristic Present as “a distinct departure from the prevailing use of the present tense to denote action in progress” and “**rare** as compared with the cases of the Progressive Present.”<sup>30</sup> Lest the reader

get the idea that a Gnostic or Aoristic Present **excludes** continuous future action, Burton states further that the Aoristic Present refers to “an action of present time [that] is conceived of **without reference** to its progress.” In other words, the Aoristic Present pinpoints an action in the present without offering any additional indication of the potential continuation of that action.

Hence, Smyth states: “The present stem may denote the simple action of the verb in present time without regard to its continuance.”<sup>31</sup> He does not mean there is no continuance of the action of the verb—as if any continuance is inherently **excluded**; rather, he simply means that an Aoristic Present does not even address whether such is the case—the focus being solely on the simple action of the verb.

Blass, Debrunner, and Funk explain that an action taking place in present time **includes** “duration **on one side or the other** of the present moment.”<sup>32</sup> Duff clarifies this sense of the present as “undefined,” i.e., “the action is considered in itself, **without reference** to continuation or completion.”<sup>33</sup> It’s not that continuation does not occur, but simply that the tense does not focus on or intend to allude to that aspect. We must recognize, therefore, the fact that a couple engaging in a one-time act—like a divorce, a marriage ceremony, or sexual intercourse—**does not imply** that such acts have no further, ongoing, continuing action.

### **Aorist Passive Infinitive?**

Further, it is incorrect to argue that “commits adultery” in Matthew 19:9 does not refer to continuous action since it is parallel to Matthew 5:32 where “commits adultery” is an Aorist Passive Infinitive which conveys “undefined action.” The “commits adultery” of Matthew 5:32a is not parallel to the “commits adultery” of Matthew 19:9a in their respective uses of Aorist Passive Infinitive

vs. Present Indicative Middle/Passive. Matthew 5:32a uses the Aorist Passive in order to emphasize the **eventuality** of the divorced woman's adultery—without specifying **when** the time of her remarriage and resulting adultery might occur. Hence, the use of undefined action.

Matthew 5:32a refers to **the divorced woman** who will eventually remarry, while 19:9a refers to **the man who does the divorcing** and then remarries. Both Matthew 5:32b and 19:9b refer to **the man who marries the divorced women**. So the infinitive in 5:32 and the Present Indicative in 19:9 are **not** parallel: (1) They refer to different **people** and (2) they refer to different **possible eventualities**. The action of 19:9 is **immediate**—envisioned as a present reality, while 5:32 is **undefined**—envisioned as a future eventuality.

While Jesus might have used the Perfect tense or a Present Passive Infinitive to make His point, He did not **have** to in order to imply continuous action. Indeed, while the Perfect focuses on the state of the **present** as the result of an action in the **past**, in Matthew 19:9 Jesus focused on the state of the **future** as the result of an action in the **present**.

## Summary

Lusk articulates a fitting summary of the view that Matthew 19:9 alludes to continuous action:

There is no factor here in the text of Matt. 19:9 which would demand a different kind of action be associated with the present tense verb *moichatai* than that which would be usual, i.e., **continuous action**. And to this we would add that the very idea intrinsic to the verb *moicheuo*, as used here in this context, would also demand that *moichatai* be taken as conveying **continuous or linear action**. The “kind of action” under consideration here is **continuous** in that the marriage under consideration is adulterous; for one to be in such a relationship, on a continuous basis, certainly implies that action contemplated is

continuous. If one is “committing adultery” by being in a particular relationship—perpetuating that relationship—he is clearly involved in a “**continuous action**.”<sup>34</sup>



## II. OSBURN'S OWN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Returning to Osburn's article, interestingly enough, the explicitly stated purpose of the article was to critique/refute the following viewpoint: "[T]he present indicative in Matthew 19:9, or any other Greek text, 'cannot mean **other than** continuous action.'"<sup>35</sup> Osburn's purpose in his article was **not** to prove that "commits adultery" in Matthew 19:9 **does not and cannot** entail continuous action. He believes that the context indicates that Jesus was simply stating a general truth and that, therefore, the verb should be taken as a Gnomic Present without regard to any timeframe.

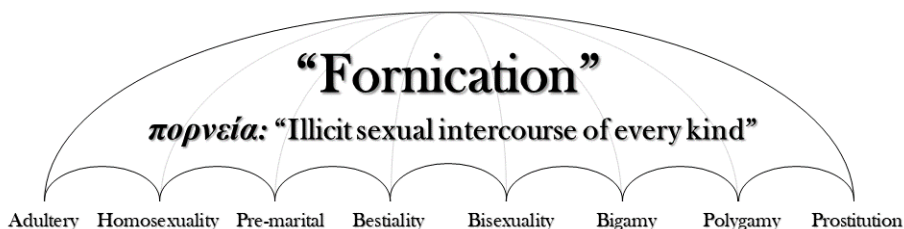
Lest one think that Osburn, therefore, is claiming that the Greek construction **excludes** the idea that adultery can be a continuous state, examine carefully **his very next sentence**—his final declaration on the matter: "Now continuity **may or may not** be involved...."<sup>36</sup> Osburn concedes that adultery may very well be an ongoing condition, "but it is not legitimate to appeal to **the Greek present indicative** to assert that it **must** be involved."<sup>37</sup> In other words, there can be **other** reasons—apart from the presence of a Gnomic Present—to conclude that adultery is a continuous condition (e.g., immediate context, remote context, etc.).<sup>38</sup> Therefore, one cannot assume that Jesus (or His alleged use of a Gnomic Present) nullifies the idea that adultery is an ongoing state. Osburn simply wants it understood that one cannot appeal automatically to the Present Indicative to establish the notion of durative action. Consequently, anyone who relies on Osburn's article as proof that adulterous couples do not have to terminate their marriages has misread, misinterpreted, and misrepresented Osburn.

### III. CAN ONE “LIVE” IN AN ONGOING CONDITION OF ADULTERY?

Let’s just say for sake of argument that “commits adultery” in Matthew 19:9 **is** a Gnostic Present.<sup>39</sup> That fact would not prove that the couple would not be guilty of ongoing adultery. It would merely affirm that they commit adultery when they marry (and have sexual relations)—without saying **anything** about their future, ongoing marital status. One would have to look for additional contextual clues—in **that** text or **elsewhere** in the Bible—to seek an answer to that question. Whether “commits adultery” is a Gnostic Present is, in fact, **irrelevant and superfluous** to the discussion. We must examine the immediate context, as well as the remote context, in order to ascertain whether adultery is an ongoing, continuous condition. When we do so, we discover the **real** issues as they pertain to adultery.

#### “Adultery” Defined

First, it is imperative that we allow the Bible to define its own terms. The New Testament uses the broad term “fornication” (*porneia*) very specifically to refer to various forms of “unlawful sexual intercourse”<sup>40</sup>—one of which is “adultery.”<sup>41</sup> Examine the following figure:



Adultery is one form/manifestation of fornication/*porneia* and, therefore, refers very specifically to sexual intercourse

between two people in which one or both have prior marital obligations that disqualify them from engaging in sexual intercourse with each other. The Greek lexicons are decisive on the matter. The verb form of “adultery” means “to have unlawful intercourse with another’s wife.”<sup>42</sup> Hence, the term encompasses a married woman who has intercourse with any man other than her husband (Mark 10:12), as well as a man who has intercourse with any woman other than his wife.<sup>43</sup> To repeat: adultery, by definition, derives its meaning on the basis of a person’s **prior** marital attachments/obligations.

Hence, every act of sexual intercourse with that person is an act of adultery—even as every act of intercourse between two homosexuals is an act of homosexuality, every act of intercourse between a human and an animal is an act of bestiality, and every act of intercourse by a prostitute is an act of prostitution. Adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, and prostitution are all equally forms of *porneia*—which, as we have noted, the lexicographers define as “any kind of illegitimate sexual intercourse.”<sup>44</sup> If adulterers are not required by God to terminate their sexual relationship, neither does He require the man who marries another man, the man who is married to multiple women, or the woman who marries her pet to do so.

### **“Adultery” Refined**

One of the common features of doctrinal error is the propensity for redefining words and assigning novel meanings that will, in turn, provide support for the error being espoused. Such is certainly the case with the term “adultery.” Hugo McCord, himself an accomplished Greek and Hebrew linguist, having produced a masterful translation of the New Testament,<sup>45</sup> manifested alarm at the

viewpoint espoused by those who challenge the “traditional” view of Matthew 19:9. He cautioned: “Greek grammar is valuable, but this writer is suspicious of any doctrine dependent wholly upon Greek grammar. Such leaves most of the human race in an impossible situation.”<sup>46</sup> He further noted:

Versions of the Bible in all languages make it clear that adultery is practiced when, except for one reason, one divorces and remarries. Some are attempting to upset that clear teaching by resorting to technical Greek grammar; that a punctiliar present of Jesus’ words “committeth adultery” makes adultery of two legal steps (divorce and a remarriage ceremony) but removes adultery from the intercourse following those two legal steps. Nobody can think of any doctrine more disastrous to Jesus’ standard for family life.<sup>47</sup>

What was McCord’s assessment of the linguistic legitimacy of the alleged meaning of “adultery” advocated by the “punctiliar” proponents? He continued:

This new and impossible meaning of “adultery” is found in no dictionary or grammar. In this writer’s limited acquaintance, no Greek grammarian gives the punctiliar action for adultery in Matthew 19:9. The durative (or, linear) action, as is commonly understood in all versions, would refer the adultery of Matthew 19:9, not to two legal steps, but to a *life* of adultery following the two legal steps.<sup>48</sup>

He then issued a sobering warning to those who press this novel view: “Those gospel preachers are presumptive and daring who risk the souls of their hearers on such a tenuous interpretation allegedly hidden in the Greek.”<sup>49</sup>

Question: Could Jesus have worded His statement exactly the way He did—not intending to imply that a marriage ceremony is adultery—but that He intended His words to be understood that if a couple marries, they will **subsequently** have sexual intercourse and thereby commit adultery? Of course, He could—and did! What if Jesus meant that, by unscripturally divorcing your lawful

spouse and marrying another person whom you have no right to marry, you “commit adultery” **in the sense that** illicit sexual intercourse will inevitably follow? In which case, His words make perfect sense, and the Bible harmonizes with itself. Indeed, what couple marries without possessing the implicit intention to have sexual intercourse? It’s a given! It’s universally expected and understood.

This realization explains why Matthew’s wording of the principle in 5:32 reads: “But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality **causes her** to commit adultery.” The implication is that the predicament her husband has placed her in means that she will inevitably remarry and thus have intercourse with another man whom she has no right to marry. Her husband is responsible for **causing** her to go to another man. This is precisely how the premiere Greek lexicon of our day explains the matter. Commenting on Matthew 5:32, Danker states: “(the man who divorces his wife) *causes her to commit adultery (if she contracts a new marriage)*.”<sup>50</sup> McGarvey rightly observes:

A woman, when divorced by her husband, naturally seeks a second marriage.... **[T]he mere fact of divorce did not make her an adulteress**, but it brought her into a state of disgrace from which she invariably sought to free herself by contracting **another marriage** and this other marriage to which her humiliating situation drove her made her an adulteress.... [H]er first husband, by divorcing her, indirectly causes her to commit this crime.<sup>51</sup>

If both “divorces” and “marries another” are what Jesus meant by “adultery,” we have two separate and distinct “punctiliar” acts separated by time—days, perhaps, even years. By this novel redefinition, the divorce, in and of itself, would be “adultery.” And then the subsequent remarriage ceremony—days or

years later—would constitute a **second**, completely separate act of “adultery.” Such confusion throws Scripture into chaos.

The fact is that to **divorce** for any reason other than the sexual infidelity of one’s lawful mate is **sinful**—but it’s not “**adultery**.” Then, when the man who so divorces his wife, waits, say five years, to remarry, the act of remarriage, i.e., **the remarriage ceremony**, is most certainly **sinful**—but it is not “**adultery**.” Adultery, by definition, refers to the **sexual intercourse** that occurs subsequent to the illicit divorce and remarriage. The only legitimate, consistent way to interpret Jesus’ allusion to “adultery” is to connect it to the illicit sexual intercourse that **follows** an illicit divorce and remarriage.

Observe, further, the inconsistencies that are created by such unwarranted redefinitions. If we redefine “adultery” to mean “to divorce” and/or “to have a remarriage ceremony”—neither of which have anything to do with sexual intercourse—then **anyone** who divorces for **any** reason is committing “adultery” merely by committing the act of divorce! Once “divorce” is redefined to mean “adultery,” then anyone who divorces commits adultery! The same is true for a marriage ceremony. If a marriage ceremony alone is redefined to mean “adultery,” then **anyone** who engages in a marriage ceremony is committing adultery by so doing.

McCord exposes yet another contradiction: “[A]dultery as a ceremony is completely eliminated by Jesus in his remark that the adultery under consideration involves abstaining from sexual relations, making ‘themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake’ (Matt. 19:12).”<sup>52</sup> McCord summarizes the precarious nature of the “point action” position:

To assume point action in Matt. 19:9 is to risk souls on a new and bizarre definition of adultery (a legal ceremony), a meaning found in no dictionary or commentator. There are three

Bible meanings of adultery (physical, mental, figurative). To assume a fourth meaning (a legal ceremony) would be done by no scholar “except in our brotherhood.”<sup>53</sup>

Indeed, several questions demand answers—questions that expose the fallacy of the viewpoint: (1) What is the distinction between a one-time act of intercourse and additional ones at a later time? (2) If a person is guilty of committing adultery the first time, why are subsequent sexual encounters **not** adultery? (3) What other sin can be committed simply by **deciding** and/or **announcing** to do so (e.g., at a marriage ceremony)—but not **actually** committing it? (4) When a couple marries for the first time (punctiliar action), do they enter into a **continuous state/condition** of being in a **non**-adulterous marriage? (5) When a couple divorce (punctiliar action), do they then exist/remain in an **ongoing condition/state** of being divorced? (6) When a person says, “I’m divorced,” doesn’t he mean that he engaged in the act of divorce and thus **remains** in a continuous divorced state? (7) Won’t that ongoing status not change until and unless he remarries? (8) If “adultery” is the act(s) of divorce and/or remarriage, if such a couple never has sexual relations (due, for example, to one being nonfunctional due to injury), are they adulterers?

While “puts away/divorces” in Matthew 19:9 is a onetime act, its practical effect is **continuous action**—since both the divorcer and the divorcee remain in a continuous state/condition of being divorced. Likewise, the person who divorces his wife for some reason other than fornication and enters into a sexual relationship with another person commits ongoing, repeated acts of sexual intercourse.

Surely, the disciples’ startled reaction to Jesus’ words verifies the fact that Jesus was declaring divorce—for any reason other than fornication—and subsequent remarriage to entail entering

into **an ongoing adulterous state**. Upon hearing Jesus' stringent declaration, they responded: "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry" (vs. 10). They surely understood Jesus to articulate a narrow, severely restrictive injunction. If the one and only reason approved by God for divorcing one's mate is if that mate is sexually unfaithful, then a person is under obligation to maintain his/her marriage—even if the spouse is hard to get along with and makes life exceedingly difficult and unpleasant—but who remains sexually faithful.

If, on the other hand, Jesus was saying that if you divorce your spouse for some reason other than fornication, and you marry someone else, you commit adultery (by divorcing and/or remarriage), but you can absolve yourself of that "adultery" by merely expressing genuine sorrow while **remaining** in that subsequent remarriage, then the disciples would have had no reason for concern. But to the contrary, the disciples' concluded that simply never entering into a marriage in the first place—thereby refraining from sexual relations altogether—would be preferable to entering a marriage and facing the possibility of circumstances that make the marriage so distasteful that sexual relations are undesirable. Jesus quickly "nixed" such thinking by pointing to only three classes of individuals who are in a position to conform to the disciples' recommendation of celibacy.

### **Is Adultery "Continuous"?**

When a man divorces his legal spouse (not for fornication) and remarries, but then acknowledges his sin and expresses sorrow for that sin, and then proceeds to maintain his new marriage, is he guilty of **living** in an ongoing, continuous state of adultery? A Gnostic Present notwithstanding, may he continue his marriage without being guilty of further sin, i.e., adultery?



It is true that sin may be viewed as the practice of isolated acts that are contrary to God's will. Telling a lie, stealing a car, committing a murder, and having sexual intercourse are "punctiliar" events—point actions. But it does not follow that individuals cannot **live** in an ongoing state of sin. A "liar" is one who is involved in separate acts of lying. What makes him a liar—and being labeled by Scripture as "a liar"—and therefore guilty of **living** a life of lying, is his refusal to cease telling lies. A thief is someone who commits isolated acts of theft—though not 24 hours a day—yet is designated a "thief." A person is a murderer if he has killed one or more persons and continues to entertain the possibility of repeating such behavior. A "prostitute" is a woman who lives in an ongoing state of prostitution. An alcoholic does not drink 24/7—yet his "point action" drinks make him an ongoing, continuous alcoholic.

Adulterous couples engage in ongoing—though not constant—acts of adultery. No wonder, then, that the feminine plural noun *moicheia* used by Jesus in Matthew 15:19 and Mark 7:22—rendered "adulteries"—is defined by Danker as "denoting separate acts" of adultery, "*adulterous acts*."<sup>54</sup> Hence, liars, thieves, murderers, prostitutes, and adulterers share in common their unwillingness to truly repent, strive to cease their sinful acts, and bring forth fruit worthy of repentance (Matthew 3:8).

When the adulterous woman was "caught in adultery, in **the very act** (*autophoro*)" (John 8:4), what was she doing at the time? Was she caught **divorcing** her husband? Or perhaps she was caught in the act of a **remarriage ceremony**? And what did Paul mean when he indicted the Corinthians with this accusation: "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality (fornication/*porneia*) **among you**, and such sexual immorality as is not

even named among the Gentiles—that a man **has** his father’s wife!” (1 Corinthians 5:1)? Did the fornicator commit sin only the first time? If he got his father’s wife to leave his father to be with him, would their marriage constitute **continuous** fornication/adultery? The fact is that Paul meant that the brother was in a **continuous condition** of practicing sexual immorality and an **ongoing illicit relationship** with his father’s wife—punctuated by illicit acts of sexual intercourse.

### “Walking” & “Living”

The New Testament uses various essentially synonymous terms to characterize this continuous nature of “punctiliar” sin. One is “walk.” Lexicographers identify *peripateo*/περιπατέω as a Hebraism which means “to live” and, hence, “to conduct one’s life, *comport oneself, behave, live* as habit of conduct...‘walk of life.’”<sup>55</sup> Paul made clear to the Ephesians that repeated acts of lying (4:25) and stealing (4:28) constitute a failure to “**walk** as children of light” (5:8) and to “**walk** worthy of the calling with which you were called” (4:1). Hence, he admonished them to “no longer **walk** as the rest of the Gentiles **walk**” (4:17). His use of the word “walk” refers to a **lifestyle** (often translated “**live**”)—an ongoing, continuous approach to behavior. Hence, the “point action” “trespasses and sins” that the Ephesians had committed were acts “**in which you once walked** according to the course of this world” (Ephesians 2:1-2). If the individual does not cease repetitiously committing those individual acts of theft or lying, then he is continuing to “**walk** in them.” He is living a life characterized by thievery and lying. He **is** a thief and a liar. In stark contrast, “we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should **walk in them**”

(2:10). Living the Christian life, therefore, consists of a cessation of individual sinful acts in order to **live** godly, i.e., to engage in **individual acts** of righteousness.

Paul stressed the same point to the Galatians: “**Walk** in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (5:16). Among others, he identifies “adultery” as one such work of the flesh that fulfills the lust of the flesh. A person is an “adulterer” because he has formed a sexual relationship which violates God’s law and refuses to cease that illicit sexual relationship—which consists of ongoing, individual acts of sexual intercourse. Simply saying he is sorry for the existence of this adulterous union will not and cannot alter what, in **God’s** sight, is “not lawful” (Matthew 14:4). As long as that marriage continues, the parties involved are **adulterers** (Romans 7:3). Only by **terminating** that relationship can the parties involved put an end to their individual acts of adultery.

Consider Paul’s comparable admonition to the Colossians:

[H]ave a **walk** worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him.... As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so **walk**<sup>56</sup> in Him.... Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: **fornication**, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once **walked** when you **lived**<sup>57</sup> **in them** (Colossians 1:10; 2:6; 3:5-7).

Paul’s words to the Colossians are unmistakable. To engage in repeated acts of fornication/adultery constitutes walking/living in a state of adultery—an ongoing, continuous relationship that merits the wrath of God.

In the words of John, such ongoing behaviors constitute a failure to “**walk** in the light as He is in the light” (1 John 1:7). After all, “He who says he **abides** in Him ought himself also to **walk** just as He **walked**” (1 John 2:6). “But he who hates his brother is

in darkness and **walks** in darkness” (1 John 2:11). To hate someone entails a continuous walking in spiritual darkness—even though hate manifests itself in isolated thoughts and acts of hatred. All of these verses demonstrate that “walk” and “live” are synonymous terms for *peripateo*—as English translators rightly reflect. (See Appendix B).

Using a different word (*poreuomai*/πορεύομαι), Peter admonished his audience that a Christian “no longer should **live** the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we **walked** in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries” (1 Peter 4:2-3). The NASB renders the phrase “walked in lewdness” as “having pursued a course of sensuality”—obviously an ongoing, continuous pursuit.

Peter used the same term again to refer to “those who **walk** according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority” (2 Peter 2:10). Observe that their disrespect for authority was equally a **continuous** condition. He referred to “scoffers” who were “**walking** according to their own lusts” (2 Peter 3:3; also Jude 16,18). The ESV has “following their own sinful desires.” An adulterous relationship is surely included in such terminology.

In all these verses, committing isolated acts of sin (like drunkenness and the like) entailed them “**living**” and “**walking**” in those sins. The Greek term Peter used means “to conduct oneself, live, walk.”<sup>58</sup> Like adultery, their individual sins involved them in a continuous, ongoing condition of “time in the flesh” (4:2). And when Jude alluded to those who “have **gone** in the way of Cain,” he meant they had entered into an ongoing lifestyle (Jude 11). The word is defined as “an action is spoken of as a *proceeding*,” “a

course of conduct, *a way*.”<sup>59</sup> Is there any question that they were **living** in an ongoing, continuous state of sin?

Using the same word, Luke likewise stressed the same point: “Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And **walking** in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied” (Acts 9:31). Those Christians were **living in a constant state** of fear of the Lord. Daily “point action” behaviors do not alter the fact that such repetitious acts constitute **living** in those behaviors.

Paul explained to the mob at Lystra that God “in bygone generations allowed all nations to **walk** in their own ways” (Acts 14:16). The same term is used to refer to John the immerser’s parents Zacharias and Elizabeth: “And they were both righteous before God, **walking** in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless” (Luke 1:6). Observe the words “righteous” and “all.” They were living in a continuous state of being righteous. Their “walking” entailed ongoing attention to **all** of God’s commands—again, demonstrating that isolated acts of obedience combine together to constitute a continuous condition or state.

The Septuagint translators used the same term in their rendering of Judges 2:12 which says, concerning the Israelites, “they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they **followed** other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them.” Brenton’s translation of the Septuagint renders the term and the subsequent word *opiso* as “**walked** after.” Some English translations have “**went** after” (RSV, ESV, et al.) and “**go** after” (YLT). Observe that idolatry entails isolated, individual acts of bowing before or in some other way paying homage to an idol. Such occasional, isolated acts constituted “walking” after other gods.

All of the preceding renderings convey the notion of continuous behavior. Appendix B provides a listing showing that translators use “walk” and “live” as synonymous terms for *poreuomai*.

Quoting the Old Testament, Jesus used another term when He countered Satan’s verbal assault with the words, “It is written, ‘Man shall not **live** by bread alone, but by every word of God’” (Luke 4:4). The word He used (*zao*) means “to live, to pass existence in a specific manner,” “to continue to live.”<sup>60</sup> One does not eat bread/food every minute, 24 hours a day. Yet the individual, occasional acts of eating are to be equated with the continuous state of **living**.

Paul used the same verb when he asked the Romans, “How shall we who died to sin **live** any longer in it?” (Romans 6:2). He used the word to mean “to conduct oneself in a pattern of behavior,”<sup>61</sup> “to devote life to sin.”<sup>62</sup>

While most English translations render the term simply as “live,” the CEV has “**go on** sinning,” the NIRV has “**keep on** sinning,” the NLV has “**keep on** living in sin,” the ERV, EXB, ICB, and NCV have “**continue** living,” and the GNT, EHV, ISV, and MOUNCE have “**go on** living.” All of these renderings accurately capture the ongoing, continuous nature of impenitent sin—like adultery.

When Paul quoted Leviticus 18:5 to both the Romans (10:5) and the Galatians (3:12), i.e., “You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall **live** by them,” the word “live” is defined as the eternal life that comes from ongoing observance of God’s laws:<sup>63</sup>

to enjoy real life, i.e., to have true life and worthy of the name,—**active**, blessed, **endless** in the kingdom of God... to **live** most happily in the enjoyment of the theocratic blessings.<sup>64</sup>

Likewise, his triple use of the term in Romans 8:12-13 contrasts living according to the flesh and living by the Spirit—both emphasizing the conflicting continuous lifestyles.

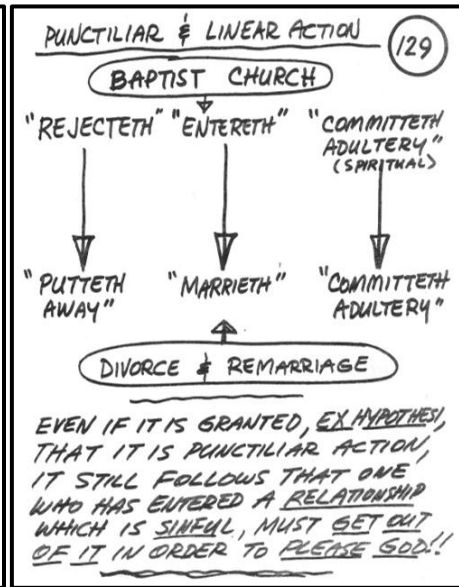
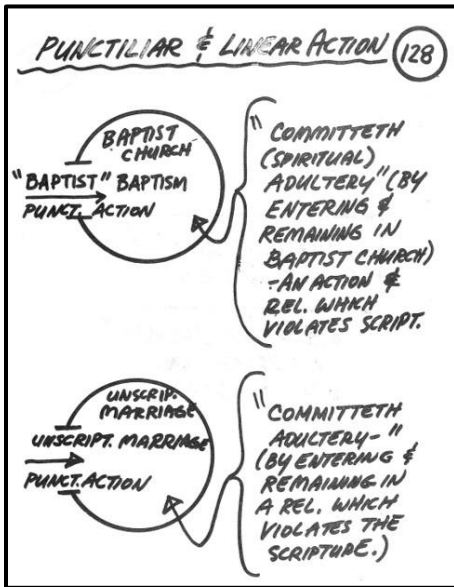
In all of these references, “to live” refers to an ongoing, continuous state of existence. An adulterous couple lives in just such a condition. It’s no wonder that, in his popular translation, William Beck rendered Matthew 19:9 as “I tell you, if anyone divorces his wife, except for adultery, and marries another, **he’s living in adultery.**”<sup>65</sup>

When Paul reminded Christians at Corinth of their conversion day, he noted that some had previously been fornicators, adulterers, and homosexuals (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Who could possibly doubt the fact that their salvation would have been impossible **unless** these sexual unions were **severed** and **terminated**? How else could he have said, “and such **were** some of you” (vs. 11)?<sup>66</sup>

Each of the terms examined in these preceding passages (and delineated in Appendix B)—“live,” “walk,” “practice,” “spend,” “do,” “follow,” “behave,” “conduct,” “pursue,” “go/went,” etc.—inherently entail continuous, durative action. They are essentially synonymous terms. The Bible plainly depicts isolated acts (point/punctiliar action)—of either sin or righteousness—as “living” and “walking” in those behaviors/actions. Individual acts combine to form an ongoing, continuous condition of **living**. Indeed, without question, sexual sin—like adultery—is continuous.

### **An Illustration**

An excellent illustration of this significant Bible doctrine may be seen in a number of charts prepared by Thomas Warren in 1978, titled “Punctiliar and Linear Action.”<sup>67</sup> Consider the following two charts:



These charts illustrate the parallel between entering a manmade denomination and entering a manmade, i.e., unscriptural, marriage. Though the act of entering both the Baptist church and an unscriptural marriage entail **punctiliar** action, nevertheless, both entail entering into a relationship and association which violates Scripture. In the words of Reisser, in the case of an unscriptural marriage, one “enters the realm of adultery.”<sup>68</sup> Entering into the realm of an adulterous marriage necessarily entails continuance, even as becoming a member of a denomination is continuous. Only by **exiting that relationship** can the sin be terminated.

Warren concluded that “even if it is granted, ex hypothesi, that it is punctiliar action, it still follows that one who has entered a relationship which is sinful, must get out of it in order to please God.”<sup>69</sup> He summarized:

So—even though it is clear that “committeth adultery” in Matt. 19:9 is linear action (the present tense, indicating “keeps on



committing adultery”) [while there is such a thing as the “aoristic”—punctiliar—use of the present tense, there must be some compelling reason for regarding the action as punctiliar rather than linear. There is no such reason as regards Matt. 19:9], nothing would be gained, by those who argue for some ground other than fornication, by our conceding (which we do not) that “committeth adultery” in Matt. 19:9 is punctiliar action—not linear.<sup>70</sup>

#### IV. MUST ADULTERERS SEPARATE?

But do we have any examples in Scripture in which God ever required an illicit marriage to be terminated? Yes, we do. However, we hasten to add that **no such example is necessary** in order to establish the truth of the fact that God requires adulterers to terminate their relationship—even as we do not need a specific example of two homosexuals being required to terminate their relationship, or polygamists being required to terminate their multiple marriages. Nevertheless, in order to reinforce the biblical point that God could and would require two individuals who are married to each other in violation of His will to terminate that marriage, we turn to two recorded instances.

1. John the immerser was imprisoned and eventually beheaded due to his insistence that Herod's marriage was unscriptural and needed to be terminated: "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; for **he had married her**. For John had said to Herod, 'It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife'" (Mark 6:17-18). Matthew's wording of the incident reads: "For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Because John had said to him, 'It is not lawful for you to **have her**'" (Matthew 14:3-4).

Observe the expression "have her." "Have" is a present active infinitive of the Greek verb meaning "to have." John could not have meant that it was unlawful for Herod to **have** Herodias as a friend, or to **have** her as a co-participant in a mutual hobby, or to **have** her as a traveling companion. John was obviously referring to the illicit **marriage relationship** that Herod had formed with Herodias. History records that Herodias had divorced her

husband, and she and Herod married each other.<sup>71</sup> The text explicitly states that Herod had **married** her. For John to say that it was **unlawful** for Herod to “have her” meant that Herod’s marriage was illicit. There wasn’t anything Herod could **say** that would fix the situation, absolving him of being involved in an ongoing state of adultery. The only way he could correct the situation was to no longer “have her,” i.e., terminate the marriage and separate from her. Genuine repentance so required.

2. Another striking example is seen in the post-exilic return of the Israelites to their homeland in the book of Ezra. In 458 B.C., Artaxerxes, then king of Persia, granted permission for Ezra to gather a second wave of exiles to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 7-10). It took him and his traveling companions five months to get to Jerusalem. Ezra was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses. His great purpose was to bring religious reform to the Jews in Palestine, to re-establish Mosaic institutions, and to revive the spirituality of a people who had degenerated socially, morally, and religiously. He worked feverishly to call them back to God’s written Word. So in Ezra 8:15, Ezra began to tackle the enormous task before him, beginning by organizing the financial offerings as well as sacrificing burnt offerings to God.

But then things got tough. Obeying God and bringing oneself back into harmony with God’s desires is often difficult:

When these things were done, the leaders came to me, saying, “The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, with respect to the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. **For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons**, so that the holy seed is mixed with the peoples of those lands. Indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this trespass.” So when I heard this thing, I tore my

garment and my robe, and plucked out some of the hair of my head and beard, and sat down astonished. Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel assembled to me, because of the transgression of those who had been carried away captive, and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice (Ezra 9:1-4).

Ezra was overcome with spiritual panic, grief, and anguish. He realized the population was in dire straits and merited the wrath and punishment of God. They had violated God's instructions regarding intermarrying with pagan peoples (e.g., Deuteronomy 7:3). Nehemiah faced precisely the same predicament (Nehemiah 13:23-27).

In verses 6-15, Ezra prayed to God out of deep contrition and penitence, acknowledging their sin in the formation of illicit marriages, and the fact that God had punished them far less than they deserved. His supplications to God were then interrupted:

Now while Ezra was praying, and while he was confessing, weeping, and bowing down before the house of God, a very large assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept very bitterly. And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra, "We have trespassed against our God, and have taken pagan wives from the peoples of the land; yet now **there is hope in Israel** in spite of this. Now therefore, let us make a covenant with our God **to put away all these wives and those who have been born to them**, according to the advice of my master and of those who **tremble at the commandment of our God**; and let it be done according to the law. Arise, for this matter is your responsibility. We also are with you. Be of good courage, and do it" (Ezra 10:1-4).

Their only recourse in God's sight was to **terminate the marriages**. Doing so would manifest their willingness to "tremble at the commandment of our God"—a factor that we are missing in our day in our need to deal with adulterous marriages.

Do not miss the application of these passages. No claim is being made that this incident parallels the marriages of our day in

which people divorce for reasons other than fornication and then remarry, thus entering into adulterous unions. Rather, its relevance for our day is that it provides proof that **God’s love for us does not enable Him to overlook sinful marriage relationships**. The Jews who had contracted illicit marriages could not merely “repent,” say they had been wrong and were sorry for their actions—and then **remain** in those marriages. The only way to please God was for them to **sever those marriages**—even though children were born to those unions (vs. 44). Based on this one passage alone, one cannot argue that the God of grace would never require the breakup of marriages.

Some claim that Ezra 10 does not imply that adulterous marriages must be severed since, to be consistent, one would have to send the children away. This claim fails to grasp the comparison being made. The historical setting of Ezra 10 pertains to God’s insistence that the Jews refrain from being exposed to pagan religion. Sending the children away along with the pagan wives was due to that adverse religious influence. The marriages—and the children born to those marriages—were unauthorized based on the Law of Moses’ prohibition of Israelites marrying non-Israelites. The pagan wives and children were being expelled from Israelite society.

The breakup of the marriages in Ezra’s day did not prevent the Israelite husband from providing for the physical well-being of either the illicit wife or the children. But they were to be prevented from exerting any further pagan influence on the Israelite community by being separated.

In sharp contrast, an adulterous marriage has nothing to do with religious affiliation. The definition of adultery applies to all people on the planet regardless of their religious affiliation.

Adulterous marriages involve both husband and wife in the sin of adultery. Adultery—then and now—requires **separation**, which then requires the couple to make provision for their children without perpetuating their adultery. Israelites **then**—and Christians **now**—must see to the well-being of the children, doing their best to provide instruction, support, and encouragement so they will see the need to obey God **no matter what**.

So the “sending away” of Ezra 10 is irrelevant to ascertaining whether God requires adulterous couples to separate today—even if they have children. The direct application of Ezra 10 to the matter of adultery in our day pertains to the fact that one cannot argue that a loving God would not require couples to terminate their marriages.

After all, what is God’s will for polygamists? African countries as well as Muslim countries are rife with polygamy. What if a Muslim man—married to four women<sup>72</sup>—encounters the Gospel and decides to forsake Islam and become a Christian? Must he sever any of his marriages—even though children are involved? America has legalized homosexual marriages. Those involved are legally permitted to adopt children. If such a “family” were to present themselves to a local congregation where they learn the truth and desire to obey the Gospel and get right with God, must they terminate their marriage and make the necessary preparations to live apart—even though children are involved?

What’s more, Mark 5:31-32 teaches that an **innocent** woman who is unscripturally/unjustly (i.e., for some reason other than her fornication) divorced by her husband, she is not free to remarry on that sole ground.<sup>73</sup> Consequently, she is under divine obligation to live single and celibate—through no fault of her own. Yet the claim that adulterous couples do not have to separate

allows adulterers to be married while an innocent, non-fornicating woman is disallowed marriage. The viewpoint under review cannot be correct since it sets up this unjust, unbiblical contradiction.

### **David & Bathsheba?**

“But if God requires illicit marriages to be severed today, why was David permitted to keep Bathsheba?” The following observations clarify this question.

First, there is no parallel between the adulterous marriages being defended today and the relationship sustained by David and Bathsheba. It is true that David’s affair with Bathsheba while her husband was at the battle front constituted adultery. However, he did not further complicate or solidify his adultery by marrying her. She returned to her own home (2 Samuel 11:4). The two apparently had no intention of further complicating their sin by forming an adulterous marital union—which would have required termination.

Instead, when Bathsheba notified David that she was pregnant, David made every effort to **hide** the sin by making it appear as if Uriah was the father of the child (2 Samuel 11:6-13). Repentance at this stage of the situation would entail David’s confession of his sin and his determination never to repeat such illicit behavior. David could have devised some other plan, say, the banishment of Uriah for some breach of military regulations. With Uriah expelled from the land, he could have then taken Bathsheba as his own wife. In such a case, David would have been **living** in adultery, and the only divinely-approved course of action would have been to sever the marriage relationship. But David did not do this. When his efforts failed, he decided the way he could “cover his tracks” was to bring about Uriah’s death (2 Samuel 11:14-15). To the sin of adultery, he added murder.

Notice that David was not going through all this rigmarole in order to free Bathsheba to be married to himself, but to keep Uriah from finding out that his wife was pregnant by another man. Thus, the argument that states, “You’re saying a person ought to murder the mate of the individual that they wish to be married to,” holds no validity in this discussion (see p. 70). By definition, adultery entails sexual relations with a person whose scriptural mate is **still living**. Notice God’s own words on this matter:

For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband **as long as he lives**. But if the husband **dies**, she is **released** from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband **lives**, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband **dies**, she is **free from that law**, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man (Romans 7:2-3).

However inexpedient David’s action after the death of Uriah may have been, his marriage to Bathsheba was not adultery and is therefore not parallel to the illicit marriages contracted by so many today whose former mates are still living.

Second, a careful reading of the wording of 2 Samuel 12:9-10 shows that Nathan was not commenting on Bathsheba’s eligibility for subsequent marriage to David or anyone else. Verse 9 sandwiches the allusion to taking her as his wife in between a double reference to the killing of Uriah. He was tying the murder to David’s **motive** for murder, i.e., to get Uriah’s wife and cover her pregnancy. In essence, God was saying to David, “You despised me and broke my commands when you killed Uriah and **took his wife**, i.e., when you killed him **so you could** take his wife.” David did **not sin in marrying** Bathsheba. He sinned in killing Uriah so that he could take Bathsheba as his wife.

Returning to the first observation above, to paraphrase Romans 7:3 in its application to David: “So then if, while her



[Bathsheba's] husband [Uriah] lives, she marries another man [David], she will be called an adulteress; but if her [Bathsheba's] husband [Uriah] dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man [David].”

Third, by employing the same logic as those who fumble for the case of David and Bathsheba to justify the continuance of adulterous unions today, one could just as easily make a case for the permissibility of polygamy today. Bathsheba was only one of several wives (cf. 1 Samuel 18:27; 25:42-43; 1 Chronicles 3:2-5). Maybe Joseph Smith, with his 28+ wives, was nearer to the truth than we previously supposed? Yet, both polygamy and adultery equally are forms of *porneia*. Though at one time David was truly “a man after God’s own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22)—when he was very young,<sup>74</sup> nevertheless, his behavior later in life demonstrates that he drifted significantly from this ideal. Human hearts—even righteous hearts—can change.

Fourth, David and Bathsheba are not intended as models for ascertaining God’s requirements concerning divorce and remarriage today in **any** sense. For the Scriptures are exceedingly explicit concerning God’s feelings about the whole sordid affair: “But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord” (2 Samuel 11:27). Nevertheless, he did not have to sever the marital relationship with Bathsheba since her husband was dead and she was released from that law (Romans 7:2).

However, God brought down upon David untold misery and unpleasant consequences to punish David, as well as instruct us concerning His true view of such iniquity. Three direct consequences were inflicted upon David:

(1) Nathan said the sword would never depart from David’s house (2 Samuel 12:10), fulfilled in the successive violent deaths of at least three of his sons—Amnon (2

Samuel 13:29), Absalom (2 Samuel 18:14), and Adonijah (1 Kings 2:25);

(2) Nathan also declared to David that his own wives would be shamefully misused in broad daylight before all Israel by someone close to him (2 Samuel 12:11), distastefully fulfilled when Absalom “lay with his father’s concubines in the sight of all Israel” (2 Samuel 16:22);

(3) Further, Nathan pronounced the fatal fate of the son conceived by David’s sin with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12:14), fulfilled seven days after Nathan’s judgment sentence (2 Samuel 12:18).

All of this detailed narration suggests that we have missed a major point if we seek to justify illicit marriages today on the grounds that “God didn’t require David to separate.”

### **The Gibeonites?**

“But what about the Gibeonites? Wasn’t that incident a case where God condemned the Israelites for entering into an illicit covenant, but then permitted the relationship to **continue**—without requiring the covenant to be dissolved? And, therefore, adulterous marriages may continue?”

The reader may remember the occasion in which the Gibeonites—unlike the kings of the other nations who desired to war against Israel—sent a delegation to Joshua in order to form a treaty. Claiming that they had come from beyond Canaan, the Gibeonites created an elaborate ruse to achieve their objective. Without seeking counsel from the Lord, Joshua and the leaders agreed to the pact. When they discovered they had been conned, they determined that they would abide by the treaty since they had “sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel” (Joshua 9:19). However, the rulers of Israel decided to subject the Gibeonites to being “woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation” and “the house of God” (Joshua 9:21).

Does this incident provide support for the idea that an adulterous couple may maintain their marriage—since the Israelites agreed to maintain their covenant with the Gibeonites? To answer this question, one must first examine carefully the circumstances that characterized the relationship between the Gibeonites and Israel.

### **The Divine Policy**

The general rule given by God regarding the inhabitants of Canaan was that they must be exterminated due to their idolatry and moral depravity.<sup>75</sup> The reason consistently given by God for requiring the Canaanites to be annihilated was very specific: their moral and spiritual depravity was so endemic and extensive that they merited elimination. Even as the pre-Flood population was thoroughly saturated with evil (Genesis 6:5), so the iniquity of the Canaanites was at the point where God considered it to be “full” (Genesis 15:16). The implication is that the inhabitants were so deeply entrenched in wickedness that they were incorrigible and unsalvageable. Even the children would have been significantly degraded by the depraved behavior being exhibited.<sup>76</sup>

### **The Exception**

While no exception is explicitly stated in the passages that articulate this general rule, nevertheless, it becomes apparent that God intended for there to be a fundamental exception to the general rule. Being the gracious God that He is, would we not expect Him to make provision for those among the pagans who were willing to repent and turn from their depravity and embrace the one true God? While not required of Gentiles, such individuals might even desire to be incorporated into the Israelite covenant.<sup>77</sup>

Consequently, it would be highly likely that there would be those among the heathen population whose moral sensibilities

had not been completely degraded, and who would be receptive to the truth of the existence of the one true God and His expectations for people.<sup>78</sup> This is precisely what we find to be the case with Rahab and her family (Joshua 2:1ff.). In addition to whatever spiritual qualities she may have possessed on her own, when she heard about the God of Israel and what He had done to the Egyptians and to the Amorites, she was sincerely drawn to Him.

Here we see the first indication of the **exception** to the general rule. Though God issued a universal declaration in Noah's day, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast" (Genesis 6:7), Noah was an exception to that general declaration. Like Noah, Rahab and her family were distinct and to be distinguished from the degenerate society among whom she lived. She is extolled in the New Testament for her expression of obedient faith (Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25). She was even incorporated into the Messianic bloodline (Matthew 1:5). The similarity between the Gibeonites' submission and Rahab's responsiveness to the same gracious God of Israel is notable and striking.

Examine the five points of comparison in Appendix C between Rahab and the Gibeonites in their mutual affirmation of the one true God—including their common knowledge of the divine Name, Yahweh/Jehovah, which they used repeatedly. Another point of similarity is the fact that both the Gibeonites and Rahab lied (Joshua 2:4-5; 9:4ff.). Nevertheless, the Gibeonites were spared for the same reason that Rahab was spared—their **faith**. Like the Gibeonites, Rahab "did not perish with those **who did not believe**" (Hebrews 11:31).

Neither of these exceptions constituted a violation of God's extermination policy. Numerous scholars spotlight this fact. As

Cobbin explains, “the law admitted of exceptions where there was no danger of idolatry, and the parties would embrace the true religion.”<sup>79</sup> Whereas the other pagan nations intensified their resistance and rebellion against God, Marchant suggests that the Gibeonites had a “change of faith” and were convicted by the mighty works of God.<sup>80</sup> Joshua’s divine “orders expressly signified, that he was to destroy all the Canaanitish nations, **if they refused to submit to the religion and laws of Israel.**”<sup>81</sup> “But it was not in itself unlawful to spare the lives of those Canaanites who **submitted** to the Israelites.”<sup>82</sup> In fact, “others, doubtless, might have been spared likewise, had they sought for mercy in the right way.”<sup>83</sup> Clarke summarizes: “We may reasonably suppose that this was the purpose of God relative to all the Canaanitish nations: those who would not renounce their idolatry, &c., were to be extirpated; those who did were to be preserved alive, on condition of becoming tributary, and serving as slaves.”<sup>84</sup> These measures, in effect, destroyed the political existence of such countries,<sup>85</sup> thus rendering their adverse religious influence ineffectual. John Calvin adds his comparable observation concerning the Gibeonites:

[T]here is a tacit rejection of the superstitions to which they had been accustomed. For it is true, that they had come, moved by the faith of the miracles which had been performed in Egypt, they concede supreme power to the God of Israel, though to them a God unknown.<sup>86</sup>

We must not assume that if the Israelites had sought God’s guidance (presumably, via the Urim and Thummim) that He would have opposed the covenant with the Gibeonites. Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown explain:

It is not clear, however, that had they applied for divine direction they would have been forbidden to spare and connect themselves with any of the Canaanite tribes who renounced idolatry and embraced and worshipped the true God.<sup>87</sup>

Coke goes so far as to insist that the Gibeonites approached the Israelites “from a motive of respect for the God of Israel,” and that if the Israelites had consulted God, He “in all probability, would have permitted them to make peace with them, on the conditions imposed by Joshua, and secretly prescribed by his divine providence.”<sup>88</sup>

When one observes all of these factors, one is forced to consider that the divine directive that called for the extermination of the Palestinian population did not necessarily exclude the potentiality of some who would genuinely desire to convert. As Clarke observed: “[T]he command to destroy the Canaanites was not so *absolute* as is generally supposed.”<sup>89</sup>

### **Evidence of Assimilation**

Is there further evidence that the Gibeonites abandoned their pagan proclivities and were assimilated into Israelite society? First, consider that it is surely unthinkable that God would allow the Gibeonites to be incorporated into Israelite society while continuing to practice idolatry. Such simply would not have been tolerated—even as it was not tolerated among the Israelites themselves. The death penalty would most certainly have been enacted (Exodus 20:3-4; 22:20).

Second, their oral profession—though offered amid subterfuge—nevertheless manifested awareness of and a healthy respect for Yahweh. As Patrick insisted, their subterfuge “arose from some degree of faith God suffered to take effect.”<sup>90</sup> Kretzmann maintains that their appeal was “an **unconditional submission**, by which they left their fate entirely in the hands of Joshua.”<sup>91</sup> Steele agrees: “These Canaanite-Gibeonites, assuming that Baal and Jehovah are two rival national deities, are proposing to make submission, and even, if needs be, to transfer their allegiance to the

latter, who has shown himself by his victories to be the mightier god of the two.”<sup>92</sup> The Gibeonites knew that “there was abundant evidence of God’s power to execute all that his wisdom had decreed.”<sup>93</sup> So even though they used fraud to achieve their objective, they received leniency due to “a respect for the honor of the God of Israel.”<sup>94</sup>

Henry and Scott also affirm that the Gibeonites made “full submission” and, regarding their profession of respect for Jehovah, “we charitably believe they were sincere in this profession.”<sup>95</sup> “In submitting to Israel they submitted to the God of Israel, which implied a renunciation of the god they had served, a resignation to the laws of the true religion. They had heard enough to convince them of the infinite power of the God of Israel.”<sup>96</sup> Clarke conceded: “They...seem to intimate that they had the highest respect for Jehovah.”<sup>97</sup> Hence, they “were received into the fellowship of the blessings of Jehovah. There are always some souls, even among the outcasts of the world, who hear of the mercy of the Lord and are moved to accept His invitation.”<sup>98</sup>

In fact, Lloyd notes that several earlier scholars maintained that when the Gibeonites stated, “From a very far country your servants have come, **because of the name of the LORD** your God” in Joshua 9:9, the Hebrew ought to be rendered “unto the name,” meaning that the Gibeonites “were come to profess it, and embrace the religion of the Israelites.”<sup>99</sup> Further, the subsequent phrase in the same verse, “for we have heard of His fame,” is equally critical in assessing the Gibeonites motives. Madvig insists that the allusion to the LORD’s **fame**

is the key statement in the entire episode. ‘Fame’ represents the Hebrew word *sem*, which is commonly translated as “name.”

It includes the idea of fame but is a much richer concept. The name stands for the character of the person.<sup>100</sup>

He further noted: “The Gibeonites were drawn by the great name of Yahweh” indicating that His “mighty acts on behalf of Israel had made his great name known far and wide.”<sup>101</sup> This is precisely the same feature of divine religion that Joshua signified when he referred to “Your great name” (Joshua 7:9), and what Solomon meant when he affirmed to God that he had built the Temple that “is called by your name” (1 Kings 8:43).

Interestingly enough, *The Samaritan Chronicle* provides another piece of evidence concerning the sincerity of the Gibeonites. The account of the Gibeonites includes these words spoken by them: “We seek protection of thee and of thy people, that we may exist in your company; for **we are of those who choose for ourselves, God your Lord.... for we believe in thy Lord**, and we will not resist whatever thou shalt prescribe unto us, be it small or great.”<sup>102</sup>

These observations suggest that all commentators who discount the sincerity of the Gibeonites in their desire to embrace the God of the Israelites are guilty of **assuming** motives. No doubt what makes their sincerity suspect is the fact that they sought to have their lives spared and, therefore, resorted to deceit. But that understandable concern is separate from whether their belief in the one true God and His past actions was based on solid evidence. Faith comes from hearing God’s word. God’s word was related to them via the accurate accounts they had heard of God’s conduct. Indeed, what convert to Christ is there who possesses no fear of God? Their fear does not nullify or discredit the genuineness of their belief in God. **Both** motives can legitimately exist simultaneously. Henry and Scott rightly observe: “They did not justify



their lie, but beg pardon for it, pleading it was to save their lives that they did it. And the fear was not merely of the power of man; ...but of **the power of God himself**, which they saw engaged against them.”<sup>103</sup>

Third, but what about the fact that they seem to have been accepted into Israelite society only on terms of complete subjugation—as if being taken as captives of war for slave labor? It is true that they were expected to labor—as all of God’s people should. However, observe that they were assigned to service associated with the Tabernacle/Temple—which can hardly be considered slave labor. The text states: “And that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD” (Joshua 9:27). Fay notes that “the worshipping congregation is meant.”<sup>104</sup> In other words, the service to which the Gibeonites were being assigned was services performed for the nation in terms of duties associated with the work of the priests and Levites. Lloyd notes:

The Gibeonites were not reduced to domestic slavery, but were the servants of the Levites (and thus indirectly of the congregation) by discharging for them the more laborious duties of the Sanctuary.<sup>105</sup>

“They served the congregation...**by serving the Altar** with Wood and with Water.”<sup>106</sup> The phrase “for the altar” was “added to define more accurately their service as a **religious** one.”<sup>107</sup> They were merely assigned duties that rank-and-file Israelites would otherwise have been required to perform—suggesting that the labor was neither menial nor penal. In fact, alluding to Josephus’ remark, Patrick describes the Gibeonites as being fashioned into “a sacred kind of servants” which was “not base and

contemptible.”<sup>108</sup> Josephus stated that the Gibeonites “desired to be admitted into the number of their citizens.”<sup>109</sup>

Their consignment was ultimately, therefore, a great blessing. The service that was imposed on them—

did not extend to all things, but only to these and such like...to hew stones, for instance, for the reparation of the Temple after it was built; and to carry them to those who were employed in that work.<sup>110</sup>

Since they were “incorporated among God’s heritage,” even “if they were doomed to servitude, it was a service that is perfect freedom when employed in the house of God.... What an honor were those Gibeonites brought to, in this best of all services.”<sup>111</sup> “If slavery were ever a blessing to a pagan nation, by bringing it into a knowledge of the true religion this would have been such a case.”<sup>112</sup> “What an honor were those Gibeonites brought to, in this best of all services”<sup>113</sup>—with “great religious privileges”<sup>114</sup> and “a peculiar privilege of spiritual improvement.”<sup>115</sup>

Observe, then, that their enjoined service—what Joshua labeled “cursed”—certainly entailed labor as an appropriate penalty for their fraud.<sup>116</sup> Their servant consignment served the additional purpose of preventing their ability to adversely influence the Israelites via the spread of idolatry. Placing the Gibeonites in “a servile condition” was intended as “a means of preventing their people from being ensnared into idolatry.”<sup>117</sup> “By this measure the Gibeonites were disabled from tempting the Israelites to idolatry, the danger from which was assigned as a special reason for destroying the Canaanites.”<sup>118</sup> Consequently, “while letting the Gibeonites live, it was their duty to put them in such a position, that they could not possibly seduce the Israelites to idolatry.”<sup>119</sup>

Fourth, the faithful service that ensued—and continued to characterize the Gibeonites throughout the subsequent years—provides decisive evidence of their full assimilation into Israelite society. Most scholars are convinced that the Gibeonites were included among what came to be known as “the Nethinim.” The word comes from *natan* (“gave”) which means the “given or dedicated ones,”<sup>120</sup> i.e., those appointed for Temple service. The Nethinim were “given to the Levites as they were to the priests (Numbers 3:9) to minister to them in the service of God.”<sup>121</sup> They were “dispersed into the cities of the priests and Levites, and came up with them in their courses to serve at the altar.”<sup>122</sup> Like the priest and Levites, the Nethinim were “maintained out of the public stock, and the profits of the Altar.”<sup>123</sup> Lloyd even surmises: “It would seem from Exodus 12:48 that they must have been circumcised, and from Deuteronomy 29:11 that they were admitted to a share in the covenant of God with His people.”<sup>124</sup>

This pattern of penitent behavior continued through the years. When Judah and the Levites were carried into captivity, the Nethinim were among them. What’s more, “many of them returned with Ezra, Zerubbabel, and Nehemiah, and continued, as before, in the service of the Temple, under priests and Levites.”<sup>125</sup> In fact, men from Gibeon helped rebuild the Temple (Nehemiah 3:7). Patrick observes: “They served God faithfully even to the times of Nehemiah: who tells us great numbers of the Nethinims...returned from Babylon to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple.”<sup>126</sup> Read Ezra 2:43,58; 8:20; Nehemiah 7:46,73; 1 Chronicles 9:2. Madvig well summarizes:

There is no record that the Gibeonites ever became a snare to Israel, as was true in the case of other nations whom they failed to drive out (Judges 3:5-6).... The Gibeonites lived peaceably in

Israel for many years. Nehemiah 3:7 and 7:25 suggest that ultimately they were fully assimilated.<sup>127</sup>

One final clue concerning the spiritual status of the Gibeonites. We are informed that, during the reign of David, a severe, prolonged famine was discovered to be divine chastisement for the crime committed by Saul during his own reign, in which he broke the treaty made by Joshua by killing some of the Gibeonites. God required David to make amends by honoring their request that seven of Saul's descendants be executed (2 Samuel 21:1ff.). This incident is surely a testament to the Gibeonites' guiltlessness. In fact, they stated forthrightly that their execution of Saul's seven descendants would entail them being hanged "before the Lord" (2 Samuel 21:6,9)—further witness to their thorough assimilation to the religion of Jehovah. Indeed, "the Gibeonites were so identified with Israel that the historian is obliged to insert a note explaining their origin and their non-Israelite extraction."<sup>128</sup>

**Conclusion:** Notice, then, the obvious difference between the Gibeonites and couples who are living in adultery. The Gibeonites **severed** their illicit relationship with paganism in order to follow the one true God; adulterers **maintain** their illicit relationship with each other. The covenant that the Gibeonites entered into with the Israelites was **legal** in God's sight since the Gibeonites converted. The covenant entered into by two people who are ineligible to marry each other is an **illegal** relationship. Hence, the covenant which the Israelites made with the Gibeonites is not parallel to the covenant made between marriage partners who are living in a state of adultery. The fact that God did not require the covenant to be severed between Israel and the Gibeonites does not provide sanction for adulterers to remain in their illicit relationship.

## Summary

Are God's expectations of human beings often rigid, narrow, strict, and difficult to obey? Yes, the Bible so states (e.g., Matthew 7:13-14; 22:14; Luke 13:23-24; Proverbs 6:23; 10:17). However, does God ever expect from humans anything that they are **not capable** of doing? No, all of God's commands are good, loving, necessary for our well-being, and not burdensome (Deuteronomy 6:24; 10:13; 1 John 5:3). They **can** be obeyed—if a person genuinely desires to do so—even if obedience requires great deprivation, difficulty, and hardship.

God's laws of marriage, divorce, and remarriage are most certainly rigid and strict. The vast majority of humanity has pursued lifestyles that are incredibly destructive physically, psychologically, and spiritually. Most have gotten themselves into entanglements that would require an extremely painful and difficult transition to a godly lifestyle. Is God's infinite love or His perfection to be questioned if obedience to His will creates such pain, distress, and deprivation?

Was Ezra guilty of blocking the gates of the kingdom of heaven from people whom God wanted in His kingdom? Did Ezra make it harder to come to God than God made it? Was Ezra responsible for totally upending entire families because he expected and required marriages to be terminated and those families to be dismantled?

God through Ezekiel warned the Israelites that He would accept he who “**gives back** what he has stolen, and **walks** in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely **live**; he shall not die” (Ezekiel 33:15). The adulterer must **give up** what he has stolen and **walk** according to God's statutes in order to **live**.

May we all bow before the great God of eternity in our desire to submit ourselves to His will. May we ardently urge those we introduce to the Gospel to be willing to make whatever sacrifices are necessary and to endure whatever hardships must be endured in order to enter into the body of Christ and have hope of heaven.

## V. GOD'S LAWS OF MARRIAGE APPLY TO EVERYONE EQUALLY

Keep in mind that this issue has nothing to do with whether an adulterous marriage is composed of Christians vs. non-Christians. God's laws of marriage, divorce, and remarriage have been in effect since the beginning of human history and have always applied equally to everyone—Jews, Gentiles, Christians, and non-Christians alike. Indeed, God articulated His general law of marriage (Genesis 2:24) **prior** to both Judaism and Christianity. When Jesus answered the Jews' query about divorce, He directed their attention back to "the beginning"—which predated Mosaic religion by 2,500 years, and the Christian religion by 4,000 years.

When Jesus issued the "Great Commission," charging the apostles with launching Christianity to the world, He declared: "Go therefore and make disciples **of all the nations**...." (Matthew 28:19). Mark's wording of the same commission reads "Go into **all the world** and preach the gospel to **every creature**" (Mark 16:15). Luke's wording coincides: "...that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to **all nations**" (Luke 24:47). Hence, all human beings on the planet are amenable to the entirety of the Law of Christ—which includes Matthew 19:9.

Peter explained to the multitude of Jews gathered on Pentecost: "For the promise is to you and to your children, and **to all who are afar off**, as many as the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39). The entirety of humanity—both Jews and Gentiles—is included in the obligatory submission to Christ's teaching. Paul announced to the Athenians that the one true God "now commands **all men everywhere** to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge **the world** in righteousness by the Man

whom He has ordained” (Acts 17:30-31). **All** people throughout the world will be judged by **all** of Christ’s teaching.

These and many other passages demonstrate that all humans are under obligation to conform their lives to the teaching of Christ regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Do God’s laws regarding homosexuality, bigamy, and polygamy apply to **non**-Christians? Of course they do. The entirety of the Gospel system applies to every person of accountable age and mind. The fact that a couple enters a sinful marital entanglement **prior** to hearing the Gospel has no bearing on whether they must repent and terminate their sinful relationships before being baptized.

### **To Whom Does Matthew 19 Apply?**

In order to sort out the proper application of the discussion on divorce in Matthew 19—whether only to Christians or to **all** people—one must take into account several contextual indicators. First, observe that in the context of the passage, Jesus addressed Himself to **Jews** (vs. 3—“Pharisees”)—not Christians. He answered **their** question: “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason?” (vs. 3).

Second, if Jesus’ answer applies only to Christians (as some claim), then He did not help His Jewish inquirers and, in fact, He completely dodged their question. But He made clear that His answer **did** apply to them **and** to everybody else, for three reasons:

(1) He said, “Have **you** not read” (v. 4) and “But I say unto **you**” (vs. 9). He was speaking to **them**—His immediate audience.

(2) When Jesus stated, “And I say to you, **whoever** divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and **whoever** marries her who is divorced commits adultery,” his use of the term “whoever” is all-inclusive. He made



it clear that His marriage regulations apply equally and fully to anyone and everyone—**all** people.<sup>129</sup>

(3) In verses 4-5, He appealed to Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24 for His answer to their question. That instruction from Genesis **predates the Mosaic period** in its original context. Consequently, the teaching of Genesis (i.e., that God has intended from the very beginning of time for one man to be married to one woman for life, with the **only** exception being fornication) is teaching that applies to mankind and humanity in general—and always has. Though (1) during certain time periods (e.g., Mosaic), people grew lax in their sensitivity to this Divine guideline, and though (2) God “**winked at**” (see p. 67) this lax behavior (Acts 17:30), such is no indication that people today are free to ignore the laws of God on divorce and remarriage (Hebrews 13:4).

Third, notice the disciples’ reaction to the stringent nature of Jesus’ declaration: “[I]f the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry” (vs. 10). In other words, if a man is obligated to remain married to his first spouse (with the **only** possibility for divorce and remarriage being the sexual unfaithfulness of that mate), then the man ought to think twice, deliberating long and hard, before he decides to get married the first time. In marrying, he is committing himself to a lifetime with the same woman (in God’s sight). As previously noted, it may very well be preferable to live single than to risk permanent marriage to a mate who creates misery and is unpleasant to live with (but who remains sexually faithful). This is the gist of the disciples’ remark to Jesus. They understood Jesus’ instruction to be **very restrictive**. But they then drew an erroneous conclusion by proposing the propriety, even priority, of celibacy.

Fourth, in response to the disciples' remark, Jesus noted in verse 11 that not everyone can live as they suggested (i.e., single and celibate). The implication is that some, more than others, possess a greater need for companionship and the sexual relationship that accompanies that marital companionship. (Notice that sex is perfectly permissible in God's sight—after all, He designed it! But, if one desires to participate, the participant is under obligation to conform to divine guidelines, limiting and confining sexual activity to a Scriptural marriage relationship.)

Jesus then elaborated upon three classes of men (vs. 12) who would be able to pursue the celibate life which the disciples proposed: (1) those who are born physically defective and, consequently, are unable to function sexually; (2) those who are born physically normal, but who are then surgically rendered unable to perform sexually. Though odd to the modern mind, it was a common practice in ancient cultures to render impotent various individuals who sought to function in official capacities, e.g., wards in charge of royal bedchambers, servants who lived in the palaces of royalty, etc. (cf. Genesis 37:36; 40:2,7; Daniel 1:3; Esther 1:10; 2:21; 1 Kings 22:9; 2 Kings 8:6; 9:32; Acts 8:27); (3) those who simply choose to forego sexual relations and marriage in order to devote themselves completely to religious matters (like Jesus and Paul).

Fifth, Jesus' concluding statement—"he that is able to receive it, let him receive it" (vs. 12)—pertains to that which He had been discussing, i.e., the choice to live celibate. He could not have been referring back to the statement of verse 9. Such would be a contradiction. For, on the one hand, He would have been declaring emphatically that those who divorce/remarry unscripturally are guilty of **committing adultery**, and then, turning right around

and minimizing this declaration by suggesting that a person does not have to abide by the stricture if he does not want to! If people are free to decide their own guidelines for marriage, there was no need for Jesus to have even mentioned the matter in the first place. But when has God **ever** laid down **any** regulation with the implication that men do not have to obey if they do not wish to?

The “saying” (vs. 11) with which Jesus took issue, maintaining that it should not be set in concrete or urged upon mankind indiscriminately and universally, was the saying of **the disciples**—that men ought to refrain from marriage and live celibate lives. Jesus’ statement in verse 9 is clearly universal in its application and import. The disciples’ statement in verse 10 is clearly limited in its scope and application to the three classes of individuals which Jesus delineated. Only those three categories of persons are in a position (physically and/or mentally) to “receive this saying” pertaining to abstinence from marriage.

## **Summary**

Matthew 19:9 constitutes legislation from Christ addressed to the entirety of humanity. All people are subject to the same divine laws of marriage. Since all people are amenable to the Law of Christ, we are forced to conclude that if non-Christian adulterers may remain in the marriage they are in when they are baptized, then Christians who divorce and remarry unscripturally may remain in their adulterous marriages as well.<sup>130</sup> God is no respecter of persons. What He requires of one, He requires of all (Acts 10:34-35). “For God does not show favoritism” (Romans 2:11, CJB).”

## VI. WHAT ABOUT DEUTERONOMY 24?

But what about Deuteronomy 24:1-4? Doesn't that passage teach that divorced women can remarry and remain in that second marriage? Isn't that what Jesus meant when He alluded to Deuteronomy 24 in Matthew 19:7-8?

As a matter of fact, on that occasion, the Pharisees confronted Jesus and demanded to know if the Law allowed a man to divorce his wife "for just any reason" (Matthew 19:3). Jesus immediately directed their attention—not to Deuteronomy 24—but to two Old Testament verses that provided the proper answer: Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24. [See Endnote 131 and Appendix D for a clarification of Mark's wording of Jesus' words.<sup>131</sup> These two verses amounted to a negative answer to their question regarding divorce—as evidenced by Jesus' own divine commentary on the two verses: "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, **let not man separate**" (Matthew 19:6). Observe carefully: humans have no right to separate what God Himself has joined together, unless He gives His approval to do so. Hence, wholesale, carte blanche divorce is not sanctioned by God. This view of divorce coincides with God's true attitude toward divorce in His forthright declaration through the prophet Malachi: "For the LORD God of Israel says that He hates divorce" (2:16).

Before Jesus could complete His response as to whether there are any exceptions to the general rule forbidding divorce, His questioners, no doubt stung by the stringency of Jesus' answer and their own failure to abide by His words, sought to justify their rejection of such a narrow viewpoint by calling attention to the Mosaic injunction in Deuteronomy 24: "Why then did Moses **command** to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"

Their words constitute an allusion to Deuteronomy 24. Read carefully the passage as it occurs in the Pentateuch:

When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife, if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance (Deuteronomy 24:1-4).

If this Old Testament passage provides a suitable answer to the Pharisees' question, Jesus undoubtedly would have alluded to it. Instead, His response to their quibble clearly demonstrates that this passage does **not** provide the proper answer to their question concerning the propriety of divorce. He discounted the passage by offering a rebuttal to its applicability to the question at hand.

### **Moses Did Not *Command* Divorce**

First, the Mosaic legislation, which included an acknowledgment that divorce was occurring in Israelite society, was a reflection of the **hard hearts** that existed at the time (vs. 8). No doubt, Egypt's influence on the first two generations of Israelites included a relaxed view of divorce, establishing a practice that was underway even before God gave His covenant at Sinai. This acknowledgment in no way provided divine sanction for or approval of divorce. The Law neither commanded divorce nor established divorce as a right.

After all, who would argue that God would overlook, sanction, or save those who possess **hard hearts**? Will anyone be in heaven that possesses a hard heart? To ask is to answer. Hence,

Jesus' pronouncement that the Mosaic provision pertained to "hard hearts" underscores the fact that it was not intended as a divine sanction of divorce—let alone a **command** (*eneteilato*) to do so. Such a command would, in fact, have been in direct conflict with God's original intention as reflected in Jesus' response on the occasion.

### Meaning of "Permitted"?

But if Moses did not "command" divorce, why did Jesus assert that Moses "allowed" it. What did He mean by His use of the term "allowed" (ESV/RSV), "suffered" (KJV/ASV), or "permitted" (NKJV/NASB)? The underlying word provided by Matthew is *epetrepsen*. This Greek word means "to allow someone to do something, *allow, permit*,"<sup>132</sup> "to give over, to leave to the entire trust or management of any one; hence, to permit, allow, suffer."<sup>133</sup> The English words "allow" and "permit" do not necessarily imply **permission** or **approval**. For example, the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines "allow" as "1a: permit; 1b: **to fail to restrain or prevent**." For the latter definition, this example of usage is given: "allow the dog to roam."<sup>134</sup> You may not want your dog to roam the neighborhood; yet, you may either do nothing to prevent it—or you may put up a fence which the dog jumps.

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines "allow" as "to give permission for someone to do something, or **to not prevent something from happening**."<sup>135</sup> And the *American Heritage Dictionary* gives as the first meaning of "allow": "**To let do or happen**; permit."<sup>136</sup> The word does not include the idea of sanction, authorization, or approval—let alone forgiveness. God only **allowed** divorce in the sense that He **tolerated** it—like He does the wicked behavior of the world's population throughout history. He "puts up with it." He allows it to go on—without implying

endorsement. As Greek expositor Alexander Bruce clarified—“permitted, not enjoined.”<sup>137</sup>

This understanding is confirmed by two additional Greek terms that are similarly used. In Paul’s address to the idolatrous Athenian philosophers, he courageously declared: “Truly, these times of ignorance God **overlooked**, but now commands all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). The Greek verb rendered “overlooked” (*huperorao*) is defined as “to overlook, disregard; to bear with,”<sup>138</sup> “to indulgently take no notice of, *overlook, disregard*.”<sup>139</sup> Paul was certainly not telling the Athenians that in the past God endorsed idolatry or did not reckon it as sin. Indeed, all those who entered eternity prior to Christianity in an idolatrous state will be eternally lost. Rather, Paul intended to impress his pagan audience with the fact that God had put up with a great deal of inexcusable polytheism through the centuries. But with the coming of Christianity, all who continued to worship false gods were under divine mandate to forsake their idolatry and turn to Christ—in anticipation of Judgment (vs. 31).

The KJV translated the Greek word in this verse as “winked at”: “And the times of this ignorance God winked at.” What did “winked at” mean in 1611? Interestingly enough, William Shakespeare provides the answer. In his famous play *Romeo & Juliet*, the prince of Verona, Escalus, delivers a stirring rebuke to the grieving families who have gathered in the wake of the tragic deaths of their two children—deaths spawned by their two warring factions:

Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!  
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,  
That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love.  
**And I for winking at your discords too**

Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punish'd.<sup>140</sup>

Escalus had, in fact, on more than one occasion, intervened with stern rebukes to urge the warring factions to cease and desist their hostilities—but to no avail. Hence, he “winked” at their discords in the sense that he allowed, tolerated, and permitted them to continue **without forcibly preventing them**. He certainly did not endorse, approve, or forgive their discordant activities throughout the period in which they occurred. But he did not stop or **physically restrain them**. He had hoped that his repeated verbal admonitions would have been heeded.

A second Greek term that reinforces the proper meaning of Jesus' use of the word “allowed/permitted” in Matthew 19 is the synonym which occurs three times in Paul's dark portrait of the Gentile world in his letter to the Romans:

“God also **gave them up** to uncleanness” (1:24).

“God **gave them up** to vile passions” (1:26).

“God **gave them over** to a debased mind” (1:28).

The Greek term rendered “gave them up/over” (*paradidomi*) means “to give over, hand over, deliver up, turn over” and includes the idea to “abandon” as in “he abandoned them to impurity.”<sup>141</sup> In addition to the three occurrences in Romans 1, the same word occurs in Stephen's great speech before the High Priest and Jewish council, in which he described the generation that exiled Egypt and constructed a golden calf to worship: “Then God turned and **gave them up** to worship the host of heaven” (Acts 7:42). A variety of English translation renderings make clear the meaning:

- NRSV: “But God turned away from them and **handed them over** to worship the host of heaven”



- NCV/ICB/EXB: “But God turned against them and **did not try to stop them** from worshiping the sun, moon, and stars.”
- NIRV: “But God turned away from them. He **let them go on** worshiping the sun, moon and stars.”
- NOG: ““So God turned away from them and **let them** worship the sun, moon, and stars.”
- ERV: “But God turned against them and **let them continue** worshiping the army of false gods in the sky.”
- DARBY/NASB1995: “But God turned and **delivered them up** to serve the host of heaven.”

Once again, it is plain to see that Jesus, Paul, and Stephen all referred to the same point, i.e., that God can tolerate and allow people to “go their own way” without His allowance implying endorsement, approval, or forgiveness.

### “From the Beginning...”

Second, observe that Jesus next redirected His questioners’ attention back to the two verses given in His initial response to their question—verses that pertain to the very “beginning” of the human race when God articulated His intention regarding marriage. His remark (“from the beginning it was not so”—vs. 8) presses the fact that God’s will for marriage is ultimately seen at the Creation when God articulated the guiding principle that answers the Pharisees’ question. Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24 are intended to be normative injunctions enjoined upon all people for all time.

Greek scholar Marvin Vincent presses this very point when he observes that the use of the perfect tense in Matthew 19:8 indicates a past action that continues to be active: “Notwithstanding Moses’ permission, the case *has not been* so from the beginning

until now. The original ordinance has never been abrogated nor superseded, but continues in force.”<sup>142</sup> In other words, the sole exception—the only ground for legitimate divorce—from the Garden of Eden to our present day, has **always** been fornication.<sup>143</sup> This firm reality explains why even God divorced His spiritual spouse—Israel—on the sole grounds of adultery (Jeremiah 3:6-8).

### **The Meaning of Moses’ Directive**

Third, careful analysis of the text of Deuteronomy 24 yields additional insights that clarify the Lord’s outright rejection of the passage as prototypical. Observe that the verses in question are lodged in a context of a particular type of legal material found in the Law of Moses known as casuistic law. This format for conveying legal obligations is couched in what logicians refer to as a “hypothetical syllogistic” arrangement—“If...then....”—in which the “if” portion of the statement is known as the “antecedent” while the “then” segment is the “consequent.” Grammarians identify the two segments as the “protasis” and the “apodosis.”

A protasis may have multiple conditions, joined together in English by the conjunction “and.” In Hebrew grammar, the conjunction is a single letter (the *waw*) which is prefixed to the subsequent word. Context must determine what conditions are part of the protasis, and at what point in the series the apodosis commences. In the case of Deuteronomy, however, it is evident that the protasis continues through verse 3 and the protasis (“then...”) commences with verse 4. Here are the conditions of the protasis:

1. When a man takes a wife **and** marries her
2. **and** it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her
3. **and** he writes her a certificate of divorce, **and** puts it in her hand, **and** sends her out of his house
4. **and** she has departed from his house
5. **and** goes **and** becomes another man’s wife

6. **and** if the latter husband detests her
7. **and** he writes her a certificate of divorce, **and** puts it in her hand, **and** sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife...

Each occurrence of “and” as bolded above is a *waw* in the Hebrew text. The apodosis now commences (also with a *waw*):<sup>144</sup>

**Then** her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Observe carefully that the seven conditions of verses 1-3 are hypothetical, that is, they envision what some person or persons might do. They are not commands. They are not instructions on how to achieve a divorce. They assume that the perpetrator of the actions has made up his mind to divorce his wife regardless of God’s will on the matter—the “hard heart” of which Jesus spoke. Such is typically the case with the conditions of a protasis. For example, consider a similar construction in Exodus 21:29—

If the ox tended to thrust with its horn in times past, **and** it has been made known to his owner, **and** he has not kept it confined, **so that** it has killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death.

The four conditions of the protasis are not actions that are approved by God. They merely reflect circumstances that could potentially occur among people in an agrarian society. The apodosis is designed to provide God’s attempt to manage the unpleasant situation by providing after-the-fact assistance. It does **not** indicate God’s sanction of the events that led up to the dilemma at hand.<sup>145</sup> Far from providing authority for divorce, Deuteronomy 24 was intended to be a **limitation** on divorce—an attempt to minimize, contain, and lessen its frequency. In the process, it

served as a measure designed to address the mistreatment of women—encouraging husbands to think twice about divorcing their wives: “It prevented the husband from later claiming rights over this ex-wife.”<sup>146</sup>

Returning to Matthew 19, having disposed of the Pharisees’ quibble concerning Deuteronomy 24, Jesus brought His response to its logical climax by applying God’s original marriage law to the specific matter of divorce: “And (*kai*—“but”) I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery” (vs. 9). In sharp contrast to the apparent widespread practice of divorce among the Jews of Jesus’ day, Jesus insisted that the original will of God, going all the way back to the beginning of humanity, was for a man and woman to remain married to each other for life. He forthrightly declared that the only way for that first marriage to terminate in a divorce that God approves is for one of the spouses (the innocent party), to divorce the other (the fornicator), solely on the ground of sexual infidelity. Jesus clarified for all people for all time Deity’s will concerning divorce: the one and only ground for divorce is illicit sexual intercourse.

Consequently, Jesus’ answer to the Pharisees’ original question (“Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just **any** reason?”) was “no.” It was the Pharisees—**not Jesus**—who brought up Deuteronomy 24 (see Appendix D), likely in hopes of justifying their relaxed view of marriage and divorce. Jesus clarified the fact that Deuteronomy 24 provides no assistance whatsoever for people living today to ascertain God’s will for marriage. Genesis 2:24 makes clear that it has always been God’s intention for humans to

respect His will for marriage: one man, for one woman, for life—with the only exception being fornication.

### **Matthew 5:31-32**

One must keep in mind that Jesus' allusion to divorce in Matthew 5 is embedded in the midst of the "Sermon on the Mount." In that discourse, Jesus contrasted God's original intentions inherent within Mosaic legislation and **the pharisaical/scrival distortions** of God's law which had collected over the centuries.<sup>147</sup>

When the Jews chose to misconstrue Deuteronomy 24 to mean they could divorce their wives for any reason, they were further violating the commandment against adultery (5:31). They were responsible for causing their wives to go to other men and thereby commit adultery (5:32). Since the woman had been put away for some reason other than fornication, whoever married her would be guilty of committing adultery as well.

Notice that the guideline of Deuteronomy 24 was not a part of original Sinai regulation. It was addressing circumstances evoked by hard hearts (Matthew 19:8) and, as we've noted, centered—not upon the legality of divorce—but on the rights of the innocent wife. It was intended to discourage men from divorcing their wives unscripturally. Being casuistic law, the first three verses raise hypothetical actions that might possibly occur (pp. 60ff.). Observe that, of those seven, only the **first** one is **authorized** by God. All the other actions were sinful and displeasing to God.<sup>148</sup>

So, Matthew 5:32 does not indicate that the mistreated woman's second marriage was legitimate and permissible to maintain. She and her second husband were living in a state of adultery and needed to terminate that illicit marriage. The only way she could enjoy a proper marriage is if she put her original,

“legitimate” husband away on the basis of his fornication. God’s laws of marriage have been operative and applicable from the beginning of the Creation.

## VII. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

“But, honestly now, how can we possibly expect married people who are living in adultery to break up their marriage?” This is a question over which every sincere student of God’s Word has agonized. When we consider the tears, the heartache, the children, the finances, the physical and emotional trauma—we cannot help but wish it could be otherwise. **Surely**, God does not expect adulterous marriages to be dissolved!

But then we reconsider the biblical perspective. We find that, more often than not, living righteously before God entails tremendous hardship and deprivation. We find that the peace, joy, and genuine happiness that characterize the Christian life are achieved **through** (i.e., in the midst of) suffering—not through an **absence** of hardship. Remember Moses (Hebrews 11:23-27)? Moses literally grew up in Pharaoh’s own household. Imagine the tender affection which he received at the hands of Pharaoh’s daughter. She literally “nurtured him as her own son” (Acts 7:21, NASB). Imagine the deep emotional and psychological bonds that were formed between Moses and his adopted family. Imagine the intellectual influence exerted on Moses’ mind, since his educational basis was derived via the Egyptian worldview (Acts 7:22). Visualize the irresistible attraction and allurement of the riches and power that were his. For 40 long years, Moses sank the roots of his very being deeper and deeper into a maze of human relationships and strong emotional ties.

But in God’s sight, this relationship could not last. When Moses realized this, he was forced to amputate the ties of a strong physical, psychological, and emotional relationship in deference to an obedient relationship with God. His choice to forego momentary pleasures meant **hardship, suffering and ill-treat-**

**ment** (Hebrews 11:25). Listen to the inspired writer: “By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to **suffer affliction** with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin (Hebrews 11:24-25). Yes, without question, terminating an illicit marriage entails suffering and excruciating affliction.

Nevertheless, we, too, must come face to face with the same dilemma. It may be the decision to subdue an insatiable desire for alcohol; it may involve the severance of a financially productive business relationship; and yes, it may entail foregoing a marital relationship. In short, living the Christian life may mean the radical and total disruption of social and family existence (study carefully Matthew 10:34-37; Luke 12:51-53).

The real tragedy is, most are unwilling to make such essential decisions. The sacrifices are simply too great. The vast majority of the time, when they come face-to-face with God’s truth, they go “away sorrowful” (Mark 10:22). In Moses’ case, he considered “the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward” (Hebrews 11:26).

Each of us must decide. Are we willing to launch out and take the necessary steps to please God? Are we courageous enough—in the face of such heartbreaking encounters when people suddenly come to grips with the truth about their marital predicament—to stand firm on God’s will and word, and represent Him faithfully?



## VIII. THE CLEANSING NATURE OF BAPTISM

“But wait a minute! The non-Christian world all around us is saturated with people who divorce and remarry any number of times for any number of reasons. When they encounter the Gospel and desire to become Christians and part of the local church, God surely would not have us refuse to baptize them—even though they are unwilling to sever their marriage which was contracted in violation of Matthew 19:9. After all, doesn’t baptism cleanse them of all past sin—including adultery? Are you saying that adultery is the ‘unpardonable sin’?”

This viewpoint fails to take into consideration several biblical principles.

First, much is accomplished at the point of biblical baptism, but baptism was never designed to change a sinful practice into an acceptable one, or to transform a sinful relationship into a righteous one. Prostitutes, homosexuals, polygamists, bisexuals, bigamists, and adulterers must sever their sexual relationships.

Second, the biblical doctrine of forgiveness must not be confused with the equally biblical doctrine of the consequences of sin (as we just noted). Being forgiven never implies that all of the consequences of sin will be erased. Past sin may be blotted out, but the **consequences** of past sin generally remain. For example:

- Syphilis of the brain is a lasting consequence of a promiscuous lifestyle.
- Permanent removal from the garden was a lasting penalty and consequence of the sin of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3).
- Being banned from Canaan was a lasting penalty of Moses’ sin (Deuteronomy 32:51-52), though he could be forgiven and one day be in heaven (Revelation 15:3).

- God pardoned the murmurers (Numbers 14:20)—but the negative effects of their sin were lasting and disastrous (Numbers 14:29-35).
- Esau's mistake of selling his inheritance rights could not be rectified—"though he sought it diligently with tears" (Hebrews 12:17).

This biblical principle simply does not square with the notion that if anyone has to break up a marriage, too much is expected of him and forgiveness is not really what it's "cracked up" to be. If biblical history teaches us anything, it teaches us that people cannot sin and then expect to have things the way they were before. More often than not, much suffering comes upon those who violate God's will—even though they may be forgiven and have the hope of heaven.

So it is with marriage. People may reject God's laws of marriage and fly in the face of His will. They may then be forgiven, but they may also have gotten their lives into such a fix that they will have no choice but to live single and celibate the rest of their lives. **Such is not a reflection upon God's justice or mercy.** Rather, such is a reflection of man's own stubborn disobedience and rejection of what God designed to be for man's good. Just as a person can sin and in so doing lose his **physical** life without God intervening to prevent the effect of the sin (e.g., rob a bank and be killed by the police), likewise a person can so sin in the marital realm that he or she forfeits **marital** life without God intervening. The deeper one descends into the quagmire of sin, the greater and the more severe the consequences.

Third, baptism is not biblical immersion if it is not **preceded** by repentance. We often forget this, so anxious are we to get people into the baptistery. Repentance is not simply being sorry. Godly sorrow precedes genuine repentance which is, in turn,

followed by a reformation of life (2 Corinthians 7:9-10). Reformation of life entails the cessation of sinful practices and the severance of sinful relationships (Matthew 3:8; 1 Corinthians 6:11). Paul put it this way in Romans 6:2—a person must not “live any longer therein.”

What did those who practiced sorcery do to show repentance in Acts 19:19? They burned their scrolls, showing that they were **ceasing** their former practices. Simply vowing to refrain from buying any further books, while insisting on keeping the books they already had, would manifest a lack of true repentance. If they held membership in a sorcery society, repentance would mean that they would **sever** that relationship. Simon’s repentance and baptism in Acts 8 demanded the cessation of his former relationship with sorcery.

What did repentance and baptism mean to the Corinthians? Consider the following chart:

<b>Thieves</b>	→	<b>FORGIVEN</b> , but... repentance will cause them to <b>sever</b> their relationship to ill-gotten gain (Luke 19:8)
<b>Homosexuals</b>	→	<b>FORGIVEN</b> , but... repentance will cause them to <b>sever</b> their sexual relation- ship (1 Corinthians 6:9)
<b>Adulterers</b>	→	<b>FORGIVEN</b> , but...?

Whether the Corinthians had been practicing adultery, homosexuality, male prostitution, thievery, or swindling (1 Corinthians 6:9-10), repentance prior to baptism would mean that they would have ceased living in illicit sexual unions—whether adulterous or

homosexual. They would have ceased stealing and would have severed their relationship with ill-gotten gain. They would have given up any business arrangement that would call for swindling others. Repentance, by definition, would demand such (Acts 26:20). And those who continue to live in such relationships have not really repented. No wonder God declared through Ezekiel that “when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is **lawful and right**, he shall live because of it” (Ezekiel 33:19). Repentance **must** precede biblical baptism (Acts 2:38).

We simply must recognize and bow submissively to the fact that baptism washes away **sin**—not sinful **relationships**. If a Mafia hitman encounters the Gospel and desires to be baptized, may he continue his profession? May he go ahead and at least complete the contracts he has already committed himself to perform? May an employee for a beer company continue her participation in the manufacture and distribution of beer? May casino employees continue to work in a casino? What if you grew up in a family that owned a prosperous whiskey distillery? Could you—**would** you—be willing to turn your back on that way of life—even if it meant being ostracized and rejected by your family?

One final point merits attention. Some attempt to justify adulterous unions by comparing the sin of adultery to murder. They say that there are some wrongs that cannot be righted. In the case of murder, a man may repent but he cannot raise his victim to life. They say that an unscriptural marriage fits in the same category.

This is a false analogy. In the first place, severing an illicit relationship is not an attempt to rectify past divorces or restore past marriages. Rather, it is what is demanded by repentance and God’s laws of marriage. Second, the basic principle which does apply to both murder and adultery is that repentance demands that

the individual cease committing murder and that he cease living in adultery (Colossians 3:7). Can a penitent murderer continue to murder? No. He will cease the relationship which he once had with the murderous life he once lived. Likewise, one who is living in a state of adultery will be lost if he or she dies in that state (Revelation 21:8). Just saying, “I’m sorry,” will not change that state or change that relationship into a righteous one so that it may be continued.

Nowhere has God ever dealt with sin in such a way. He always demands the cessation of the sinful practice or relationship before He abundantly pardons. As previously noted, John the Baptizer was not asking Herod simply to acknowledge his sin, say he was sorry and ask forgiveness, and then continue to live with Herodias. Herod had **married** her (Mark 6:17). What did repentance demand? That they break up their marriage. Why? Because, as John declared, “It [was] not lawful for [Herod] to **have her**” (Mark 6:18). There wasn’t anything that Herod could merely **verbalize** that would change the status of the marital relationship. It had to be terminated.

It’s not that we do not sympathize with those whose lives have been lived apart from the spiritual guidance that would have eased their way. As previously noted, we can only imagine the heartache, feelings of insecurity, loneliness, and psychological turmoil that accompanies the need to terminate an unscriptural marriage relationship. However, it does no good to give in to our emotional human inclinations. We must allow God’s **thinking** to impact **our own thinking** to the point that we will muster the courage and faith to comply with His directives. To be a Christian, one must “deny himself” (Matthew 16:24), becoming a servant of Christ instead (Galatians 1:10).

## CONCLUSION

In our day-to-day living, we humans typically lose sight of the seriousness of living life on Earth—our one and only opportunity to decide where we will spend eternity. We tend to rationalize our behavior when that behavior conflicts with God’s Word. We tend to downplay the gravity of our sin and seek to justify why it is not as bad as some might think. We “cut ourselves considerable slack” in order to dodge the seriousness of our sinful propensities. We are quick to appeal to God’s grace, love, and mercy—even though we are unwilling to come to complete grips with our behavior. After all, “we’re all sinners,” “one sin is no worse than another,” and “we can all be forgiven.”

Nevertheless, for all the falderol that has been generated over the years regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage, God’s laws on the matter remain **firm** and **simple** to understand. Under the Law of Moses—which emanated from the Mind of Deity—**adulterers were to be executed** (Exodus 20:3-4; 22:20). Under the Law of Christ, their lives are spared—but God does not permit them to continue in their adulterous marriages. God’s words through the ancient prophet Malachi are surely relevant to our day: “I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness...against adulterers...because **they do not fear Me,**’ says the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 3:5). May we all humbly bow before the will of the great God of time and eternity. May we love Him enough to fear Him.

# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A

## English Translation Abbreviations

ASV—American Standard Version  
BRG—BRG Bible  
CSB—Christian Standard Bible  
CEB—Common English Bible  
CEV—Contemporary English Version  
CJB—Complete Jewish Bible  
CSB—Christian Standard Bible  
DARBY—Darby Translation  
DLNT—Disciples’ Literal New Testament  
DRA—Douay-Rheims 1899 American Ed.  
EHV—Evangelical Heritage Version  
ERV—Easy-to-Read Version  
ESV—English Standard Version  
EXB—Expanded Bible  
GNT—Good News Translation  
GNV—1599 Geneva Bible  
GW—God’s Word Translation  
HCSB—Holman Christian Standard Bible  
ICB—International Children’s Bible  
ISV—International Standard Version  
JUB—Jubilee Bible 2000  
KJV—King James Version  
LEB—Lexham English Bible  
LSB—Legacy Standard Bible  
MEV—Modern English Version  
MOUNCE—The Mounce Reverse Interlinear New Testament  
NABRE—New American Bible (Revised Edition)  
NASB—New American Standard Bible  
NCB—New Catholic Bible  
NCV—New Century Version  
NET—New English Translation  
NIRV—New International Reader’s Version  
NIV—New International Version  
NKJV—New King James Version  
NLT—New Living Translation  
NLV—New Life Version  
NMB—New Matthew Bible  
NOG—Names of God Bible  
NRSV—New Revised Standard Version  
NRSVCE—New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition  
NTFE—New Testament for Everyone  
OJB—Orthodox Jewish Bible  
PHILLIPS—J.B. Phillips New Testament  
RGT—Revised Geneva Translation  
RSV—Revised Standard Version  
RSVCE—Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition  
TLB—The Living Bible  
TLV—Tree of Life Version  
VOICE—The Voice Bible  
WE—Worldwide English (New Testament)  
WEB—World English Bible  
WYC—Wycliffe Bible  
YLT—Young’s Literal Translation



# APPENDIX B

## “Living” & “Walking” Are Continuous

VERSES	TRANSLATIONS		
<i>peripateo</i>	LIVE/LIVING	WALK(ING)	Miscellaneous
Mark 7:5	CSB, CEB, CJB, HCSB, ISV, LEB, MEV, NET, NIRV, NIV, NRSV, RSV, RSVCE	ASV, BRG, DARBY, DLNT, DRA, EHV, ESV, GNV, JUB, KJV, LSB, MOUNCE, NASB, NKJV, NMB, NRSVUE, RGT, TLV, WEB, YLT	<b>Follow</b> - ERV, GW, GNT, ICB, PHILLIPS, TLB, NOG, NABRE, NCB, NLT, NTFE, OJB, VOICE <b>Keep</b> - WE <b>Go after</b> - WYC
Acts 21:21	CSB, CEB, CEV, GNV, LEB, NET, NIV, NMB, RGT	ASV, BRG, DARBY, DLNT, DRA, ESV, HCSB, JUB, KJV, LSB, MOUNCE, NASB, NKJV, TLV, WEB, YLT	<b>Follow</b> - CJB, CEV, ERV, EHV, GW, GNT, NOG, NLV, NLT <b>Observe</b> - ISV, PHILLIPS, MEV, NABRE, NCB, NRSV, RSV, RSVCE
Gal. 5:16	ERV, GW, ICB, ISV, PHILLIPS, LEB, MOUNCE, NOG, NABRE, NCV, NET, NIRV, NRSV, NTFE	ASV, BRG, CSB, DLNT, DRA, EHV, ESV, HCSB, KJV, NASB, NIV, NKJV, RSV, WEB, YLT	<b>Observe</b> - ISV, MEV, PHILLIPS, MEV, NABRE, NCB, NRSV, RSV, RSVCE
Eph. 2:2	CEB, ERV, ICB, PHILLIPS, MOUNCE, NABRE, NCV, NET, NIRV, NIV, NLT, NRSV	ASV, BRG, CSB, CJB, DARBY, DLNT, DRA, EHV, ESV, HCSB, JUB, KJV, LSB, LEB, MEV, NASB, NMB, RGT, RSV, TLV, WEB, YLT	<b>Followed</b> - CEV, GW, NOG <b>Practiced</b> - ISV <b>Way of life</b> - NCB <b>Travel</b> - NTFE <b>Wandering</b> - VOICE, WYC
Eph. 2:10	CEB, CEV, NABRE, NCV, WE	ASV, BRG, DARBY, DLNT, DRA, EHV, ESV, GNV, HCSB, JUB, KJV, LSB, LEB, MEV, NASB, NKJV, NMB, RGT, RSV, TLV, WEB, YLT	<b>Way of life</b> - ISV, NRSV, WE <b>Do/Doing</b> - CSB, CJB, ERV, GW, GNT, ICB, PHILLIPS, MOUNCE, NOG, NCB, NCV, NCV, NET, NIRV, NIV, NLV

# APPENDIX B

## “Living” & “Walking” Are Continuous

VERSES	TRANSLATIONS		
<i>peripateo</i>	LIVE/LIVING	WALK(ING)	Miscellaneous
Eph. 4:1	CEB,CEV,ERV,ISV, PHILLIPS,LEB,TLB, NOG,NABRE,NET, NIRV,NIV,NLV, NTFE,VOICE,WE	ASV,BRG,CSB,DARBY, DLNT,DRA,EHV,ESV, NV,HCSB,JUB,KJV, LSB,MEV,NASB,NKJV, NMB,NRSV,RGT,TLV, WEB,WYC,YLT	<b>Lead a life</b> - CJB, MOUNCE,NLT, NRSVA,RSV,RSVCE
Eph. 4:17	CEB,CJB,ISV, MOUNCE,NOG, NABRE,NCB,NET, NIRV,NIV,NRSV, RSV,WE	ASV,BRG,CSB,DARBY, DLNT,DRA,EHV,ESV, HCSB,JUB,KJV,LEB, MEV,NASB,NKJV, NMB,NRSV,RGT, VOICE,WEB,YLT	<b>Behave</b> - NTFE
Eph. 5:8	CEB,CJB,ERV,ICB, ISV,LEB,MOUNCE, NOG,NABRE,NCB, NCV,NET,NIV,NIRV, NRSV,WE	ASV,BRG,CSB,DARBY, DLNT,DRA,EHV,ESV, HCSB,JUB,KJV,LSB, MEV,NASB,NKJV,NMB, NRSV,RGT,RSV, WEB,WYC,YLT	<b>Behave</b> - NTFE <b>Act like</b> - CEV,VOICE
Col. 1:10	CEB,CJB,CEV,ERV, EHV,GW,GNT,ICB, ISV,LEB,NOG, NABRE,NCB,NCV, NET,NIV,NLT,WE	ASV,BRG,CSB,DARBY, DLNT,DRA,ESV,GNV, HCSB,JUB,KJV,LSB, MEV,MOUNCE, NASB,NKJV,NMB, NRSV,OJB,RGT,TLV, WEB,WYC,YLT	<b>Lead a life</b> - NIRV, RSV,NRSVA,RSVCE
Col. 2:6	CEB,CJB,ERV,GW, GNT,ICB,ISB, PHILLIPS,LEB,TLB, MOUNCE,NOG, NCV,NET,NIRV, NIV,NRSV,RSV, RSVCE,WE	ASV,BRG,CSB,DARBY, DLNT,DRA,EHV,ESV, GNV,HCSB,JUB,KJV, LSB,MEV,NABRE, NASB,NCB,NKJV,NMB, NRSVUE,RGT,TLV, WEB,WYC,YLT	<b>Keep on/continue following</b> - CEV,NLT <b>Continue journey</b> - NTFE,VOICE

# APPENDIX B

## “Living” & “Walking” Are Continuous

VERSES	TRANSLATIONS		
<i>peripateo</i>	LIVE/LIVING	WALK(ING)	Miscell.
Col. 3:7	CEB,GW,GNT,LEB, NOG,NCB,NET,NIRV	ASV,BRG,CSB,DARBY,DLNT, DRA,EHV,ESV,GNV,HCSB, JUB,KJV,LSB,MEV,MOUNCE, NASB,NIV,NKJV,NMB,RGT, RSV,TLV,WEB,WYC,YLT	<b>Followed</b> - NRSV <b>Behave</b> - NTFE <b>Pursued</b> - VOICE <b>Do</b> - NLV,NLT,TLB,WE <b>Comport self</b> - OJB
2 Peter 2:18	ASV,BRG,CSB,CEV, DLNT,EHV,ESV,EXB, GW,GNT,HCSB,ICB, ISV,KJV,LEB,TLB,MEV, MOUNCE,NOG, NABRE,NASB,NCV, NIV,NKJV,NRSV,OJB, RSV,TLV,VOICE, WEB,WE,WYC	DARBY,RGT	<b>Wandered</b> - CEB <b>Conducted them-</b> <b>selves</b> - LSB,YLT <b>Reside</b> - NET <b>Lifestyle</b> - NLT <b>Behave</b> - NTFE
1 John 1:7	CEB,CEV,ERV,GW, GNT,ICB,ISV,PHILLIPS, TLB,NOG,NCB, NCV,NLT,NLV,WE	ASV,BRG,CSB,CJB, DARBY,DLNT,DRA,EHV, ESV,GNV,HCSB,JUB,KJV, LSB,LEB,MEV,MOUNCE, NABRE,NASB,NET,NIRV,NIV, NKJV,NMB,NRSV,NTFE,RGT, RSV,TLV,VOICE,WEB,WYC,YLT	
1 John 2:6	CEB,ERV,GW,GNT, ICB,ISV,TLB,MSG, NOG,NABRE,NCB, NCV,NIRV,NIV,NLV, NLT,WE	ASV,BRG,CSB,DARBY, DLNT,DRA,EHV,ESV,GNV, HCSB,JUB,KJV,LSB,LEB, MEV,MOUNCE,NASB, NET,NKJV,NMB,NRSV, RGT,RSV,TLV,VOICE, WEB,WYC,YLT	<b>Conduct life</b> - CJB <b>Follow</b> - CEV <b>Behave</b> - NTFE
1 John 2:11	CEB,CEV,ERV,EXB, GW,ICB,ISV,NOG, NCV,NLV,NLT,WE	ASV,BRG,CSB,CJB,CEV, DARBY,DLNT,DRA,EHV,ESV, GNV,GNT,HCSB,JUB,KJV,LSB, LEB,MEV,MOUNCE,NABRE, NASB,NCB,NET,NIRV,NIV, NKJV,NLT,NMB,NRSV,NTFE, OJB,RGT,RSV,TLV,WEB,YLT	<b>Wandering</b> - TLB, WYC <b>Stumbling around</b> - VOICE

# APPENDIX B

## “Living” & “Walking” Are Continuous

VERSES	TRANSLATIONS		
<i>poreuomai</i>	LIVE	WALK	Miscellaneous
Luke 1:6	CSB,GNT, HCSB,ISV,LEB, MSG,NRSV	ASV,BRG,DARBY,DLNT, DRA,EHV,ESV,GNV,JUB, KJV,LSB,MEV,MOUNCE, NASB,NKJV,NMB,OJB, RGT,RSV,TLV,VOICE,WEB	<b>Followed</b> - ERV,GW,NOG,NET, NTFE <b>Observing</b> - NIV,CEB,CJB, NCB, NABRE,PHILLIPS
Acts 9:31	CJB,ERV,EHV, GW,GNT,ICB, ISV,NOG,NCV, NLT,VOICE	ASV,BRG,DARBY,DLNT, DRA,ESV,GNV,HCSB, JUB,KJV,TLB,MEV, MOUNCE,NABRE,NKJV, NMB,RGT,RSV,RSVCE, TLV,WEB,WYC	<b>Going</b> - LSB,NASB95,OJB,YLT <b>Continued</b> - ISV,NASB <b>Went forward</b> - PHILLIPS
Acts 14:16	GW,NOG,NLV	ASV,BRG,CJB,ESV,GNV, JUB,KJV,MEV,MOUNCE, NKJV,NMB,RGT,RSV, RSVCE,WEB	<b>Go own way</b> - CSB,EHV,GNT, HCSB,ISV,LSB,LEB,TLB,NASB, NABRE,NCB,NET,NIRV,NIV, NLT,NTFE,OJB,TLV,WYC,YLT <b>Follow own ways</b> - NRSV, VOICE
1 Peter 4:3	CEB,CJB,CEV, ERV,EHV,ESV, ICB,ICB,ISV, LEB,NABRE, NET,NIRV,NIV, NLV,NRSV,RSV, TLV,VOICE,	ASV,BRG,DARBY,DLNT, DRA,GNV,KJV,MEV, NKJV,NMB,OJB,RGT, WEB,WYC,YLT	<b>Carrying on</b> - CSB,CEV,HCSB, MOUNCE <b>Pursuing</b> - LSB,NASB,NCB
2 Peter 2:10	EXB,ICB,NCV	ASV,BRG, DARBY, DRA,GNV,JUB, KJV,MEV,NKJV,NMB, RGT,WEB,WYC	<b>Follow</b> - CSB,CEB,CJB,EHV, GW,GNT,HCSB,TLB,NOG, NABRE,NIRV,NIV,NLT,NTFE,TLV <b>Indulge</b> - ESV,PHILLIPS,NASB, MOUNCE,NET,NRSV,RSV, RSVCE <b>Going after</b> - OJB <b>Indulging</b> - NRSV,NRSVCE

# APPENDIX B

## “Living” & “Walking” Are Continuous

VERSES	TRANSLATIONS		
<i>poreuomai</i>	LIVE	WALK	Miscellaneous
2 Peter 3:3	CEB,ERV,EXB, HCSB,ICB, NABRE,NCV	ASV,BRG, DARBY,DRA, GNV,JUB,KJV, MEV,NKJV, NMB,RGT,WEB	<b>Following</b> - CSB,CJB,ERV,EHV, ESV,GW,ISV,LSB,LEB,NOG,MOUNCE, NASB,NIRV,NIV,NLV,NLT,RSV,TLV,VOICE <b>Going after</b> - OJB,WYC
Jude 11	EASY,ISV,WE	CJB,ESV, OJB,RSV	<b>Go/Gone/Went</b> - ASV,BRG,ASV,BRG, CSB,DARBY,DRA,EHV,JUB,KJV,LSB,MEV, NASB,NKJV,NRSV,NTFE,YLT <b>Followed</b> - CEB,CEV,ERV,CEB,CEV,ERV, EXB,GNV,GW,GNT,ICB,TLB,NOG,NABRE, NCB,NCV,NIRV,NLV,NLT,NMB,RGT, VOICE
Jude 16	CSB,CEB,CEV, NABRE,NLT	ASV,BRG, DARBY,DRA, EHV,GNV, HCSB,JUB,KJV, MEV,NKJV, NMB,OJB,RGT, WEB,YLT	<b>Follow</b> - CJB,ESV,GW,GNT,CJB,ESV,GW, GNT,ISV,LSB,MOUNCE, NOG,NASB, NIRV,NIV,RSV,RSVCE,TLV <b>Wandering</b> - WYC <b>Proceeding</b> - LEB,DLNT <b>Indulge</b> - NRSV,NCB <b>Do</b> - ERV,ICB,EXB,NCV,TLB <b>Go</b> - NET
Jude 18	CSB,CEB, PHILLIPS, NABRE	ASV,BRG, DARBY,DRA, GNV,HCSB, JUB,KJV,MEV, NKJV,NMB, OJB,RGT,WEB	<b>Following</b> - CJB,EHV,ESV,EXB,GW,GNT, ISV,LSB,LEB,NOG,NASB,NCB,NCV,NIRV, NIV,NTFE,RSV,RSVCE,TLV,VOICE <b>Wandering</b> - WYC <b>Going</b> - YLT <b>Driven by</b> - MOUNCE <b>Propelled by</b> - NET <b>Led by</b> - PHILLIPS,NLV <b>Indulging</b> - NRSV
Judges 2:12		LXX	<b>Followed</b> - ASV,BRG,CSB,CJB,DARBY, DRA,GNV,GW,ISV,JUB,KJV,LSB,LEB,NEV, NOG,NABRE,NASB,NCB,NET,NIV,NKJV, NLV,NRSV,OJB,RGT,TLV,WEB,WYC <b>Went after</b> - CEB,EHV,ESV,HCSB,NLT, RSV,RSVCE

# APPENDIX B

## “Living” & “Walking” Are Continuous

VERSES		TRANSLATIONS	
<i>bioo</i>	LIVE	SPEND	
1 Peter 4:2	ASV,BRG,CSB,CEB,CJB, DARBY,DLNT,DRA,ERV, EHV,ESV,EXB,GNV,GW, GNT,HCSB,ICB,ISV,JUB, KJV,LSB,LEB,MEV, MOUNCE,NOG,NASB, NCV,NIRV,NIV,NKJV,NMB, NRSVA,NTFE,OJB,RGT, RSV,RSVCE,TLV,VOICE, WEB,WYC,YLT	NABRE,NET,NLV, NLT,TLB,PHILLIPS	
<i>iosis</i>	LIVE	Manner/Way of Life/Living	
Acts 26:4	CJB,CEV,ERV,EHV, GW,GNT,ICB,ISV, PHILLIPS,NOG,NCB,NCV, NET,NIRV,NIV, NTFE,VOICE,WE	ASV,BRG,DARBY,DLNT, ESV,JUB,KJV,LSB,LEB, MEV,MOUNCE,NABRE, NASB,NKJV,RSV,YLT	
<i>prasso</i>	LIVE	DO/DOES/ DOING	PRACTICE
Galatians 5:21	NIRV,NIV, NLT,TLB	BRG,CEB,CJB,CEV,DAR BY,DRA,ERV, EHV,ESV,GNV,GW, ICB,JUB,KJV,MEV, NOG,NABRE,NCB, NCV,NLV,NRSV,RGT, RSV,WE,WYC,YLT	ASV,CSB,DLNT, HCSB,ISV,LSB, LEB,MOUNCE, NASB,NET, NKJV,OJB,WEB

# APPENDIX C

## A Comparison of Rahab & the Gibeonites

Comparison of Rahab and the Gibeonites	
Rahab-Joshua 2:9-11	Gibeonites-Joshua 9:9,10,24
I know that the LORD has given you the land.	The LORD your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land.
We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt.	We have heard of His fame, and all that He did in Egypt.
and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.	and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan--to Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan
The terror of you has fallen on us.	We were very much afraid for our lives because of you.
All the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you.	To destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you
for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath	because of the name of the LORD your God

# APPENDIX D

## A Comparison of Matthew 19 & Mark 10

MATTHEW 19	MARK 10
<p><u>Verse 3</u></p> <p>“Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?”</p>	<p><u>Verse 2</u></p> <p>“Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?”</p>
<p><u>Verses 4-5</u></p> <p>“Have you not read...?”</p>	<p><u>Verse 3</u></p> <p>“What did Moses command you?”</p>
<p><u>Verses 4-6</u></p> <p>“...that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and 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.”</p>	<p><u>Verses 6-9</u></p> <p>“But from the beginning of the creation, God ‘made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and 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.”</p>
<p><u>Verse 7</u></p> <p>“Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”</p>	<p><u>Verse 4</u></p> <p>“They said, ‘Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her.”</p>
<p><u>Verse 8</u></p> <p>“Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.”</p>	<p><u>Verse 5</u></p> <p>“Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.”</p>
<p><u>Verse 9</u></p> <p>“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”</p>	<p><u>Verse 11</u></p> <p>“So He said to them, ‘Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”</p>



## **APPENDIX E**

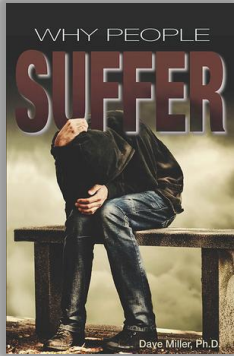
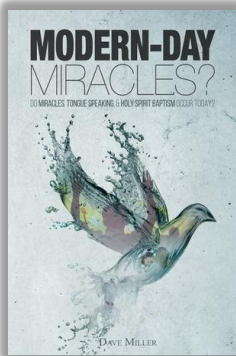
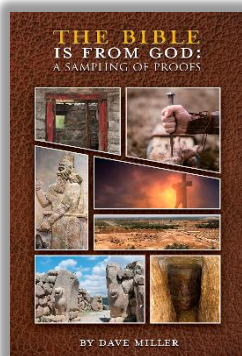
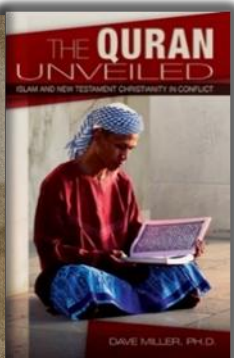
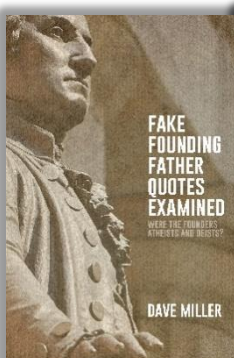
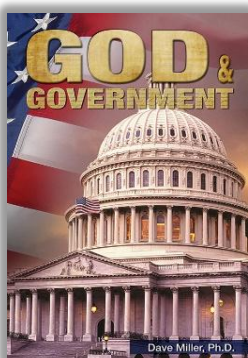
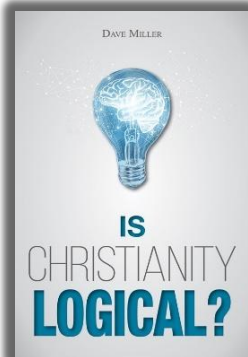
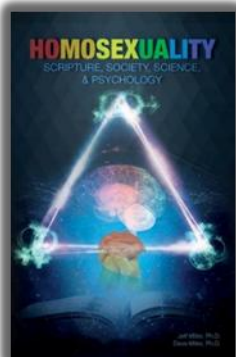
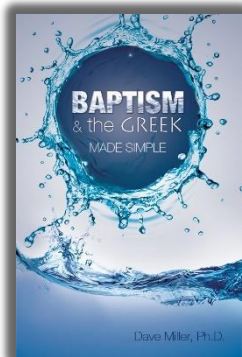
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# APPENDIX F

## *Additional Resources & Class Materials*

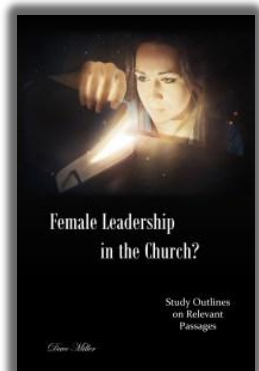
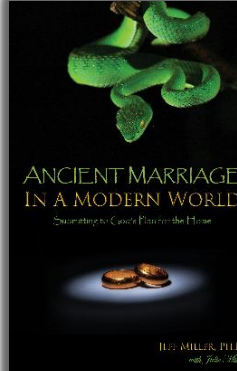
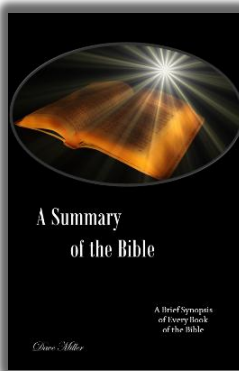
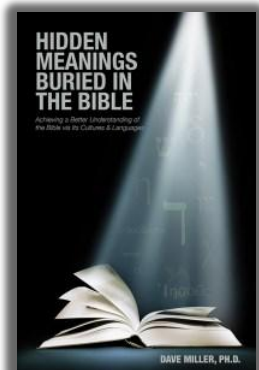
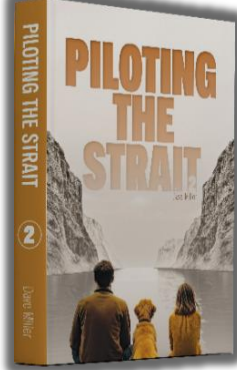
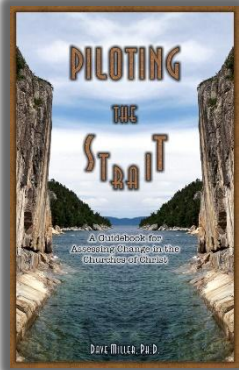
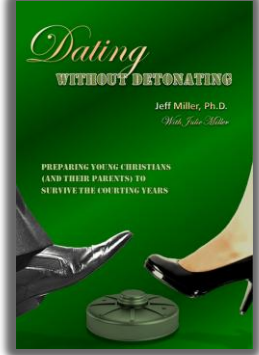
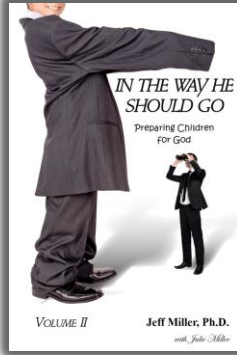
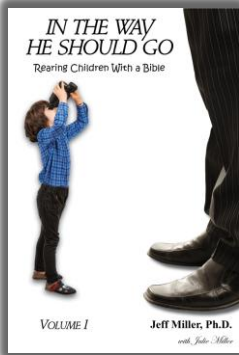
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## APPENDIX F

### *Additional Resources & Class Materials*

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## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead (1999), “What’s Happening to Marriage?” <http://marriage.Rutgers.edu/Publications/pubwhatshappening.htm>; Alexander Plateris (1969), “Divorce Statistics Analysis, United States, 1964 and 1965,” National Center for Health Statistics, October, 21[17]:1, <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/12824>.

<sup>2</sup> These included James Woodroof (1973), *The Divorce Dilemma* (Nashville, TN: Christian Family Books); James Bales (1979), *Not Under Bondage* (Searcy, AR: J.D. Bales); Lewis Hale (1974), *Except for Fornication* (Oklahoma City, OK: Hale Publications); Olan Hicks (1978), *What the Bible Says About Marriage, Divorce, & Remarriage* (Nashville, TN: Christian Family Books); et al.

<sup>3</sup> Carroll Osburn (1981), “The Present Indicative in Matthew 19:9,” *Restoration Quarterly*, 24[4]:193-203, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

<sup>4</sup> Nigel Turner (1963), *Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark), 3:60, emp. added.

<sup>5</sup> “...it is the context which must settle the matter of whether continuity is involved”—Osburn, p. 194.

<sup>6</sup> Hugo McCord (no date), “Moichao, Matthew 19:9” in *50 Years of Lectures* (Atwood, TN: Atwood Church of Christ), 2:162.

<sup>7</sup> Ernest Burton (1898), *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark), pp. 7-8, emp. added; James Moulton (1906), *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark), pp. 119,120.

<sup>8</sup> C.F.D. Moule (1977), *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 6-7.

<sup>9</sup> D.B. Monro (1891), *A Grammar of the Homeric Dialect* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 63.

<sup>10</sup> Moule, p. 8, brackets in orig.

<sup>11</sup> Curtis Vaughan and Virtus Gideon (1979), *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Broadman), p. 136, emp. added.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., emp. added.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 136-137, italics in orig.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 137, emp. added.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 137, emp. added.

<sup>16</sup> A.T. Robertson (1914), *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton), p. 864.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 866.

---

<sup>19</sup> McCord, 2:162

<sup>20</sup> Daniel Wallace (2000), *The Basics of New Testament Syntax* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), p. 224.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 865. See also P. Giles (1901), *A Short Manual of Comparative Philology* (London: Macmillan), pp. 483-484.

<sup>23</sup> F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and Robert Funk (1961), *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press), p. 167, emp. added.

<sup>24</sup> Monro, p. 62.

<sup>25</sup> Frederic Farrar (1876), *A Brief Greek Syntax* (London: Longman, Greens, & Co.), p. 124.

<sup>26</sup> William Goodwin (1893), *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* (Boston: Ginn & Co.), p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 276, emp. added.

<sup>28</sup> Dana and Mantey, pp. 181,182, emp. added.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 184, emp. added.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 185, emp. added.

<sup>31</sup> Herbert Smyth (1920), *A Greek Grammar for Colleges* (New York: American Book Co.), p. 414.

<sup>32</sup> p. 166, emp. added.

<sup>33</sup> Jeremy Duff (2005), *The Elements of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 210.

<sup>34</sup> Maurice Lusk (1982), "A Lexical Study of the Term *Moicheuo* as Used in Matthew 19:9" in *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the Teaching of Jesus and Paul* (Atlanta, GA: Guild of Scribes), pp. 54-55, emp. added.

<sup>35</sup> Osburn, p. 203, emp. added.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 203, emp. added.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., emp. added.

<sup>38</sup> Recall Osburn's own observation on the matter: "...it is the **context** which must settle the matter of whether continuity is involved"—which he repeats at the end of his article: "Greek syntax requires that each occurrence of the present indicative be understood in terms of its **context** to determine whether continuity is involved"—Ibid., pp. 194,203. Numerous Greek grammarians note that **context** must be used to ascertain intended meaning in the Present Indicative. For example: "But normally, a present tense form will express linear action. When a present tense form does express punctiliar action (usually called aoristic-present), **the context will make clear that it does**"—William Chamberlain (1941), *An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: Macmillan), p. 68, emp. added; "The historical, futuristic, and gnomic presents may be

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**either linear or punctiliar in force, depending on the meaning of the verb and the significance of the context**”—Vaughan and Gideon, p. 137, emp. added.

<sup>39</sup> J.D. Thomas, former professor of Bible and head of the Bible Department at Abilene Christian University, considered “commits” in Matthew 19:9 to be a Gnomic Present—which did not mean adultery was not continuous: “The word ‘commits’ is in the present tense (Gnomic present or present of general truth), and therefore, can be considered as ‘**present of habitual action.**’ **To be guilty of ‘living in adultery’ is therefore a valid concept**”—(1977), *Divorce & Remarriage* (Abilene, TX: Biblical Research Press), p. 15, emp. added; cf. p. 35.

<sup>40</sup> Frederick Danker (2000), *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press), p. 854; William Mounce (2006), *Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), pp. 126,638—“any kind of illegitimate sexual intercourse.”

<sup>41</sup> “*moicheuo* is narrower than *porneia* and refers solely to adultery”—F. Hauck and Siegfried Schultz (1968), *porneia*, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 6:581. For an extensive lexical analysis of *porneia*, see Dave Miller (2025), “Fornication’ (*Porneia*) Defined in New Testament Greek Lexicons,” *Reason & Revelation*, 45[4]:8-11, <https://apologeticspress.org/issue/rr-issue-45-4/>.

<sup>42</sup> Danker, pp. 656-657; Joseph Thayer (1889), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York: American Book Co.), p. 417; Thomas Green (1896), *A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament* (Boston, MA: H.L. Hastings), p. 120; Charles Robson (1839), *A Greek Lexicon to the New Testament* (London: Whittaker & Co.), p. 387; John Pickering (1832), *A Greek and English Lexicon* (Boston, MA: Hilliard, Gray, Little, & Wilkins), p. 593; Henry Liddell and Robert Scott (1901), *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 974; Samuel Loveland (1828), *A Greek Lexicon Adapted to the New Testament* (Woodstock, VT: David Watson), p. 210; Samuel Bagster (no date), *The Analytical Greek Lexicon* (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons), p. 272; G. Abbott-Smith (1922), *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons), p. 295; James Moulton and George Milligan (1930), *Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-literary Sources* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982 reprint), p. 416; Cornelius Schrevelius (1826), *The Greek Lexicon of Schrevelius* (Boston, MA: Cummings, Hilliard, & Co.), p. 571; E.A. Sophocles (1914), *Greek Lexicon of the Roman & Byzantine Periods* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), p. 911; Greville Ewing (1827), *A Greek & English Lexicon* (Glasgow: James Duncan), p. 600; et al.

<sup>43</sup> See the survey of the term in both Judaism and Christianity in R.H. Charles (1921), *The Teaching of the New Testament on Divorce* (London: Williams & Norgate), pp. 103-104.

<sup>44</sup> H. Reisser (1975), *porneuvw* in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 1:500.

<sup>45</sup> Hugo McCord (1988), *McCord’s New Testament Translation of the Everlasting Gospel* (Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman College).

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<sup>46</sup> Hugo McCord (no date), “Greek Grammar and Marriage” in *50 Years of Lectures* (Atwood, TN: Atwood Church of Christ), 2:432.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:433.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, italics in orig.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Danker, p. 656, parentheses in orig., italics in orig., emp. added. Also p. 657 under *moixeuwv*.

<sup>51</sup> J.W. McGarvey (1875), *The New Testament Commentary: Matthew and Mark* (Delight, AR: Gospel Light Publishing Co.), 1:56, emp. added; J.W. McGarvey (no date), *The Fourfold Gospel* (Cincinnati, OH: Standard), p. 242. Also, Thomas, p. 37: “this assumes that she will unite with someone else.”

<sup>52</sup> “*Moichao*, Matthew 19:9,” 2:163. McCord also points out that if the redefinition of “adultery” viewpoint is true, then John the baptizer erred when he condemned the marriage of Herod Antipas and Herodias because, according to Josephus (*Antiquities*, 18.5.4), she divorced her husband **before** she married Antipas (2:163).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:162, parentheses and quote marks in orig.

<sup>54</sup> Danker, p. 656, italics in orig.

<sup>55</sup> Danker, p. 803); “to regulate one’s life, to conduct one’s self,...the **state** in which one is living, or the virtue or vice to which he is given” (Thayer, p. 504, emp. added); “pass one’s life” (Robson, p. 362); “to live in any particular manner, follow **a course of life** or conduct, have one’s conversation, behave” (Green, p. 144, emp. added); “walk, i.e. live” (Liddell and Scott, p. 1382); “to maintain a certain walk of life and conduct” (Bagster, p. 320); et al.

<sup>56</sup> Observe that several translations render the term *peripateo* in Colossians 2:6 as “**continue to walk**” (CSB, EHV, NCB, NRSVUE, TLV) and “**continue to live**” (ERV, GW, ICB, ISV, MOUNCE, NOG, NCV, NET, NIV, NRSVA).

<sup>57</sup> The term “lived” is *ezēte* (from *zao*) which means “to live and be strong” (Thayer, p. 270), “to conduct oneself in a pattern of behavior” (Danker, pp. 425-426). Specifically, Danker cites Colossians 3:7 as an instance in which their past conduct caused them to “*live in these (sins)*” (p. 426, italics in orig.).

<sup>58</sup> Danker, p. 853.

<sup>59</sup> Thayer, p. 438, italics in orig.

<sup>60</sup> Thomas Green (1896), *A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament* (Boston, MA: H.L. Hastings), p. 80; Samuel Bagster (no date), *The Analytical Greek Lexicon* (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons), p. 181; Thayer, p. 270.

<sup>61</sup> Danker, pp. 425-426.

<sup>62</sup> Thayer, p. 270.

<sup>63</sup> Danker, p. 425.

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<sup>64</sup> Thayer, p. 270.

<sup>65</sup> William Beck (1964), *The New Testament in the Language of Today* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House), p. 37.

<sup>66</sup> J.D. Thomas noted: “The word ‘were’ is the imperfect tense in Greek, which shows that it means ‘durative or continuous action in past time,’ thus numerous, repeated actions and continued guilt” (p. 15).

<sup>67</sup> Thomas Warren (1978), “Punctiliar and Linear Action,” in *Charts You Can Use in Preaching, Teaching, and Studying on Divorce and Remarriage* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press), pp. 127-130.

<sup>68</sup> H. Reisser (1976), *moixeuw* in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 2:583.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 129, underlining in orig.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 130, underlining, parentheses, and brackets in orig.

<sup>71</sup> See Endnote 53.

<sup>72</sup> The Quran permits a man to have up to four wives at a time—Surah 4:3. See Dave Miller (2005), *The Quran Unveiled* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), pp. 177ff.

<sup>73</sup> If her husband commits adultery, she has the right to exercise the permission given by Jesus regarding a fornicating spouse.

<sup>74</sup> The Hebrew term used to describe David’s relative age in 1 Samuel 17:33 (נָעָר), while somewhat fluid, is often used to refer to a lad or adolescent, including a child, boy, or youth (1 Samuel 20:21; 1 Kings 11:17; 2 Kings 2:23; 5:14; Jeremiah 1:6; Judges 8:20)—Ludwig Koehler, et al. (1994-2000), *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, Electronic edition), p. 707.

<sup>75</sup> i.e., Exodus 23:32-33; 34:11-16; Numbers 35:55; Deuteronomy 7:1-5; 20:10-18.

<sup>76</sup> We leave it to God to sort out the accountability of such children.

<sup>77</sup> See the discussion of “strangers” in Israelite society in Dave Miller (2017), *God & Government* (Montgomery, AL), pp. 207ff.

<sup>78</sup> Patrick states that the phrase, “All the inhabitants of our country” in Joshua 9:11 means that they had “the unanimous consent of all the people”—Symon Patrick (1765), *A Commentary Upon the Historical Books of the Old Testament* (London: A. Millar, et al.), p. 32.

<sup>79</sup> Ingram Cobbin (1837), *The Condensed Commentary and Family Exposition of the Holy Bible* (London: Thomas Ward & Co.), p. 243.

<sup>80</sup> F.G. Marchant (1883), *The Preacher’s Commentary on the Book of Joshua* (London: Richard Dickinson), p. 186.

<sup>81</sup> Thomas Coke (1801), *A Commentary on the Holy Bible* (London: G. Whitfield), 2:39, emp added.



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<sup>82</sup> Henry and Scott (1834), *A Commentary upon the Holy Bible: Joshua to Esther* (London: The Religious Tract Society), p. 27, emp. added.

<sup>83</sup> F.C. Cook (1891), *Joshua-1 Kings* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), 2:47.

<sup>84</sup> Adam Clarke (1846), *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments: Joshua to Esther* (New York: G. Lane & C.B. Tippet), 2:40.

<sup>85</sup> Adam Clarke (no date), *Clarke's Commentary on the Bible: Genesis to Deuteronomy* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon), 1:791.

<sup>86</sup> John Calvin (1854), *Commentaries on the Book of Joshua* (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society), p. 138.

<sup>87</sup> Robert Jamieson, A.R. Fausset, & David Brown (1882), *A Commentary: Critical, Practical & Explanatory on the Old & New Testaments: Genesis-Psalms* (Toledo, OH: Jerome B. Names & Co.), 1:340.

<sup>88</sup> Coke, p. 37.

<sup>89</sup> Clarke (1846), 2:40, italics in orig.

<sup>90</sup> Patrick, p. 34.

<sup>91</sup> Paul Kretzmann (1923), *The Historical Books of the Old Testament: Genesis to Esther* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House), p. 378.

<sup>92</sup> D. Steele (1875), *Commentary on the Old Testament: Joshua to II Samuel* (New York: Nelson & Phillips), 3:68.

<sup>93</sup> Charles Simeon (1855), *Horae Homileticae: Discourses: Numbers to Joshua* (London: Henry Bohn), 2:590.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Henry and Scott, p. 26.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>97</sup> Clarke, p. 39.

<sup>98</sup> Kretzmann, p. 378.

<sup>99</sup> John Lloyd (1886), *The Book of Joshua* (London: Hodder & Stoughton), p. 125; see also John Gill (2010 reprint), *An Exposition of the Old Testament: Joshua-2 Kings*, <https://sacred-texts.com/bib/cmt/gill/jos009.htm>; Arthur Pink (1981 reprint), *Gleanings in Joshua* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers).

<sup>100</sup> Donald Madvig (1992), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Joshua*, ed. Frank Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 3:297.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Oliver Turnbull, trans. (1890), *The Samaritan Chronicle or the Book of Joshua* (New York: John B. Alden), Ch. 19. "Believed to have been redacted into its present form about A.D. 1300, out of earlier documents"—<https://shomron0.tripod.com/articles/thebookofjoshua.pdf>.

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- <sup>103</sup> Henry & Scott, p. 28, emp. added.
- <sup>104</sup> F.R. Fay (1875), *The Book of Joshua*, trans. George Bliss (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, & Co.), p. 90.
- <sup>105</sup> Lloyd, pp. 129-130.
- <sup>106</sup> Patrick, p. 34.
- <sup>107</sup> Lloyd, p. 131, emp. added.
- <sup>108</sup> Patrick, p. 34.
- <sup>109</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 5.1.16.
- <sup>110</sup> Patrick, p. 34.
- <sup>111</sup> Robert Hawker (1822), *The Poor Man's Commentary on the Bible: Joshua to First Book of Kings* (London: Sherwood, Neely, & Jones), 2:40.
- <sup>112</sup> Steele, p. 71.
- <sup>113</sup> Hawker, p. 40.
- <sup>114</sup> Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, p. 341.
- <sup>115</sup> Coke, p. 41.
- <sup>116</sup> Calvin, p. 144. Calvin understood Joshua's use of the word "cursed" to mean that "he throws the blame of their servitude upon themselves" (p. 145).
- <sup>117</sup> Jamieson, et al., p. 341.
- <sup>118</sup> Lloyd, p. 130.
- <sup>119</sup> C.F. Keil & F. Delitzsch (1865), *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: Joshua, Judges, Ruth* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark), 4:101.
- <sup>120</sup> Hugh Blair (1979), "Joshua," in *The New Bible Commentary Revised*, ed. Donald Guthrie and J.A. Motyer (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), p. 243.
- <sup>121</sup> Henry and Scott, p. 28. Also Coke, p. 40.
- <sup>122</sup> Ibid., p. 28.
- <sup>123</sup> Patrick, p. 34.
- <sup>124</sup> Lloyd, p. 130.
- <sup>125</sup> John M'Clintock & James Strong (1969 reprint), *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), 3:852.
- <sup>126</sup> Patrick, p. 34.
- <sup>127</sup> Madvig, p. 300.
- <sup>128</sup> M'Clintock and Strong, 3:852.

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<sup>129</sup> For a discussion of the claim that “whoever” in Matthew 19:9 applies only to those who are in “covenant” relationship with God, see Dave Miller (2025), “The Meaning of ‘Whoever’ (ὅς ἄν) in Matthew 19:9 and the Bible” at [ApologeticsPress.org](https://ApologeticsPress.org).

<sup>130</sup> For decisive discussions of the fact that New Testament teaching on divorce and remarriage applies to all people—Christian and non-Christian alike—see Thomas Warren (1980), *Keeping the Lock in Wedlock* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press); Thomas Warren, ed. (1978), *Your Marriage Can Be Great* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press); Roy Deaver and James Bales (1988), *The Bales-Deaver Debate: On Aliens and the Covenant* (Austin, TX: Firm Foundation Publishing House); Jerry Moffitt (1982), *Bales’ Position Explained and Denied* (Austin, TX: Jerry Moffitt); Thomas Warren (1989), *Under Bondage to the Law of Christ* (Moore, OK: National Christian Press); et al.

<sup>131</sup> Observe that in Mark’s account of this incident (10:2-12), Jesus asked the Pharisees, “What did Moses command you?” These words parallel the words of Matthew 19:4. In other words, “command” in Mark 10:3 lines up with Jesus’ question, “Have you not read” and His quotations of Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24. **These** two verses—not Deuteronomy 24—constituted Moses’ **command** concerning the propriety of divorce. See the chart in Appendix D.

<sup>132</sup> Fredrick Danker (2000), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago), third edition, p. 385, italics in orig.

<sup>133</sup> Wesley J. Perschbacher, ed. (1990), *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), p. 167.

<sup>134</sup> *The Merriam Webster Dictionary* online, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/allow>.

<sup>135</sup> *Cambridge Dictionary* online, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/allow>.

<sup>136</sup> *American Heritage Dictionary*, <https://www.ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=allow>.

<sup>137</sup> Alexander Bruce (no date), *The Synoptic Gospels in The Expositor’s Greek Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 1:246.

<sup>138</sup> Perschbacher, p. 418.

<sup>139</sup> Danker, p. 1034, italics in orig.

<sup>140</sup> Act V, Scene iii, line 290ff. Other occurrences in Shakespeare of the use of “winked” are found in *Cymbeline*, V.iv.192; *Hamlet*, II.ii.137; *Henry 5*, V.ii.300; and *King John*, IV.ii.211. See <https://www.shakespeareswords.com/Public/Searchresults.aspx?search=winking&WholeWordSearch=True>.

<sup>141</sup> Danker, p. 762; Perschbacher, p. 306.

<sup>142</sup> Marvin Vincent (1946), *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 1:108, italics in orig.

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<sup>143</sup> No doubt Moses did not explicitly articulate this fact in his recounting of the events in the Garden since Adam and Eve were the only people on Earth and, hence, incapable of committing adultery.

<sup>144</sup> Many English translations demonstrate awareness of these grammatical nuances and the commencement of the apodosis at verse 4. Among those that insert “then” at the beginning of verse 4 are the ESV, NASB, NIV, NKJV, RSV, NAB, and the Geneva Bible. The CEB has “in this case,” the CJB has “In such a case,” and the EHV has “in these circumstances.” The EXB, GNT, ICB, and NCV have “In either case.”

<sup>145</sup> Additional instances of this same casuistic construction that further illustrate the point include: Exodus 21:29; Numbers 35:22-25; Deuteronomy 10:11-12; 21:15-17; 22:25; 22:28-29.

<sup>146</sup> Jack Lewis (1978), “From the Beginning It Was Not So...” in *Your Marriage Can Be Great*, ed. Thomas Warren (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press), p. 415.

<sup>147</sup> See the lecture presented at the Spiritual Sword Lectureship: Dave Miller, “Chapter Five,” in Garland Elkins and Thomas B. Warren, eds. (1988), *The Book of Matthew* (Memphis, TN: Getwell Church of Christ, pp. 192-216).

<sup>148</sup> This observation assumes that the term “uncleanness” does not refer to unchastity/fornication. The actual Hebrew is ambiguous: “nakedness, shame,” “disgrace,” “something indecent,” “nakedness of a thing, .i.e., probably indecency, improper behavior”—Koehler, et al., p. 1954; Benjamin Davidson (1850), *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970 reprint), p. 613; William Holaday (1988), *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), p. 283; Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles Briggs (1906), *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004 reprint), p. 789. English translations reflect this ambiguity: “some uncleanness” (KJV/NKJV), “some unseemly thing” (ASV/WEB), “something indecent” (EHV/CSB/NIV), “some indecency” (ESV/NASB/RSV), “something inappropriate” (CEB), “something disgraceful” (CEV), “something objectionable” (ISV/NRSV), “something bad about her” (ISV/NCV), “something improper” (HCSB), et al.