

Except for Fornication

A young couple in their early 20's just got married. Oh what joy! However, about a year later the husband finds out his wife has been sleeping around with her former boyfriend who has come back into her life. Of course the husband is shocked, dismayed, and beside himself. He feels such a betrayal from the woman he loves so dearly. She decides she does not want to be married anymore to her husband and now she wants a divorce because her heart is with her other lover. According to some Christians, the judgment upon the husband is that he is now to spend the rest of his life as a perpetual virgin!

As Jesus said to the Pharisees and lawyers, **“Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.”**



It's very easy to place condemnation on others when we have never been in their shoes. Oh, God bless you that you have such a wonderful and faithful spouse and happily married, but can't understand a brother or sister who have to now live as perpetual virgins because their spouse was unfaithful and now happily married to someone else and having children and loving life while the other spouse, whose desire for the same, has to remain alone, and fight his God-given sexual desires for the rest of his life! Really people? Come on.

Should this husband decide to remarry to a Christian woman, has children, according to you, he must DIVORCE his present wife and go back to the first wife, which is IMPOSSIBLE, because she is happily married to another man, settled and raising children from her present spouse.

If this husband does not divorce his wife, his soul awaits eternal damnation for he is said to be *living in adultery*. So to avoid eternal damnation, he must divorce this wife, who loves him very much and bore him children, and he is to remain single. On top of all this mess, it puts his wife in the same position! For now she CANNOT remarry but remain alone for the rest of her life!

“Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.”

The following is written by Mike Desario, and completely in line with Scripture.

This is an important message since there is a 'marriage to death camp' out there that teaches that remarriage is never permitted in the Bible if one has been previously married and that anyone who is remarried while their divorced spouse is still alive is living in adultery in all circumstances. These people are putting many who are remarried under harmful bondage to their merciless teachings which goes against the Lord's desires.

First let's look at what Jesus taught concerning this in Matt 19. Here the Pharisees come to test Jesus and ask Him if it is lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason. The key is that the Pharisees asked if it was lawful to divorce for **any reason**. Jesus said that whoever divorces his wife **except for sexual immorality/marital unfaithfulness** causes her to commit adultery. The "marriage to death camp" strives to remove Jesus' exception clause here concerning marital unfaithfulness.

Moses permitted divorce for uncleanness. There were two Jewish camps and the debate was about "what was uncleanness?" One group thought if the woman merely burned the food or didn't clean the house they could cast her out as they felt that divorce was accepted for any reason basically. The other camp said 'uncleanness' dealt with unfaithfulness and whoredom. Fornication comes from the Greek work 'porneia' which covers all bases in sexual immorality. Jesus is saying in Matt. 19 and also in Matthew 5:31-32 that Moses permitted divorce for this reason in Deuteronomy 24:1-4, and that remarriage was permitted under Moses for this reason. Moses was saying that unfaithfulness dissolves a marriage. But what the Jews were doing is that they were **unlawfully** dissolving marriages for any reason they chose and unlawfully remarrying. This is what the Lord is addressing in Matthew 19 for the Jewish nation.

Moses' and Jesus' teachings are in perfect harmony to each other for "**uncleanness means unfaithfulness**. Jesus didn't teach we could cast out a wife for any reason as the Jews wanted to do, but rather He was in agreement with Moses in that unfaithfulness dissolved the marriage. And if a marriage is dissolved, then there can be ANOTHER marriage (remarriage).

Would Moses permit this, as a holy man of God, to cause people to go to hell for allowing divorce and remarriage for marital unfaithfulness? Was Moses causing people to go to hell because he was permitting them to remarry? Of course not. Deuteronomy 24 clearly tells us there is permissible remarriage allowed in the Bible. Moses sanctioned these remarriages and if Moses sanctioned them, then this means that GOD sanctioned them under certain conditions. So we see that Moses' and Christ's teachings line up in perfect harmony with each other. We can't put away a wife for any reason and remarry, but only if there is **marital unfaithfulness**. Divorce is permitted when a marriage is spotted with unfaithfulness and it can be dissolved and remarriage is allowed in such circumstances.

In Mark 10 the exception clause is not mentioned, and because it is not, does not negate what Jesus said ("except it be for fornication"). We must remember that every gospel has some differences and Mark is relating the same thing as Matthew in Matt. 19. All the Bible harmonizes.

Divorce is not God's original plan for sure, but neither was it God's original plan that man fall into sin or to have a hell etc..

For genuine Christians married in the Lord with legitimate marriage under God, divorce is out of the question! We'll never need a divorce if both are truly saved — never! We must do all we can to reconcile or else we will be bringing disgrace upon the Lord. This is a serious and weighty

matter between true repentant genuine Christians. If we violate this as true Christians and remarry, then we do commit adultery.

However, if we were previously married as an unrepentant non-believer and we got divorced and remarried, but later heard the Gospel and got saved and got remarried, we DON'T have to be under bondage of the 'married to death camp' that says, "Oh, you have to divorce the person you're currently married to now." NO, you DON'T have to divorce the person you're currently married to now. You don't have to divorce your current spouse and scripture does not teach this and these guys teaching this are teaching doctrines of demons.

If two unconverted people are living together and attend a church, many times the preacher and his wife will try and convince this unrepentant couple to get married for appearance's sake. This preacher will not even preach or teach about true repentance in his church. This idea of uniting two unrepentant people to get married for the sake of appearance is an abomination to God, just like most other things in the churches are an abomination, and God does not even recognize this marriage and it is not legitimate because they're not pledging themselves under Jesus and it is just hypocrisy in the heart.

Now, let's move on and look at a second common argument of the 'marriage to death camp' which involves the story of king Herod, and they use this story to try to say marriage is undissolvable. They say that two heathens standing before the bush to marry is to last forever and is proven because John the baptist rebuked Herod for having his brother Philip's wife. But if we look further into this story, we see that John's rebuke is because Herod violated Jewish law by marrying his dead brother (Philip's) wife who already had a daughter which is forbidden under Deuteronomy. You WERE to marry your dead brother's wife IF she was childless to bring forth the prodigy, BUT, if she already HAD a child you were NOT permitted to marry the dead brother's wife. So it was forbidden in Deuteronomy what Herod had done and that is why John the baptist rebuked him. This is also verified over and over by the early church fathers.

Let's move on to the Romans 7:1-6 argument now that the "marriage to death camp" tries to use. Here we have an illustration given about the law and that the woman is married and bound to the husband as long as he lives, but if the husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. So if she marries another man while her husband is alive, she is called an adulterer, but if her husband dies, she is released from this law and not an adulterer. Wow, they love this passage and think that this passage seals their views. They think it's absolute proof positive that marriage is till death and you can't do anything about it.

But you see the whole illustration here in Romans 7:1-6, if you read and try to understand what Paul is talking about here, CLEARLY reveals that he's talking about those "under the law." He's showing that under the law you had to be released from the bondage of the law, so that you could go and serve Christ. If you married while your husband lives, you committed adultery under the law and you would be KILLED/put to death under Moses' law for this.

As we move on in this passage, we read this about the convert, “So my brother you also DIED to the law through the body of Christ that you might belong to God, that we might be wed to another so that you can die.” See, this is not taught in the churches about death to self, and putting away the passions and desires is not being taught at all. The cutting off of the hand, the plucking out of the eye and casting away of evil from us so we can enter the Kingdom single mindedly with a pure heart is not even part of the teaching in our day, and is another reason this teaching is perverted so easily. This verse is talking about dying with Christ so that we can marry into the family of God and be freed from the bondage of the law. It’s an illustration of being freed from the bondage of the law no longer enforced, for when we ‘died,’ we died with Christ and we are no longer legally bound to that law and we’ll see this verified further in 1 Corinthians 7. So this not only teaches that we’re free from bondage of the law to marry another, but it’s also an illustration to a legitimate and happy marriage in Christ, wed in Him and freed from the bondage of the old master of the old law that put people to death for breaking the law, and that instead, if we walk in the Spirit and not the flesh, we can fulfill the righteous requirements of the law. Many great early church fathers taught all this same teaching if you take the time to research it and they did not teach the heresies being taught in our day. We have studied this issue carefully for many are being bound up/in bondage by the “marriage to death” camp teachings that are utterly false.

Now let’s move onto 1 Corinthians 7. 1 Corinthians confirms all the above about not being bound in all situations. Paul writes about people as new believers coming into the body of Christ with one spouse being saved and the other not saved and what is to happen in these situations. Paul says in this situation we’re to stay married if we can, BUT if the unbeliever leaves, then the Christian is not under bondage but rather is LOOSED. What does ‘loosed’ mean? This means he’s loosed from slavery and freed from his bonds and the marriage is dissolved. When the Bible says to ‘come as you are’ into the body of Christ, it does NOT mean to come in your sins to the body of Christ and continue to stay a child molester, adulterer, drunkard, deceiver etc.. Rather, it means that if you become saved and came into the body of Christ uncircumcised, then ‘come as you are’ and don’t seek to be circumcised, or if you came in bound to a wife, then don’t seek to be loosed/divorced; or if you’re loosed/divorced from a wife when you become saved then don’t seek a wife, BUT if you DO marry you do NOT sin. So it clearly was permitted in the early church as people were coming out of wicked lifestyles and truly repenting and being saved that they could remarry if they were previously divorced. This is not referring to virgins alone to marry (it’s not a sin for a virgin to get married), but this is clearly sharing about remarriage. If we do get remarried though, we must get married in the Lord to another true Christian and this marriage is permanent and not to be trifled with.

Conclusions:

1. Remarriage is clearly shown in the Bible. See Deuteronomy 24, and the exception clause for sexual immorality was clearly recognized. Moses permitted it and if Moses permitted it, it was also sanctioned by God for Moses was a great patriarch and was not causing people to go to hell for allowing remarriage. The exception clause was also

recognized by Jesus as we discussed in Matt. 19:9 and Matt. 5:32.

2. People were coming to the faith as already divorced and were permitted by the apostle Paul to remarry and it was not sin. (1 Corinthians 7:27-28) Also those believers who became abandoned by their unbelieving spouses were loosed from their marriage bond and permitted to remarry. (1 Corinthians 7:15; 27-28)
3. Legitimate marriages between two saved truly repentant Christians are not allowed to divorce/remarry and is out of the question. (1 Corinthians 7:10-11; 39)
4. If we are involved in a marriage/divorce/remarriage that is clearly forbidden by Christ, we are in adultery and will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Rev. 21:8 etc.) Only those that truly go through a season and crisis of conviction of godly sorrow for past sins and come to God in true brokenness will ever be able to find mercy. There is mercy, but it's not easily achieved and must be 100% sincere. We must seek God with all that is in us. Lack of real repentance shows we've never come to Christ in the first place and we'd better realize that grace cannot be abused for God will not be mocked.

No one is trying to mock God by permitting remarriage, but to simply share what the Bible teaches and to release people from their bondage by false teachers who try and tell them to divorce their current spouse if they were once married and divorced. These teachers scare people to death and destroy their faith with their wicked doctrine of demons. So be aware of what Scripture teaches in its fullness and dig deep into it. Seek the mercy of God before it is too late so you might have hope for your soul.