

Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage

(Dec., 2014 – Feb., 2015)

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Abbreviations

NASB = New American Standard Version

NAS77 = pre-95 edition of New American Standard Version

ASV = American Standard Version

KJV = King James Version

NKJV = New King James Version

ESV = English Standard Version

GLT = Green's Literal Translation

KJII = King James II Version

LXX = Septuagint Version

NIV = New International Version

AGB = Arndt & Gingrich's Greek-English Lexicon

BDB = Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon

FFG = Fourfold Gospel by McGarvey/Pendleton

Gngrch = Gingrich's Shorter Lexicon of the Greek N.T.

ISBE = International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

MW03 = Merriam-Webster 11th Collegiate Dictionary 2003

MacKnight = James Macknight (1721-1800), Translation and Commentary

OX10 = Oxford American Dictionary

OB = Online Bible

RWP = A.T. Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament

TH = Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon

Strong's = Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

v = verse

vv = verses

VN = Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words

WNWD = Webster's New World Dictionary

WOTWS = Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies

WSNCD = Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary

The Lord willing, we will study this subject in the auditorium class on Sundays and Wednesdays, beginning December 7 and going through Wednesday, February 25. The elders believe the subject warrants studying periodically, so, you may have been through this study before. If so, here are some suggestions.

Instead of rewriting the answers, reference your material from past studies and use the additional time you have (by not having to rewrite the answers) to expand your study. Restudy the texts involved and how you responded previously. Do you still agree with what you concluded? Look at the text more thoroughly—context, meaning of words, force of connecting words and logical indicators (e.g., “and,” “but,” “for,” “therefore,” etc.). Compare related Scriptures (law of harmony). This could be a time to pursue answers to questions raised in studying these Scriptures in the past.

The lessons will have some differences from the previous studies. Material will be updated, changed, and added to. However, the bulk of the study will follow the plan of previous studies. Therefore, you may simply want to add the changed and added material in the margin on your previous copies or by inserting additional pages at the appropriate points.

If you like to do your work on a computer, this time through you might want to enter your answers and observations on your computer. A digital copy of each lesson will be available for download.

Whether you have or have not been in this study before, it will be to your advantage to study the Scriptures cited and their context before you come to class and/or after the class (**Acts 17:11**). It’s easy to say, “I agree,” or “I disagree”; it’s quite a different matter to be able to show why you agree or disagree from the texts. If we wish, we can find someone who teaches whatever we want to believe. But, that won’t be of much help when we stand before Christ in judgment! “...if a blind man guides a blind man, BOTH will fall into a pit.” **Mt 15:14**. We need to be as certain as we can that our conclusions are supported by honest and accurate interpretation of Scripture. “And He [Jesus] said to him, ‘What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?’” **Luke 10:26**. It is a difficult subject, but keep in mind what Paul told the Ephesians about what he wrote to them, “when you read you can understand...” **Eph 3:4**.

Feel free to ask questions or make comments. Do not think, however, that all your questions will be answered. Why? The teacher doesn’t know all the answers! Because we cannot answer every question does not keep us from being able to arrive at any understanding of God’s will on this matter. We must base our faith on what we know, not what we do not know.

We hope you find the study beneficial. If you have suggestions for improving it, please make note of them down so you can share them with the teacher and elders.

ATTITUDES

Objective: To encourage proper attitudes and introduce plan of study.

I. Importance Of This Study

A. Consequences

1. **1Co 6:9-10** - What actions are first and third in this list?
2. **Mt 25:34,41,46; Mk 9:47-48** - What happens to those who do not inherit the kingdom of God?

B. So Many Involved

1. Presently
Observation, experience - OUR friends, aunts, cousins, brothers, children, parents...selves!
2. Potentially - Why?
 - a. **Eph 2:2** - What was the norm of the Ephesians' lives before Christ?
 - b. **1Pt 1:18** - Where had Peter's readers learned their way of life? (Think of the influence our views and practices toward marriage, divorce, and remarriage will have upon our children and grandchildren.)
 - c. **Ezra 9:1-2...10:2-5,8**
 - a) What was the "unfaithfulness" ("trespass" KJV, ASV, NKJV)?
 - b) Who was "foremost" ("chief" KJV, ASV; "led the way" NIV) in it?
 - c) Who stood with Ezra in leading the reformation?
 - d. **1Co 5:6** - What was one reason Paul gave for removing the immoral man from the congregation?

C. Misunderstanding

1. There are many theories and much confusion.
2. **Eph 5:3-10,15-17**

- a. Compare **v10** in the NASB with the KJV, ASV, or NKJV. Note the marginal note in the NASB. Look up the word “prove” in a dictionary and write a definition that fits the usage here.
 - b. In **v15** the KJV uses the word “circumspectly.” Write the definition of this word.
 - c. Contextually (**vv15...17**), how does one “make the most of his time”?
3. **1Th 5:19-22** - What were the Thessalonian Christians urged to do?
 4. **Acts 17:11** - You are encouraged to study each lesson, and to diligently, “examine the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things are so.”

II. Attitudes Affecting Understanding

A. 2Th 2:10-12 - Love of truth

1. What are the two contrasting attitudes in this text?
2. What did God do to those who were not really interested in knowing and practicing the truth?

B. Ezra 9:3-6,10-15; 10:1-3,6,9-11,14,44 - Fear of God

1. What is a real danger to understanding when people are already involved in an unscriptural marriage?
2. What motivated them to put away their wives? **Ezra 9:4; 10:3,4,9,14**

C. Mt 22:23-32 - Faith in revealed versus reasoning from consequences

1. Difficulties
 - a. What was the Sadducees argument against the resurrection?
 - b. Had you lived then, before Jesus revealed there would be no marriages in heaven, how could you have answered their argument?

Difficulties in a position may certainly be reason to reexamine it, *but they do not necessarily disprove it*. A difficulty may be due to lack of

knowledge. We may just have to admit: “I don’t know.” It may be due to the fact some things are not revealed, **Dt 29:29**. Note and remember: *Every position will have its difficulties*.

2. “Absurdities”; “Unfair”

Men and women, limited in knowledge and wisdom, may label what they do not understand or believe as “absurd” or “unfair.” But, “unfair” by whose definition? Do you believe John’s grandma, who went to church all her life, prayed, studied her bible, was full of good works, was not saved because she was not baptized for the remission of sins? John Doe might consider that “unfair and absurd.” The question is—what has been *revealed*? *That* “belongs to us”! (**Dt 29:29**) Do you believe Christians ought to sever association with a person because they no longer go to church or pray? Many in the world (even some “Christians”) would not only consider that “unfair” but “harsh” and “wrong.” Again the question must be, “What has been *revealed*?”

3. “Immoral”

Should one reject a doctrine which results in practical consequences which the *world* views as immoral? Do you believe Saul would have been justified in killing *men, women, and children* in Amalek? How would the *world* view it? Remember: God’s will is not determined by consequences; *our responsibility is determined by revelation*.

4. Challenge: deal with *what is revealed*.

Easy to say, “I don’t agree.” If not, *what does the text mean*? And, what *text* do you adduce for your belief?

D. Mark 6:18 – God’s Law the Standard

1. If “it is not lawful” it is not right, regardless of *who is involved* (e.g. Herod the king; religious leaders, **Ezra 10**), *who teaches it* (e.g. Pharisees, **Mt 5:20...31**, Gamaliel, **Acts 5:38**), *how many people believe it* (**1Pt 3:20**; **Mt 7:13,14**), *how good it sounds* (**Gen 3:4-5**; **2Pt 2:3**; **3:17**), *how many times it is repeated and preached* (Judaizing teachers - **Acts 15**; **2Co 3**; **Galatians**; **Col 2:16-19**; **Php 3:1f**).
2. **Mt 19:3-4**; **1Co 7:10-11,40** - The only way to know what is “lawful” is by *what God said in His revealed Word*.

III. Conclusion

- A. **2Tim 4:1-2** - A gospel preacher's responsibility is to "Preach the Word!" What three actions are involved in faithfully carrying out his ministry?
- B. **1Tim 3:15; 2Tim. 1:13; Tit 1:9; 2:1** - What is essential to a "sound church"?
- C. What can YOU do to help prevent people from being involved in unscriptural marriages?
- D. **Psa 119:33-36,105-106** - Let this be our prayer!

PLAN OF STUDY

1. Positively

- A. Meaning of four terms: "Marriage"; "Divorce"; "Adultery"; "Fornication"
- B. Application of the meaning in a study of the relevant passages.

2. Negatively - Other positions

3. Work Sheets/Tapes

You are not required to agree with the teacher, but you are strongly urged to complete each work sheet. The class is designed to promote unity *based on what the texts say*. We will not make progress toward that end by merely expressing views based on tradition, subjectivism, or renowned preachers. To benefit from the class and to benefit the class we must *deal with the texts*. The lessons are designed to compel us to do that. Cassette tapes will be available if you miss a lesson or for further study.

DEFINITIONS

Objective: This lesson is designed to define four terms : “marriage”; “divorce”; “adultery”; “fornication.”

“Words are vehicles upon which thoughts travel.” If words connote different things to participants in a discussion, communication is in jeopardy at the outset. It is essential, then, to understand God’s thoughts communicated by means of the Scriptures, to ascertain the meaning of those words used to convey those thoughts.

The understanding of four terms—*marriage*, *divorce*, *adultery*, and *fornication*—is requisite to understanding God’s will concerning marriage and divorce. This approach seeks to determine the meaning of those words by *Biblical usage*.¹

I. “MARRIAGE”

Biblically, “marriage” is a relationship² between a man and a woman, established by **1) a covenant** to “become one another’s” (intimate companion) for life and **2) sexual consummation**.³

A. To enter “marriage” is to “become one’s”

1. Used by the Holy Spirit as the equivalent of “marriage”
 - a. Write the phrase in the following verses that is equivalent to marriage:
 - 1) **Dt 24:2**⁴
 - 2) **Ezk 16:8**
 - 3) **Ezk. 23:4**
 - 4) **Jer 3:1**⁵
 - b. For further study, see **Rom 7:3**: If you have availability to a Greek lexicon, what is the fundamental meaning of the word translated “be married” in KJV or “be joined” in the ASV or “is joined” in the NASB?⁶
2. Nature of the case
 - a. A woman is “_____” and “_____” in marriage.
(Read the following verses in order to fill in the blanks.)
Gen 28:1,6,9⁷; 29:19, 21; 34:8,9; Dt 7:3; 24:1; Josh 15:17; Jud 21:7; Mt 24:38
 - b. Man “_____” and “_____” in marriage.
Gen 2:22-24, Mt 19:5

c. **1Co 7:1-5** - belong to one another

- 1) Because of fornications (NASB, “immoralities”), each man is to do what?
- 2) Each woman is to do what?
- 3) Define “due,” or “duty,” **v3**.
- 4) Define “defraud,” **v5** (KJV, ASV).

B. Two things people must do to complete a “marriage”

1. Enter into a covenant

a. **Ezk 16:8**

- 1) What transpired between God and Israel before she “became his”?
- 2) What is a “covenant”?

b. **Mal 2:14**

- 1) What does “treacherously” mean?
- 2) What does “wife of thy covenant” (KJV, ASV) mean? (Compare NASB)

c. **Gen 2:18-24**

- 1) Why was the woman made?
- 2) Note: what is the opposite of being “alone”, **v18**?
- 3) What does “companion” mean? (Use a dictionary.)
- 4) What is the man’s obligation?

See also **Mt 19:5,6**.

d. For further study:

1) Gen 24:3,4,51,56-58

- 2) Must the vows be public? (ceremony) **Num 30; Acts 23:12-16; Gen 28:20...31:13; 1Sam 1:11...12-13**.
- 3) Must the vows be sincere? **Dt 23:21-23; Ecc 5:4-6; Pro 20:25**

2. Consummate the covenant in sexual union
 - a. "One flesh" - Compare **Gen 2:24** with **1Co 6:16**. What act is the phrase "they shall be one flesh" built on?
 - b. Joseph and Mary
 - 1) How is their relationship described
 - a) before conception **Lk 1:27**?⁸
 - b) three months (? - see **Lk 1:39...56**) later, **Mt 1:18**?
 - c) after they began to live together (**Mt 1:18...20, 24**) and just before Jesus was born, **Lk 2:5**? Note **Mt 1:25**.
 - 2) Called "husband and "wife" before married? **Mt 1:18,20...25**⁹
 - a) Define "prolepsis"
 - b) **Mark 15:2**. As Jesus did not begin reigning as King until his ascension, how could he confess being "King of the Jews" before that?
 - c) **Lk 2:11**. Since we are saved by the death and resurrection of Christ, **Rom 5:9,10**, how could the angel announce him as the "Savior" at his birth?
 - d) **Dt 22:22-24**. **Verse 22** deals with unlawful sexual conduct of a woman " _____ " to a man. **Verses 23, 24** deal with unlawful sexual conduct of a woman " _____ " to a man. This second woman is called, **v24**, "his neighbor's _____."
 - e) For further study:
Dt 20:7, KJV, ASV, ESV, "betrothed a wife"; **Gen 24:3,4,7,38,40**, "take a wife"...**51**, "take her and go and let her be the wife"...**67**, "became his wife"; **Lk 2:5**, KJV, NKJV, "betrothed (KJV, espoused) wife"; **Rev 19:7-9 (v7**, "wife" - KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB footnote).
 - f) Note: "Husband" and "wife" may be used in regard to an *anticipated* relationship (as above), and *existing*

relationship, or a *past* relationship (**2Sam 11:26; 12:10**).¹⁰ Context and harmony must determine.

- 3) How could he “put her away,” **v19**, if not married?
- a) *apoluO* = “lit. to loose from (*apo*, from, *luO* to loose)”
VN. “to loose from, sever by loosening, undo...” TH.
 - b) used of:
 - i. Releasing from a debt - **Mt 18:27**
 - ii. Divorce - **Mt 5:31,32; 19:3,7,8,9; Mk 10:2,4,11,12; Lk 16:18**
 - iii. Releasing a prisoner from bonds - **Mt 27:15; Acts 3:13; 4:21, 16:35,36; 17:9; 26:32; 28:18**
 - iv. Forgiveness - **Lk 6:37**
 - v. Releasing from the bondage of infirmity - **Lk 13:12**
 - vi. Being let go, dismissed, or sent away from one’s company or association, dismissed - **Mt 14:15,22,23; 15:23,32,39; Ac 15:30,33**

Nothing in the word to imply “marriage.” What bond or connection being released or severed must be gathered from the context.¹¹
 - c) Here, the Holy Spirit says the woman was “engaged” - i.e. *promised* to Joseph in marriage. He determined to “put her away” - release her from that *promise*.

c. **Mt 5:32**

- 1) If the one who marries the divorced woman commits adultery in so doing, and adultery is a sexual act, the marriage must involve what?
- 2) Note: “whoever” is universal. To assert exceptions is to *assume* them and needs *proof*.

C. Civil law, ceremony, neither make nor break a marriage**1. Mt 19:4**

Jesus, in discussing marriage as God ordained it, goes back to the “_____.” What civil law was complied with then? What ceremony was engaged in?

2. Ezra 9,10

- a. What problem was brought to Ezra’s attention?
- b. Were these marriages lawful or unlawful according to the national law for the Jewish nation? See **9:10-14, 10:2,3**.
- c. This Jewish law was both civil and religious.

3. Consider other patriarchal marriages. Read **Gen 24:3,4...51...56-58...67; 29:21-30¹²****4. Rom 13:1, Rom 12:17**

- a. The fact that civil law neither makes or breaks a marriage does not mean no regard is to be paid to it. According to **Rom 13:1** we are to do what?
- b. Likewise, because a ceremony is not essential to make a marriage, it does not follow that there is no value in one. **Rom 12:17** teaches we must do what in regard to all men? See **Jn 2:1**.
- c. Some argue that if civil law not complied with there is no marriage because God commanded us to obey civil law (**Rom 13:1**) and there needs to be social recognition. But...
 - 1) True, the marriage covenant is not “ratified” *legally*, i.e. by civil law, until its requirements are met. But, civil law ≠ God’s law. The question is, when does God recognize the covenant as “in force” (ratified)? If civil law does not ratify a covenant between Christians to form a “church,” is it therefore not a church?”¹³
 - 2) If not “provide for what is honorable” (**Rom 12:17**), are they married? *Both* are commands of God and have to do with “social recognition.”¹⁴

3) If “marriage” is not marriage until civil law recognizes it, is “adultery” not adultery until civil law recognizes it as so? Would civil law call the second marriage of **Mt 19:9** “adultery?”¹⁵

5. Discuss:

- a. Difference in fornication, rape, and marriage
- b. Difference in a housemaid, concubine, and a wife
- c. “Common law” marriage

6. Marriage is a *relationship* - holy or unholy

Where these two things are present (covenant & sexual union), there is a “marriage” even though not approved by God.

a. Mark 6:17-18

- 1) Was Herod’s marriage to Herodias approved by God?
- 2) Did God consider them “married”? What does the *text* say?

b. Mt 5:32 - Though it is adultery, those who enter the unlawful relationship are said by our Lord to be “_____.” Note that this is *God’s* terminology.

c. See also Mt 19:9; Rom 7:3. All these go to show the term “marriage” does not connote *approval*.

Even people married contrary to God’s law are “married” in God’s eyes. God calls even unholy relationships “marriages.” Avoid the snare of speaking of people who are in an unholy marriage as “not married in God’s eyes.” Because it is not RIGHT does not mean it is not REAL; because it is not APPROVED does not mean it is not ACTUAL; because it is not PERMISSIBLE does not mean it is not POSSIBLE.”¹⁶ One might as well argue the “fornication” is not really fornication because God doesn’t approve it as argue marriage is not really marriage because God doesn’t approve it.

II. DIVORCE

As “marriage” is a relationship between a man and a woman based on a covenant to “become one another’s” and consummated by sexual union, “divorce” is **severance of that relationship, i.e., a “putting away” the other as “one’s own.”**

A. To “put away,” “send out of the house,” “separate from”

1. **Dt 24:1-3** - What phrase represents divorce in this passage?
“sends her out from his house”
2. **Jer 3:1** - What phrase represents divorce in this passage?
3. **Mt 5:31-32**
 - a. In **v31** in the KJV and NASB, what word and phrase are used synonymously?
 - b. Compare the NKJV. Instead of “put away” or “send away,” what word does it use in **vv31,32**?
4. **1Co 7:10-15**
 - a. What words and phrases represent divorce in this passage?
 - b. How do you know this is divorce and not mere separation by consent for a time as in **v5**?
5. **Mt 1:18-19**
 - a. What was Joseph thinking about doing?
 - b. While Joseph and Mary were not married, but only engaged, this text shows a difference in “planning” or “considering” (NASB) to sever a relationship (“put her away”¹⁷) and actually doing it.
 - c. Compare also **Ezra 10:3...9...11...17...19**.¹⁸ Note that several months transpired between the decision to put away their wives and the actual doing of it.
 - d. Note: While divorce implies a decision to sever the covenant relationship, it is more than a mental act. The divorced person is “sent out,” “separated from.” It is also more than simply saying one is divorcing their mate. It requires the

decision to sever the covenant and the *action* of severing the relationship based on that covenant.

6. By Divine usage “put away” (*apoluO*) is applied to engagements and marriages. But where to any other relationship, e.g., people who were married, quit living together, and then sometime later decide to “put away”?

B. Requires only the will of one

1. In the case of Jewish marriages, is there any indication that the consent of the wife was required before she could be “put away”? **Dt 24:1-3; Mt 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mal 2:14-16.**
2. **1Co 7:10-15** - If one partner in the marriage “departs” or leaves, in what state does that leave the other partner?
3. Compare other covenantal relationships. E.g., Abimelech and Abraham’s covenant about the well, **Gen 21:27-32**; Zedekiah and people’s covenant to set Jewish slaves free, **Jer 34:8-11**. See **Mal 2:14,16**, “dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant ... I hate divorce ...”
4. Compare to being fired versus resigning. Both refer to termination of relationship. One is initiated by the company, and one by the employee. If fired, can you quit? If quit, can you be fired? If you know you are going to be fired, you may quit first; but, what if you do not know...? Is this “fair?”¹⁹

C. Divorce is the severance of relationship - right or wrong

Avoid the divorced “in God’s eyes” or not divorced “in God’s eyes” phrases. Like marriage, because it is not RIGHT does not mean it is not REAL; because it is not APPROVED does not mean it is not ACTUAL; because it is not PERMISSIBLE does not mean it is not POSSIBLE.”²⁰

D. Civil law

As civil law does not make a marriage, neither does civil law break a marriage.

1. “Certificate of divorcement” **Dt 24:1-3**
 - a. A Jewish practice²¹
 - 1) Who wrote this certificate and who gave it to the woman?

- 2) What was the purpose of it?
 - 3) Are civil courts or an appeal to them anywhere in the passage? ?
 - 4) Did the failure to give the certificate mean that the person was not divorced?²²
2. Discuss: Is it possible to be legally “married” while Biblically “divorced,” or to be Biblically “married” while legally “divorced”?

E. Separation versus divorce. 1Co 7:5

1. This separation takes place “_____” and is to last only “_____.”
2. What is the difference in this and the “divorce” mentioned in the other passages we have been studying?

III. “ADULTERY”

Adultery is **unlawful sexual intercourse**, in which one (or both) of the participants is **bound by law to someone else**.

A. A sexual act

1. A “wife that committeth adultery,” **Ezk 16:32** (KJV, ASV; “adulterous wife”, NASB, NKJV), is performing the actions of what kind of woman according to **vv30-33**?
2. What phrase in **Ezk 23:44** is equivalent to “adulteries” in **Ezk 23:43**?
3. In **Jer 3:8** it is said that Israel “committed adultery” and her sister Judah “ALSO” “_____.”
4. For further confirmation study **Lev 20:10** in the light of the context following that verse. Observe that there is a change of subjects involved - i.e., “neighbor’s wife”, **v10** (“friend’s wife” NASB); “father’s wife”, **v11**; “daughter-in-law”, **v12**; etc. - but the section as a whole is dealing with unlawful sexual activity. Note the parallel phrase, “lie with”.

B. Not ceremony, legal state

1. Above definition

2. According to **Job 24:15-16**, what is characteristic of the adulterer and his practice?
3. Is this characteristic of the ceremony or of satisfying legal requirements?
4. In **John 8:4** a woman is said to be taken in the “very act” of adultery. What is this according to **Lev 20:10f** and **Dt 22:22-24**?

C. Figuratively used to denote spiritual unfaithfulness

Rule: Literal unless context and harmony demands figurative. Ignore this and confusion is the result. E.g. “body” is used figuratively of the church. Apply figurative meaning in **1Co 5:3, 9:27, 15:35**...!

D. Involves a person bound by law to another - Rom 7:1-3

1. The woman which has a husband is “_____” to her husband as long as he lives, **Rom 7:2**.
2. What is the logical import of “so then if” in **Rom 7:3**? (See a dictionary).
3. “So then if, while her husband is living (and she is thus bound by law to him, **v2**), she be joined to (married to) another man (thus, bound by law to one man, but married to another), she (for this reason, “so then if”) shall be called an “_____.” **Rom 7:3**.
4. According to **v3**, a woman bound by law to one man while married to another is an adulteress. The first man dies. She remains married to the second man, but it is no longer adultery.
 - a. Why? what has changed?
 - b. Is it the marriage (her marriage to the second man), in and of itself, that makes the sexual act “adultery”? Why?
5. A person bound by God’s marriage law is not what? **1Co 7:39**. This defines what the apostle Paul means by “bound to.”

E. “Adultery” describes the sexual act . . .

1. Between two people unlawfully married to each other, **Mt 5:32**.

Objection: If this is true, explain Thayer's definition: *moichaO* - "to have unlawful intercourse with ANOTHER'S WIFE" (caps mine, srf)." The argument is that a man cannot commit adultery with his OWN WIFE. But, "wife" is used in Bible, and by us, not only of present relationships, but of *past* relationships (**2Sam 11:26; 12:10**). Why should Thayer be limited to present relationships? Both **Rom 7:1-3** and **Mt 5:32** show that adultery can describe an unlawful sexual act with the mate one is presently married to.

2. Between two people not married to each other, yet one of them married to a third party, **Ezk 16:30-34**.
3. Between two unmarried people, at least one of them having been married before, yet still bound by law.
4. The point to be remembered is that in adultery at least one party is bound by law to another.

IV. FORNICATION

Fornication is **unlawful sexual intercourse in general**.

A. Unlawful sexual act

1. What phrases are used interchangeably with "committed fornication" (KJV, ASV; "played the harlot", NASB) in **Ezk 16:25,26**?
2. What phrases are used interchangeably with "fornication" in **Ezk 16:28-30** (KJV)?

Compare how the ASV and NASB translate the phrase rendered "multiplied thy fornication" in the KJV.

3. **1Co 6:13-18**.
 - a. Fornication involves a man's _____.
 - b. When a man commits fornication he is joined to what?
 - c. Instead of "fornication" the NASB translates "immorality". What is meant is clearly indicated in the context as the above questions show. The NASB "immorality" may suggest too broad a concept, for while all fornication is immoral, not all immorality (e.g., murder) is fornication. See the marginal note in the NASB at **Mt 15:19, Col 3:5**.

B. Used interchangeably with “adultery”

1. **Ezk 16:23-32**. “Committing fornication”, **v26** (KJV, ASV), is used interchangeably with what phrase in **v32**?
2. Note: “fornication”, “whoredom”, “harlotry” used to refer to the same thing in the Old Testament.
3. In **Rev 2:20-22** the Lord said that Jezebel seduced his servants to “commit fornication” (“commit acts of immorality”, NASB), **v20**, and that he would judge those that “_____” with her, **v22**.
4. Compare also **Ezk 23:43** with the context of that chapter.

C. But, has a broader meaning than “adultery”

1. According to **Rom 7:1-4**, the adulteress is “_____” to a man.
2. In **1Co 6:13-18** is there any indication whether the parties involved are married, unmarried, or bound by the marriage law of **Rom 7:1-4**?
3. Thus, all “adultery” can be called “fornication,” but not all “fornication” is “adultery.”
4. Include bestiality, homosexuality, lesbianism? **Jude 7**²³

D. “Living in” adultery, fornication

1. Is it scriptural to speak of “living in adultery”? Read **Col 3:5-7**.
2. What does it mean?

¹ If question using Biblical examples of usage to determine meaning:

- Proof of other definition?
- This how TH defines!
- Question is—what did the word mean TO THEM? Then we can talk about the application to us.

² “Relationship” refers to some kind of connection between people. What that connection is will be determined by each circumstance. For example, the “relationship” of “father” and “son” refer to a connection of blood, a physical connection of generation. The “relationship” of marriage of a man and woman refers to a connection by covenant to be one another’s intimate companion and consummation of that covenant.

³ I.e., the covenanted relationship of “marriage” is brought to completion or fulfillment in sexual union. “Consummate” - “1.a. To bring to completion or fruition; conclude: *consummate a business transaction*... 2. a. To complete (a marriage) with the first act of sexual intercourse after the ceremony.” AHD00.

⁴ ESV, NRSV, NIV, “she becomes the wife of another man.” Neither of these versions italicize “wife.” Caution: Be careful in using these to reliably define words by Biblical usage because 1) they do not italicize added words (“wife” here) and 2) in its effort to make it simpler for the reader may interpret at times rather than translates.

⁵ NIV, “marries another man”

⁶ *ginomai*, Strong’s #1096. ““is joined “ ASV, NASB; “be married “ KJV; *ginomai*, “to become a man’s wife, Ro. vii. 3 sq. “ TH.

⁷ Note NASB and footnote - same Hebrew word as in **vv1,6** - #3947 (took) + #0802 (wife)

⁸ “espoused” - Can mean *either* married or engaged. Note that “marry” is “archaic.”

“2 ARCHAIC marry : *Edward had espoused the Lady Grey.*

• (be espoused to) (of a woman) be engaged to (a particular man)” OX10

“betrothed” – *never* refers to being married

“enter into a formal agreement to marry” OX10. So AHD2000, MW03.

3423, *mnesteuO* - “to be promised in marriage, be betrothed: ... Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:27; 2:5.*” TH (Only three occurrences in NT)

⁹ “as thy wife” - Lit., “the wife of him.” ASV, KJV, “thy wife.” “take,” “took” **vv20,24** = *paralambanO* - so that the person is “along” or “with” you where you are. See ref., esp. **Jn 14:3** (“receive” = *paralambanO*), “that...” Did they live in the same house, he take care of her? See **Lk 1:56; 2:4,5**.

¹⁰ Using “husband” or “wife” of a past relationship is done by the figure of Adjournment, “Old name for new thing” – other examples: **Ex 7:12**, “staff” (now a serpent); **Jn 9:17**, “blind” (now sees); **Jn 20:24**, “twelve” (Judas dead, Matthias not appointed).

¹¹ Observe that even VN makes a difference: “is rendered to put away in reference to one who is betrothed, Mt 1:19; a wife, 5:31,32” (under “Put,” #16, *apoluO*).

¹² The patriarchal marriages show that people were married without civil sanction (legal papers, certification by officials). Some say it is an error to equate entering marriage in such situations with entering marriage in situations where civil government exists. The point is, *were they married?* If yes, then civil government sanction is not an *inherent* part of marriage. If it is where civil government has jurisdiction, then indeed the “nature” of marriage is changed.

¹³ Some ask, for the sake of argument, what if the “nature of marriage” is changed in situations where civil government exists (see previous footnote) - so what?” Here are some “so whats”...

- a. People could be married in one country, but upon moving to another country who did not recognize the laws of the previous country, find themselves unmarried. If they have sexual intercourse now, is it sin? Since they did not divorce (the new government simply does not recognize their relationship as “marriage”), can they marry someone else? If the new government says it will only recognize people as married who are of the same race, and since to be married to someone of the same race is not contrary to God’s law, can these two people now enter into a relationship of marriage if they are of different races?
- b. If people are not divorced until civil papers are filed and the government recognizes it, then people may separate for any reason, then at any time thereafter that the other party commits fornication or remarries, whether ten minutes or ten years later, file for divorce on the grounds of fornication and be free to remarry according to **Mt 19:9**.
- c. Two people may covenant to live together as husband and wife, do so for ten years, have three children, and then decide to split up and have the freedom to remarry without being in sin in the new relationship because they never complied with the civil law in the previous relationship. If you say the government recognizes them as married after living together for a stated period of time, were they never married if they split up one day before that specified length of time?

These examples of “so whats?” are not given to seek a solution to all these situations, but to show this issue does indeed have consequence.

¹⁴ Some argue society has always had some means of recognizing who was married and who was not (**Rom 12:17**), e.g. Samson’s marriage feast, the wedding feast at Cana, the marriage feast parable, and the parable of the ten virgins. Society may accept these as a means to recognize who is married, but they do not create a marriage, nor are they requisite to it. If a couple covenant to marry privately, get a license, go to the justice of the peace, all without any ceremony or announcing it to people, *are they married?* If they now take off on an extended honeymoon, society may indeed raise their eyebrows, but are they married? We agree Christians ought to provide for things honorable in the sight of men, but if they don’t, *are they married?*

¹⁵ We must obey civil law as long as it does not violate God’s will, and since getting a marriage license does not violate God’s law, we should comply with that civil requirement. But, we must do that to be *obedient*, but not to be *married*. If the civil law says the church must own property to be recognized by the civil government as a nonprofit religious organization, is the church not a nonprofit religious organization if it does not own property? If the civil government passed a law that elders must be registered with the state to be recognized as leaders in that nonprofit religious organization, would they not be elders if not so registered? The ‘nature’ of marriage is not changed by civil law. Civil government has jurisdiction relative to that country’s laws. The church above without property would not be a church *legally* (i.e., would not be recognized to be such according to that country’s laws); the elder who is not registered would not be an elder legally; and a marriage that did not comply with civil law would not be a marriage...*legally*. But, *biblically*, the church would be a church, the elder would be an elder, and the marriage would be a marriage.

The *legal* aspect of marriage is regulated by civil government, just as the *legal* operations of a church are regulated by civil government. But the nature of marriage or a church as defined and recognized by God is not changed by civil regulations.

¹⁶ Terminology (caps) borrowed from Kevin Kay, *Is It Lawful?*, p. 330.

¹⁷ The word for “put away” in Mt 1:19 is *apoluo*, the same word used for the severance of the marriage relationship. Earlier in this lesson we saw that *apoluo* does not imply people were married, but is a term used of severing some connection and what that connection is must be determined from each context.

¹⁸ Interestingly, the word translated “married” in the NASB (KJV, NKJV, “taken”; GLT, “dwelt with”) in **Ezra 10:2** is #3427, which, according to the NASB fnt., means “Lit., *given dwelling to.*” (3427 also in **vv10,14,17,18**; **Neh 13:23,27**). According to OB, it occurs 1088 times and in the KJV it is translated dwell 437, inhabitant 221, sit 172, abide 70, inhabit 39, down 26, remain 23, in 22, tarry 19, set 14, continue 5, place 7, still 5, taken 5, misc 23. In contrast, they were to “put away” (**vv3,19**), “separate from” (**v11**).

¹⁹ The scriptures do not speak of “dual divorce.” One “putting away” in a relationship is all that is ever mentioned.

²⁰ Terminology (caps) borrowed from Kevin Kay, *Is It Lawful?*, p. 330.

²¹ It is questionable whether the certificate of divorce was initiated by God’s law. According to Matthew’s account, Jesus said “permitted” it, **Mt 19:7-8** (in contrast to the Pharisees, “Why then did Moses...command?”). **Dt 24:1-3** = protasis; v 4 = the apodosis. “protasis” - “2. *Gram.* the clause that expresses the condition in a conditional sentence.” W.NWD. “apodosis” - - “the clause expressing the conclusion or result in a conditional sentence: opposed to PROTASIS.” W.NWD. KJV, ASV do not clearly bring this out. NKJV, NASB: “When...*then*” NIV: “If...*then*” **Dt 24** legislated that in such circumstances the first husband could not have her back.

However, in Mark’s account, the Jews say “permit” while Jesus says “this commandment” (**Mark 10:4-5**). If the true order of the conversation (harmonizing Mt & Mark) has **Mt 19:4-7** *between* **Mark 10:4 ... 5-9** (after v4), then the Jews said “permitted” in their answer to Jesus question, “What did Moses command you?” and “command” in their rebuttal (**Mt 19:7**) to Jesus reference to Genesis (**Mt 19:4-6**). While this solves the seeming discrepancy between the Jews saying “command” in Matthew’s account and “permit” in Mark’s, it does not deal with the fact that Jesus is represented by Matthew as saying “permitted” but Mark has him saying, “this commandment” (**Mt 19:8**; **Mark 10:5**). One possibility is that Moses “permitted” by way of “commandment.” If so, no emphasis should be placed on Jesus saying “permitted” in contrast to the Jews “command.” An alternative suggestion: By “this commandment” Jesus referred to the *whole* of **Dt 24:1-4** (synecdoche). If **Dt 24** is translated as the later versions, v1 is not a sentence by itself. When Jesus said, “permitted” he specified “you to divorce your wives.” When he said “this commandment” he referred to the whole injunction, including the prohibition against having the wife back again and thus bringing sin on the land (v4). SUGGESTION: *Both* “permission” & “command” due to how they were treating their wives and the “hardness of your hearts.”

Suggested harmonies of Mt & Mk.: FFG, McGarvey, Comm. on Mt/Mark - 1) **Mt 19:3**; **Mk 10:2-4** 2) **Mt 19:4-7** 3) **Mk 10:5**; **Mt 19:8**. “This last remark is quoted out of its original connection by Mark ... [Mk 10:5, srf], because he condenses the entire conversation.” - Comm. on Mark. 4) **Mk 10:10-12**; **Mt 19:9-12**. Hendriksen - (1) **Mt 19:3**; **Mk 10:2** (2) **Mk 10:3-5** (3) **Mk 10:6-9**; **Mt 19:4-6** (4) **Mt 19:7-9** Here, if Jesus spoke this twice, once to the Pharisees and later to the disciples in the house (5) **Mark 10:10-12**; **Mt 19:10-12** While in the house with the disciples. Lenski - “In Matt. the question about Moses is placed after the exposition regarding the creation of male and female; Mark seems to have the true order.” **Mk 10:10-12** a repetition by Jesus of what he said to the Pharisees (**Mt 19:9**). Foster, *Studies in the Life of Christ* - (1) **Mt 19:3**; **Mk 10:2** (2) **Mt 19:4-7** (3) **Mk 10:3-4** “Mark’s account shows that Jesus asked them to quote the law on the subject (10:3)” [Did he here give them a chance to correct their use of Moses, **Mt 19:7**, “Why did Moses command to give...?” - srf] (4) **Mt 19:8**; **Mk 10:5** (5) **Mt 19:9** “Matthew sing on divorce (v9), given in answer to the Pharisees, was spoken before the entire crowd.” (6) **Mk 10:6-9** (? - Foster not com on this. Did Jesus reaffirm what he had said earlier?) (7) **Mk 10:10-12**; **Mt 19:10-12** “He [Matthew, srf] then records a conversation with his disciples concerning t teaching. Mark 10:10 shows that this discussion occurred in private after they had gone into the house of some disciple....Jesus repeated his solemn declaration that marriage was for life.”

²² Did the certificate indicate the woman was innocent of adultery so that she could be another man/s? N0 - **Jer 3:8**.

²³ “gross immorality and went after strange flesh” - if “and” used in ascensive sense it would be a case where fornication included homosexuality. Note “Sodom and Gomorrah.” Exam. of *kai* in ascensive sense, “even” in **Mt 5:46,47, Gal. 2:13**.

“Intercourse” – Thayer and AGB both say *porneia* is unlawful “sexual intercourse.” “Intercourse” is not in and of itself a sexual word; it refers to some kind of “connection or dealings between persons or groups” (*Merriam-Webster*, 2003). What that connection or interaction is must be determined. Compare, “social intercourse” – exchange of thoughts, feelings, communication. Thus the need to add the adjective, “sexual.” Merriam-Webster further defines it, “physical sexual contact between individuals that involves the genitalia of at least one person” and then give examples of anal, oral and heterosexual intercourse. AGB says on *porneia*, “every kind of” unlawful sexual intercourse.

porneia is a action. *pornE* (female) and *pornos* (male) are persons who practice *porneia*. If a prostitute (*pornE*) engaged in sexual contact involving the genitalia of either herself or her paramour, yet without engaging in penetration, would it be *porneia*?

“The word *porneia* is used by the LXX and by the writers of the New Testament, in the latitude which its correspondent word hath in the Hebrew language, namely, to denote all the different kinds of uncleanness committed, whether between men and women, or between men, or with beasts. “ MacKnight, *Apostolical Epistles*, on 1Co 5:1. Barclay, in *Flesh and Spirit*, discusses homosexuality under the word *porneia*. In an article by Frank E. Hirsch in ISBE, he says, “Every form of unchastity is included in the term ‘fornication.’ “ (Eerdmans, 1956) Vol. II, p. 746.

PASSAGES

Objective: To ascertain the meaning of the passages relevant to this study. The definitions established in previous studies will be plugged in and context and harmony will be applied.

I. MATTHEW 5:31-32

A. Theme of the sermon

Chapters 5-7 are a record of Jesus' "Sermon on the mount." Read the following: **4:23; 5:3,10,19,20; 6:10,33; 7:21.**

1. What is he preaching about?
2. What word occurs in all the following verses? **5:6,20; 6:1,33**
3. Combine that word with what he is preaching about to observe the theme of the sermon. (Read the sermon). This shows the applicability of this text to us.

B. Subordinate theme

Read **5:19-20; 6:1,2,5,16,19 (Lk 16:14); 7:1 (Jn 7:23-24; Mt 12:1-8)**. What is being contrasted?

C. Verses 21-48

1. What two phrases occur in combination repeatedly throughout **vv21-48**? Write the verses where they occur.
2. "Righteousness" of the S. & P. denounced, **5:19,20**. The Pharisees were their teachers (**Jn 3:1...10; Lk 5:17; Mt 23:1-2; 15:1...9-14**). Their *practice* did not accord with what the Old Testament said, **Mt 23:1ff**. People become like their teachers, **Mt 10:25**. So, in contrast to ("but I say unto you") what their teachers made of these laws by their lives and thus taught the people, Jesus sets forth the attitudes characteristic of those who would enter the kingdom of heaven.

D. Verses 27-32

1. What action is discussed in both **v27** and **v32**? This identifies the subject of this section.
2. **Verse 31** marks a break with, "And it was said..." **Verses 27-30** discuss one thing that leads to the sin being discussed and

vv31-32 discuss a second. What are these two things that violate the intent and design of the law of **v27**?

- a.
- b.
- c. Setting this in the context of the theme of the sermon, we see Jesus teaching that citizens of the kingdom do not seek to satisfy their unholy lust, **v27**, nor take the marriage covenant lightly **vv31,32**.

E. Insert definitions

Write in the parentheses the definitions of the terms immediately preceding the parentheses. Use the definitions ascertained in lesson 2.

“Everyone who divorces (_____) his wife, except for the reason of unchastity (_____), makes her commit adultery (_____); and whoever marries (_____) a divorced (_____) woman commits adultery (_____).” NASB

F. “Makes her commit adultery” NASB

“causes her to commit adultery “ NKJV

“maketh her an adulteress” ASV

1. Read **Num 31:16; Col 4:16; John 4:1**.
2. Note in all these the “causing” or “making” is **CONDITIONAL** on the action of others.
3. Metonymy of the effect: “This is when the effect is put for the cause producing it.” E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, p. 560.

G. Verse 32b

1. Does God recognize the relationship between these two people as “marriage”?
2. Does he *approve* the relationship?

H. Questions

1. Since the context has to do with lust, can the text be applied to a divorce where it is not a matter of lust for another woman?

It is an *assumption* to say the divorce Jesus speaks of in vv31-32 is one that takes place because of lust for another woman. *Adultery*, not lust, is clearly the subject of this section (vv27...32). If Jesus is showing that God's law against adultery forbids not only the act itself, but those things that lead to it, specifically here, 1) lust, and 2) divorce, then while those two things are both related to adultery, they are not necessarily related to each other (e.g., as cause and effect).

2. Jesus said a man makes his wife commit adultery if he divorces her for *any other reason* than fornication ("except for fornication"). Since he excluded those cases, does that imply that in those cases (when the divorce was because of her fornication) her remarriage is NOT adultery?
 - a. When fornication was the cause of divorce, Jesus DID except those cases FROM WHATEVER HE SAID. WHAT DID HE SAY? (Read carefully.)
 - b. The CONTEXT warns against those things that violate the intent and design of the law, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." To say that if one did NOT commit fornication and was divorced he could NOT remarry, but that if he DID commit fornication (WHICH WOULD INCLUDE ADULTERY) and was divorced for it he COULD remarry would be to ENCOURAGE what?
 - c. Grammatically, "for fornication" may refer to the person who is doing the divorcing, i.e. for his own fornication. However the SENSE of the passage derived from CONTEXT AND HARMONY says it refers to the one being put away. If the innocent person cannot remarry without committing adultery, what does the SENSE say about the fornicator?²⁴
3. Since Jesus is dealing with principles relating to the righteousness of citizens of the kingdom of heaven, should what he said about divorce and adultery be taken literally?
 - a. Figurative language is found on *every page of the Bible*. To make *everything* in a context figurative because figurative language is used would mean *nothing* in the Bible is literal! Figurative and

literal language are intertwined, and careful and honest exegesis must be employed to correctly interpret. For example, in **Jn 11:11**, “has fallen asleep” is *figurative* (v13), while “he said” “our friend” and “I go” are *literal*. In **Mt 16:6**, “beware” and “Pharisees and Sadducees” are *literal*, but “leaven” is *figurative*.

- b. Because Jesus is dealing with principles relating to the righteousness of citizens of the kingdom of heaven, does NOT mean nothing he says should be taken literally. “I say to you” is *authoritative* and what he “said” was that *literal* divorce, except for *literal* fornication, results in *literal* adultery!

II. MATTHEW 19:3-12

A. “Is it lawful...?”

1. According to Christ, what determines whether a practice is lawful?
2. To set forth what is lawful relative to marriage and divorce, where did Jesus go?
3. Is the law Jesus referred to uniquely for Christians or for all men? Compare **1Co 6:9-11**.

B. “What therefore God hath joined together, let no man separate”

1. When two people are “joined together” by means of an agreement to be intimate companions and sexual consummation (**vv4-5**), what is that relationship?
2. “Separate” (“put asunder” KJV) is the same word translated “leave” (“depart” KJV) in **1Co 7:11**. If she “leaves,” what state is she in?
3. The context is concerning what? (Note the word that recurs in **vv3,7,8,9**.)
4. Metonymy: Action put for declaration of it.²⁵

“What therefore God hath joined together [by the authority and declaration of his law, **vv4,5**], let no man separate” Compare **Ac 10:15**.

C. “Except for immorality”

1. What is “immorality”? (NASB. See footnote. Compare other versions. See “Definitions” lesson for further information on this word.)
2. How many reasons does this allow for divorce?
3. If a person can divorce his mate FOR ANY OTHER REASON and remarry without committing adultery, what is the reason? Give scripture.

D. Four guilty of adultery

If the original couple divorces for other reasons than fornication and remarries, who will be guilty of adultery?

E. The person divorced BY another

Jesus divides all divorces into two classes: (1) divorce *for fornication*; (2) divorce for *any other reason* (“except for fornication” - the one exception).

1. If a person is divorced by another for *any other reason* can he remarry without committing adultery?
2. If a person is divorced by another *because he is a fornicator*, can he remarry without committing adultery? Explain.
3. If ANY person who has been divorced BY (not “from”) another can remarry, give the scripture.²⁶
4. Some say the focus or point of this entire discussion was the *cause* of divorce, i.e. fornication, and therefore it makes no difference who did the putting away. Does Mark mention fornication at all (**Mk 10:2-12**)? Looking at the text, beginning in **Mt 19:3**, what is the thread that runs throughout—is it fornication?

III. MARK 6:17-18**A. “He had married her”**

1. Was this marriage lawful?
2. Was it therefore not a marriage?

3. If Herodias was married to Herod, how could she be called the “wife” of Philip? [See Lesson 2: Definitions, I, B, 2, b)].

B. Unpopular preaching

1. How did John’s preaching affect Herodias? Read **2Tim 4:1-5; Tit 1:9**.

IV. MARK 10:2-12

What action is mentioned here that is not mentioned by Matthew?²⁷

V. LUKE 16:18

A. Insert definitions

Write in the parentheses the definitions of the terms immediately preceding the parentheses. Use the definitions ascertained in lesson 2.

“Everyone who divorces (_____) his wife and marries (_____) another commits adultery (_____); and he who marries (_____) one who is divorced (_____) from a husband commits adultery (_____).” NASB

B. Context

Read **vv14-31** and note especially **vv15-17, 29-31**. The Pharisees’ attitudes and practices in marriage, divorce, and remarriage stood in stark contrast to God’s law, **v18**. Based on the context, what did that reveal about them?

VI. ROMANS 7:1-3

A. “Bound”

1. From your English dictionary write the definitions of “bind” that connote:
- Obligation
 - Restraint

2. In **1Co 7:39** the *same writer* on the *same subject* uses the same word: “bound.” Based on the contrast in the verse, what does Paul mean by “bound”?
3. Is this a *legal* or *physical* bond? Put the phrase from the verse that indicates.

B. “Bound...TO”

1. Look up “to” in your English dictionary. How many definitions does it have? Write the one that connotes “in reference to.”
2. What does “to” mean in the following?²⁸
 - a. **Rom 6:2** - “died to sin”
 - b. **Rom 7:4** - “die to the law”

C. “Bound by law to her husband”

1. Can a LEGAL bond bind ONE person IN REFERENCE TO another? Give an illustration.
2. Read **Dt 23:21-22; Num 30:2**. A person who makes a “vow to the LORD” “binds his soul with a bond” (ASV) to do or not do something. He is bound by law to observe his oath in reference to whatever or whoever he made the vow.
3. Read **Jud 11:30-40**. Jephthah was “bound by law” (**Num 30:2**) in reference to “whatever comes of the doors of my house” - to “offer it up as a burnt offering.” This was a one-way legal bond in reference to another.
4. **Acts 23:12**. These Jews “bound themselves under an oath.” It was in reference to Paul and had a restraining effect: “they would neither eat nor drink...” Note also that Paul was not bound.
5. In marriage BOTH parties are “bound.” In the case of death or divorce for fornication *the law* sets one free. Where does *THE LAW* free the OTHER PARTY? If it does, give the scripture.

D. Observations

1. Can a person be married to one person while bound by law to another?

2. Can a marriage be dissolved, but there yet remain a “bond” existing?
3. Does adultery of itself free a person from the law of the first marriage?
4. What is a requisite for God approved remarriage?
5. What allowance for remarriage is made in this passage that is not mentioned in the gospels? With this and Mt 19, there are only two ways for one previously in an approved marriage to ever again be “free to marry”:
 - a. Death of mate
 - b. To have put away a mate for fornication.
6. To assume any party to marriage can be free on any other grounds or conditions is to do exactly that - *assume it*. THE BIBLE LEAVES THEM BOUND.

Vows of any kind ought to be taken seriously, **Num 30:2, Mt 5:33-37, Jam 5:12**. Rash vows are dangerous, and can be tragic, **Ecc 5:4,5, Pro 20:25, Jud 11:30-40, Mt 14:7-9**. God is witness to the vows we take when enter into the marriage covenant, and as to how we keep them, **Mal 2:14,15**. (It might be good to get yours out and read them.) Marriage is designed to be permanent, and cannot be broken without serious consequences. THINK before you enter! THINK before you leave!

VII. 1CORINTHIANS 7

A. “Not I, but the Lord...I say, not the Lord” vv10,12

Whatever “not I, but the Lord” means, THE OPPOSITE IS AFFIRMED in v12, “I say, not the Lord.”

If the emphasis (“not..but”) is INSPIRATION, then he emphasizes the lack of it in v12. This cannot be: vv17, 40b.

If the emphasis is DIVINE COMMAND (see vv6,25,40), then he emphasizes personal opinion in v12. If this be the case, the imperatives of vv12-13 could be disobeyed without sin, as in vv27b-28.²⁹

If he emphasizes that the LORD PERSONALLY SPOKE this, then he emphasizes the Lord’s silence on this matter of v12.

Either:

- The Lord said *nothing* of mixed marriages (they are not in the scope of whatever the Lord said concerning marriage, and *whatever he said cannot be applied to them* - Bales, *Not Under Bondage*), or,
 - The Lord said nothing *specifically* of mixed marriages (as the specific is included in the general, he did say something that *applies* to mixed marriages, but he did not *specifically* address them)
1. Some *assume* **v10** refers to Jesus' teaching relative to marriage and divorce in **Mt 19**. Whether it does or doesn't, did Jesus at that time *specifically* address the issue of Christians married to unbelievers as Paul does here?
 2. Though Jesus did not *specifically* address inter-racial marriages, does what he said *apply* to these marriages?
 3. Why might Paul address the question of mixed marriages specifically if they are included in the instructions to the married in **vv10-11**?
 - a. **7:1, 12a, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1**
 - b. Who in Corinth might cause these converted pagans to think mixed marriages were unlawful? Read **v14** and compare **2Co 3; 11:22; Dt 7:3,4**.
 4. Some contend that the instructions of **vv12-16** must be different than those of **vv10-11**, else why give the same instructions he had just given? But, must they be different? Compare **Lk 12:41**. Did the Lord say something DIFFERENT to Peter in **vv42ff** than he had said in **vv35-40**, or did he merely expand upon it because he was asked specifically whether it applied only to them or to the multitude as well?

B. "If she does leave" v11 ("if she depart" KJV)

1. Does this refer to divorce? How do you know?
2. Does this connote approval of divorce? Compare the following: **Gal 6:1**, "if a man is caught in any trespass"; **1Jn 2:1**, "if anyone sins."
3. Other examples showing that regulation ≠ approval: **Dt 17:14,15 (1Sam 8:5-8); Ex 21:10 (Mt 19:4-6)**. Parents

regulations concerning speeding: “When you get your first speeding ticket, you will lose your car (or, pay your insurance).”

4. What danger does divorce in itself pose? **Mt 5:27-32**

C. “Not under bondage” v15

1. The context of **vv12-15** deal with a woman “_____” an unbelieving mate as opposed to leaving them.
2. Is remarriage discussed at all in this section?
3. **Mt 5:32** and **19:9** say that whoever marries a woman who has been divorced, even though she is innocent of fornication, commits _____. How does this bear on the freedom (“not under bondage”) of the woman of **1Co 7:15**?
4. If you have availability to a lexicon of New Testament words (Vine’s, Thayer’s, Strong’s) find out whether the word “bondage” in **v15** is the same as in **vv27,39**, and **Rom 7:2**.

D. “Are you released” v27. (“Art thou loosed” KJV)

1. Does “released” or “loosed” equal “divorced”? To answer complete the following:
 - a. In **vv10-11** the divorced (“unmarried”) woman is told to “_____” whereas the “loosed” person is free to marry.
 - b. According to **Mt 5:32** and **19:9** a divorced person may _____ if they remarry.
 - c. In **Rom 7:1-3** a woman who had married another man was still “_____” to the first man.
2. “Released,” NASB, may connote that one was bound, but the original word does NOT.
 - a. “Bachelors as well as widowers are included in *lelusai...*” RWP. “are you free from a wife, i.e. not bound to a wife? **1Co 7:27** (a previous state of being ‘bound’ need not be assumed...).” AGB. **Mt 16:19**, “whatever you shall loose (*lusEs*, subj. aor. act. - *luO*) on earth shall be loosed (*lelumenon*, perf. pass. part. - *luO*).”
 - b. Who is this section, beginning in **v25**, dealing with?
 - c. Better as KJV, NKJV, ASV, “loosed.”

- d. NIV, 1984 - “Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried?...” *Interpretation* instead of *translation*. NOT the words used throughout N.T. for “married” and “divorced,” and the same writer in another passage used “bound” in such a way as to distinguish it from marriage...**Rom 7:1-3**. NIV, 2011, changed the translation to: “Are you pledged to a woman? Do not seek to be released. Are you free from such a commitment? Do not look for a wife.”
- e. Compare: “Are you a slave? Do not seek to be free. Are you free? Do not seek to be a slave.” While those once slaves may now become “free,” not all “free” were once slaves. Likewise, while those once bound through lawful marriage may now be “free,” not all “free” from the marriage bond were once married.
3. “Bound,” **v39**
- Based on the *contrast* in this verse, what does Paul mean by “bound”?
 - How long is the woman bound?
 - Compare **Rom 7:1-3**.
4. “I think that I also have the Spirit of God,” **v40**
- Define “understatement.”
Compare **Acts 5:36**, “claiming to be somebody”; **Lk 17:9**, KJV, “I trow not.”
5. Compare **v26; 4:9**.

²⁴ These last two points (2. b and c) also answer a similar argument, i.e. that the “except...” clause applies to the last phrase also, “Whoever marries a woman divorced for any other reason than fornication commits adultery.” (Thus nothing said about marrying a woman who is divorced because of her fornication - it is not said to be adultery.) Also, remember WHO IS BEING SPOKEN TO, the Pharisees. They wished to maintain “righteousness,” and if they could not marry the innocent woman without being guilty of adultery, marrying the fornicator would be out of the question!

²⁵ Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, has this under the general heading of Metonymy of the Subject, “when the subject is put for the adjunct: i.e., for some circumstance pertaining to (or joined to) the subject...” pp. 567,572. He also has it listed under “Idiom,” “Active verbs are sometimes used to denote the effect of the action expressed.” p. 822.

²⁶ Some may give **Mt 19:9**. It would necessitate the “except...” clause apply to the last phrase (“he who marries a divorced woman, except when she was divorced for her fornication...”). But the SENSE of the passage drawn from context and harmony militate against this. If the woman innocent of committing adultery cannot remarry without committing adultery, the woman guilty of committing adultery surely can not.

²⁷ “Against her,” **v11**. Grammatically, this may either refer to the *former* wife or *new* wife.

IF it refers to the former wife, could it be a reference to the same thing Jesus said in **Mt 5**, i.e. he exposes his former wife to adultery and in doing so violates the intent and design of the law, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” Two problems with this: 1) “Commits adultery” is present ind. - does *he* keep on committing adultery as long as *she* is married to another? 2) This makes *her* actually the one committing adultery whereas he is the one said to be committing it. Some fig. of speech?

Another possibility if it is against his former wife is that he commits adultery, it is “against her” in the sense that the action is an act of hostility, or injury, to her. His body belongs to her (**1Co 7:1-5**), and he has used what is hers without her consent to her harm and shame. Indeed, he violated the covenant he made to her, implies something wrong with her, and emotionally, mentally, and spiritually his relationship with the other woman has a negative impact upon her.

IF it refers to the new wife, the meaning is obvious: he commits adultery with her and thus involving her in this sin it is certainly “against her.” This accords well with the present tense—as long as he is married to her he is committing adultery against her. To argue that “against her” means the first wife and is because they are still “married in God’s eyes” is to *assume* it refers to the first wife, and then to *assume* he is still married to his first wife *when the text says he divorced her*.

²⁸ “*tO zOnti andri*” = dative case (AGNT)

“to the living husband”

A Manual of the Greek N.T., Dana & Mantey, pp. 84,85: “93. The observation of Blass, quoted above, that the dative ‘expresses the person more remotely concerned,’ [und. mine, srf] is, without doubt, in line with the root meaning of the case...It is primarily a case of personal relations, and it is with this in view that we must interpret it when allied to things. We adopt Robertson’s view of the root idea as *personal interest*. The idea of interest as applied to things becomes reference.... (4) *The Dative of Reference*. The force of interest in the dative may be diminished to the idea of mere reference [und. mine, srf]...This use of the dative occurs mostly with things, though it may also be used with persons.

“*apethanomen tE amartia (tE amartia = dative case)*

“We died with reference to sin.” **Rm. 6:2**

See also: **Rm. 8:12; 2 Cor. 5:13**.

Comp. **v4**: “dead to the law”

tO nomO = dative case

“put to death with reference to [und. mine, srf] the law” - *The New Testament, An Expanded Translation*, Kenneth S. Wuest, Teacher Emeritus of N.T. Greek, The Moody Bible Institute.

²⁹ “I say” in **v12** = “I give instructions” **v10**, i.e. order, command. *parangello* - “1. prop. to transmit a message along from one to another...to declare, announce. 2. to command, order, charge..[TH has all NT references under this defin., srf].” TH “...is used esp. of the order of a military commander which is passed along the line by his subordinates...” TH [under syn. notes for *keleuo*].

POSITIONS

Objective: Briefly examine in the light of Scripture several positions.

NOTE:

- This lesson does not propose to examine ALL the positions on marriage, divorce, and remarriage.
- Different positions may share some common views. Therefore, answers for one will sometimes apply to others.
- *Definitions are very important* in understanding the fallacies involved in some of these positions.

- I. NOT UNDER ANY DIVINE LAW
- II. NOT UNDER DIVINE MARRIAGE LAW OF MATTHEW
- III. BAPTISM CHANGES THE RELATIONSHIP
- IV. ALL “MARRIAGES” SCRIPTURAL
- V. FORNICATION, ADULTERY, DISSOLVES THE MARRIAGE BOND
- VI. ONE FREE, BOTH FREE
- VII. THE DIVINE PREROGATIVE
- VIII. SENSE OF THE PASSAGE
- IX. **MT 5:32** – PRINCIPLES
- X. **1CO 7:27-28** - DIVORCED CAN MARRY WITHOUT SIN
- XI. DESERTED BELIEVER NOT UNDER BONDAGE – **1CO 7:15**
- XII. PROCEDURE NOT SPECIFIED
- XIII. OTHER REASONS FOR LAWFUL DIVORCE - **EZRA 9,10**

I. NOT UNDER ANY DIVINE LAW

A. The Position

While in the world, men are not under law to Christ in any sense. They are only under civil law. After baptism, then men are under law to Christ. Therefore, a man in world is not accountable for specific sins such as adultery, fornication, which are held to be violations of Christ’ law. The only marriage law the man in the world under is civil law. *Warren-Fuqua Debate*, pp. 9-10.

B. Answer

1. **1Co 6:9-11** - What in the text shows these people were guilty of these specific sins, including adultery, while they were still in the world?
2. According to **Rom 5:13**, what must be for these people to have been guilty of these sins?
3. **Mt 19:3-8** - Jesus said it was “unlawful” for a man to divorce his wife (choose one of each of the following pairs [a or b] and then put a phrase from the text that supports your answer):
 - a. Because of Divine law
 - b. Because of civil law
 - a. From the beginning
 - b. Only after baptism
 - a. For all men
 - b. For Christians only
4. **Rom 1:18...32; 2:1; 3:9,23** - Why are men lost?

II. NOT UNDER DIVINE MARRIAGE LAW OF MATTHEW 19**A. The Position**

“This is the basic argument in my book, i.e., that Christ’s legislation in His personal ministry was for those in His covenant who were married to one another. Therefore, it is unscriptural for us to extend it to include mixed marriages (Paul did not), or to marriages of two people outside the covenant...One can summarize my book by saying: First, Christ in his personal ministry legislated on marriage, divorce and remarriage for two Christians. (1 Cor. 7:10-11) Second, Paul legislated on marriage, divorce and remarriage for the Christian married to a non-Christian. (1 Cor. 7:12-15). The two legislations differ but they do not contradict one another because they apply to two different categories.” *Not Under Bondage*, James D. Bales, pp. 8,10.³⁰

B. The Answer

1. **Mt 19:1-12**
 - a. Whose question was Jesus answering?

- b. What was the question (**v3**)?
- c. The law to which Jesus appealed governs whom?

2. **1Co 6:9-11**

- a. When had these people been adulterers?
- b. What is a requisite for them to have been guilty of this sin?
(**Rom 5:13; 1Jn 3:4**)

3. **1Co 7:10-15**

The argument is that the Lord dealt with Christians married to Christians (“not I, but the Lord) and said nothing about Christians married to unbelievers (“I say, not the Lord”).

- a. Can it be affirmed with certainty that Paul here referred to **Mt 19:1ff**? If so, how?
- b. Did the Lord specifically address the issue of interracial marriages in **Mt 19**? Would what he said apply to them?
- c. Why might Paul address the question of mixed marriages specifically if they are included in the instructions to the married in **vv10-11**? **7:1, 12a, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1**
- d. Who in Corinth might cause these converted pagans to think mixed marriages were unlawful? Read **v14** and compare **2Co 3, 11:22, Dt 7:3,4**.
- e. Some contend that the instructions of **vv12-16** must be different than those of **vv10-11**, else why give the same instructions he had just given? But, must they be different? Compare **Lk 12:41**. Did the Lord say something DIFFERENT to Peter in **vv42ff** than he had said in **vv35-40**, or did he merely expand upon it because he was asked specifically whether it applied to them?

The argument continues that in **v15** Paul gives the deserted believer the right to remarry for he says the believer is “not under bondage” and thus free to remarry.

- f. The context of **vv12-15** discusses a woman _____ an unbelieving mate as opposed to leaving them.
- g. Is remarriage discussed at all in this section?

- h. **Mt 5:32** and **19:9** say that whoever marries a woman who has been divorced, even though she is innocent of fornication, commits _____. How does this bear on the freedom (“not under bondage”) of the woman of **1Co 7:15**?
- i. If you have availability to a lexicon of New Testament words (Vine’s, Thayer’s, Strong’s) find out whether the word “bondage” in **v15** is the same as in **vv27, 39**, and **Rom 7:2**.

III. BAPTISM CHANGES THE RELATIONSHIP

A. The Position

Under law, but baptism changes the relationship so that it is now acceptable. One is forgiven for the past and is not expected to undo it.
Dabney-Frost Debate, pp. 15,16,41

B. The Answer

1. **Ac 2:38; Gal 3:27** - What is the purpose of baptism?
 - a. Write the scripture that teaches baptism changes a sinful act into a righteous act.
 - b. If the act that was adultery is no longer adultery after baptism, then what about homosexuality? drunkenness? lying?
2. **Rom 7:1-3** - How long is the woman bound by law to her husband?
 - a. **Mt 19:9** implies an exception. What is it?
 - b. Write the scripture that teaches baptism is another exception.
 - c. Define “adultery.”
3. Objections
 - a. God does not require us to undo the past.
What does God require? **Col 3:5-10**
 - b. Where is the authority to tell someone to divorce?
 - 1) **Ezra 10:11** - What did Ezra tell these people they must do about their wives?
 - 2) **Mt 3:8** - What did John the Baptist tell people they must do? See **Rev 9:20,21**.

- 3) **Mark 6:18** - What did John the Baptist tell Herod?
 - 4) **John 8:11** - What did Jesus tell the woman who had been caught in the act of adultery?
- c. Is the “gospel” really “good news” if it demands that people must divorce?
- 1) **Lk 3:3-14** - John the Baptist was preaching that men must repent and believe the gospel (compare **Mark 1:15**).
 - 2) What did this demand of the tax-gatherer who had been exacting more taxes than he should if he was using this money to provide for his family’s future?
 - 3) What did this demand of the soldier who had been taking money by force if he had been using this money to pay the debts his children had incurred and for which they were about to lose their home?
 - 4) **Mt 10:34-39** - What might obeying the gospel cause in a family?
 - 5) What *is* the “good news” of the gospel? **Mark 1:1...16:15,16; Rom 1:16**
- d. This would demand that people unscripturally married must divorce, even when they have children.
- 1) Is there *any case* where people must divorce though they have children? For example, suppose they have both been divorced for some other reason than fornication and remarried *after* baptism, and now have children by this relationship—must they divorce? If they have been divorced three times after baptism for other reason than fornication, and now have children in the fourth relationship...?
 - 2) If a homosexual couple has adopted children, must they sever their relationship to be right with God?
 - 3) See **Ezra 10**. Note that they had children, **vv3,44**, but agreed “to put away” the unlawful wives, **vv3,11,19**. This was “according to the law,” **v3**, and to “do His will,” **v11**.

IV. ALL “MARRIAGES” SCRIPTURAL

A. The Position

“...If the relationship is marriage, it is holy...” (p. 17). “...The application is this: the bed of the second marriage is not defiled because the husband cannot commit fornication with his own wife; the wife cannot commit fornication with her own husband...” (p. 18) *Lydic-Barnett Debate*

B. The Answer

1. **Mt 5:32** - When the divorced woman “_____” again, she _____.”
2. **Rom 7:1-3** - This woman, who is married to another man, is an “_____.” How long will she be one?
3. Define “marriage.”
4. Review definition of “adultery.” Definitions are important.
5. Scriptures used to justify
 - a. **1Co 7:27,28** - “loosed” equated with “divorced” and any such person who “marries” “has not sinned.”
 - 1) Is this section of chapter seven discussing divorced persons? If not, who?
 - 2) Does the word Paul used here (“released” NASB; “loosed” KJV) mean that one was previously bound? (See notes on previous lesson on **1Co 7**.)
 - 3) To make this scripture say any divorced person can remarry without sin is to contradict other scriptures (below). Write beside each a note about what that verse says that contradicts the idea that any divorced person can remarry.
 - a) **Verses 10-11** of this chapter
 - b) **Mt 5:32; 19:9**
 - c) **Rom 7:1-3**
 - b. **Heb 13:4**
 - 1) Does this verse say “all marriages are honorable”? Are they? (Give scripture for answer.)

2) “No verb in the Greek. The copula can be supplied either *estin* (is) or *estO* (let be, imperative).” RWP

- If as KJV, marriage is honorable in every way, including the marriage bed, “but” fornicators ...
- If as NASB, an imperative to hold marriage in honor in every way including the marriage bed, “for” fornicators ... ³¹

V. FORNICATION, ADULTERY, DISSOLVES THE MARRIAGE BOND

A. The Position

“...adultery is committed *the first time* one cohabits with any other than the person to whom he was first married...That first marriage has been destroyed by the sin of fornication...Since the first marriage has ceased to exist, how is it possible to adulterate that which does not exist? Though adultery was committed when they first joined themselves together in intercourse because they were still the husband or wife of someone else, *subsequent sexual intercourse between them is not adultery*. They are no longer the husband or wife of someone else.” [italics mine, srf] *Frost-Moyer Exchange*, p. 11

B. The Answer

1. Rom 7:1-3

- a. Is this woman an “adulteress” because the first marriage still exists?
 - b. WHY is this woman an adulteress?
 - c. How long will she be an adulteress?
 - d. Suppose that while her first husband is still living, and after she has divorced him and married the second man, she is sorry, pledges not to divorce and remarry again, and asks God to forgive her, but continues to live with the second man. Is she now an adulteress? Why?
2. Where is the scripture that defines adultery as that which defiles the first marriage?
 3. Thayer defines “to commit adultery” as “to have unlawful intercourse with ANOTHER’S WIFE” (caps mine, srf). The

argument is, then, that a man cannot commit adultery with his OWN WIFE. Can he, and if so, give a scripture?

How might Thayer scripturally use the term “wife” other than the woman to whom one is presently married? Give a scripture.

4. Give a Biblical definition of “adultery.”

5. Mt 19:9; Lk 16:18

a. If fornication dissolves the marriage so that it no longer exists, once fornication takes place, can the innocent party now divorce their mate? Explain.

b. How many people are guilty of adultery according to **Luke 16:18**?

If adultery dissolves the marriage of the original parties so that both are free to marry, how many of these would be guilty of adultery?

VI. ONE FREE, BOTH FREE

A. The Position

When the divorce is on the grounds of fornication the innocent may remarry. The reason that he may remarry is that no marriage bond exists. If that is so, the guilty cannot be bound by that which does not exist, therefore, if the innocent is free, the guilty must be. Stated in other words, they are bound to each other. When that bond is loosed for the innocent (as implied in Mt 19:9), the guilty is of necessity loosed also, and thus free to marry, 1Co 7:27-28. *Except For Fornication*, Lewis Hale, pp. 10,19,22,24,28,35; George Southard, printed material, pp. 4-8.

B. The Answer

1. Rom 7:1-3

- a. Based on the contrast of **1Co 7:39**, what does Paul mean by “bound”?
- b. Is this a physical or legal bond? Put the phrase from the verse that supports your answer.
- c. What does “to” in “die to the Law,” **v4**, mean?

- d. With this and **Mt 19**, there are only two ways to be “free to marry” by God’s law (for one previously married). What are they?

To assume any party to marriage can be free on any other grounds or conditions is to do exactly that - assume it. THE BIBLE LEAVES THEM BOUND.

2. Give a secular and a Biblical example showing a person can be bound by law in reference to another without the other person being bound. (See lesson on passages, **Rom 7:1-3**.)
 - a. Secular example
 - b. Biblical example
3. It is argued that **Mt 5:32** and **19:9** do not discuss remarriage in cases where the divorce took place because of fornication (making the “except..” clause apply to both parts of the verse). But,
 - a. Grammatically, while the “except...” clause may apply to both parts of the verse, the weight of scholarly testimony makes it at best only possible, but not probable.³² It is a weak foundation upon which to build such a critical doctrine. Remember, it is not repeated in the text.
 - b. Grammatically, “for fornication” may refer to the person who is doing the divorcing, i.e. for his own fornication. However the SENSE of the passage derived from CONTEXT AND HARMONY says it refers to whom?

Likewise, the SENSE of the passage derived from CONTEXT and HARMONY says that if the innocent person cannot remarry without committing adultery, neither can the fornicator.
 - c. Also, remember WHO IS BEING SPOKEN TO, the Pharisees. They wished to maintain “righteousness,” and if they could not marry the innocent woman without being guilty of adultery, marrying the fornicator would be out of the question.

VII. THE DIVINE PREROGATIVE

A. The Position

The “whosoever” (“everyone” NASB) of Mt 5:32a grants a divine prerogative to put away your mate if fornication has been committed

against you. If your mate puts you away for some other reason, it is by human authority and not recognized by God. Therefore you are still married in God's eyes. Later, then, if your mate commits fornication, you may now exercise your divine prerogative and put your mate away. Marshall Patton, *Searching the Scriptures*, Feb., 1987.

B. The Answer

1. Mt 5 and 19

- a. Is the "whosoever" of Mt 5:32a a married or divorced person?
- b. If a person has been divorced, *for whatever reason*, can they subsequently divorce their mate? If so, explain.
- c. Is there any divine prerogative given in Mt 5 or 19 to a person who has ALREADY BEEN PUT AWAY to put away their mate?

2. Confusion of terms

This position argues that a divorce by human authority does not dissolve the marriage in heaven, therefore the person put away by human authority may later put away their mate for fornication.

- a. Does "married" = "bound"? Explain and give evidence for your answer.
- b. According to **1Co 7:10,11**, the person who is divorced is "_____."
- c. Can an unmarried person have a "husband"? Explain.
- d. Is a person who has been divorced still "married" in the eyes of God?

3. The "put away" woman of **Mt 5:32b**

- a. It is argued "that the innocent put away person ... who has fornication committed against her simply is not in verse 32b." Whether that is so or not, if she is "put away" can she subsequently put away her mate for fornication? Explain.
- b. It is argued that "human action by human authority and in violation of the law of God" cannot "negate that which is divinely authorized." By "that which is divinely authorized" is

meant the “divine prerogative” for one who “*has already been put away* by human authority” to “put away one’s guilty mate.” (italics mine, srf)

- c. Does **Mt 5:32** or **Mt 19:9** give divine authorization for a *put away* person to “put away” their mate for fornication?

If not, then “that which is divinely authorized” according to this position is *assumed* and *non-existent*.

VIII. SENSE OF THE PASSAGE

A. The Position

Although the text of Mt 19:9 only allows the person who divorced their mate for fornication to remarry without sin, the reason for this allowance is the protection of the innocent, so the SENSE of the passage would justify the innocent person divorced by a fornicator to remarry.

(Suggested in class)

B. The Answer

1. The SENSE of a passage must be gathered from what is said in the text.³³
 - a. What is the topic of discussion in **Mt 5:27-32**?
 - b. What is the topic of discussion in **Mt 19:3-9**?
 - c. Is the protection of the innocent the topic of discussion in either text?
2. Does the text say *why* this one allowance for divorce and remarriage was made?
3. If the protection of the innocent in cases where fornication is involved decides what is lawful, would the following situations justify the innocent in divorcing their mate and remarrying?
 - a. If fornication was planned at the time the divorce took place, but not actually committed, could the innocent party later remarry when they found out about the planned fornication?
 - b. If the fornication was unknown by the innocent party at the time of the divorce, could the innocent party then remarry without sin?

4. If the SENSE of Jesus' legislation was to protect the innocent, would that justify the innocent divorcing and remarrying in the following situations?
 - a. Wife beating?
 - b. Continual drunkenness and inability to hold a job and support the family?
 - c. Desertion?
 - d. Moral perversion in language, magazines, TV, movies?

We must beware of reasoning from consequences. (See lesson on "Attitudes.")

IX. Mt 5:32 – PRINCIPLES

A. The Position

Since Jesus is "specifically addressing principles," cannot "take what he says literally" and "state it as law."³⁴

B. The Answer

1. Because Jesus is dealing with principles relating to the righteousness of citizens of the kingdom of heaven, does NOT mean nothing he says should be taken "literally" as prohibitive "law."

"Principle" - "1. an accepted or professed **rule of action or conduct**: 'a person of good moral principles.' 2. a fundamental, primary, or general **law** or truth from which others are derived ..." [bold mine] *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Random House, Inc. "1 a **fundamental** truth, **law**, doctrine, or motivating force, upon which others are based: moral *principles* 4. a. a **rule of conduct**, esp. of right conduct" [bold mine] *yourdictionary.com*. *Webster's New World College Dictionary* Copyright © 2010 by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio.

"Love your neighbor" can be called a "principle"—"a fundamental, primary, or general law ... from which others are derived." Jesus said it is the second greatest "commandment in the Law" and that on this one and the first one "depend the whole Law and the Prophets." **Mt 22:34-40**

"I say to you" is *authoritative* and presented "fundamental law" or "rule of conduct."

What he “said” was that *literal* divorce, except for *literal* fornication, results in *literal* adultery!

Compare:

v22 – *literally* call “fool” out of prideful anger – SIN?

v28 – *literally* “look...to lust” – SIN?

v44 – *literally* “love...pray”??

2. Figurative language

Figurative language is found on every page of the Bible. To make everything in a context figurative because figurative language is used would mean nothing in the Bible is literal! Figurative and literal language are intertwined, and careful and honest exegesis must be employed to correctly interpret.

In the following, label each word or phrase “literal” or “figurative”:

a. Jn 11:11

- 1) “Our friend”
- 2) “Lazarus”
- 3) “has fallen asleep”
- 4) “I go”
- 5) “awaken him out of sleep”

b. Mt 16:6

- 1) “Jesus”
- 2) “said to them”
- 3) “beware”
- 4) “leaven”
- 5) “Pharisees and Sadducees”

c. When figurative language is used, it is a mistake to

- 1) ASSUME ALL is figurative.
- 2) ARBITRARILY interpret as figurative without evidence. The rule is that it should be taken literally unless there is reason in text (context or harmony) to interpret otherwise.

FACT: Jesus said *literal* divorce, except for *literal* fornication, results in *literal* adultery!

X. 1Co 7:27-28 - DIVORCED CAN MARRY WITHOUT SIN

A. The Position

1Co 7:27-28 grants the divorced person the right to remarry.³⁵

B. The Answer

1. “Loosed” does NOT equal “divorced”

To make it mean any divorced person can remarry without sin is to contradict:

- a. **Vv10-11** - What does Paul tell the divorced woman she must do?
 - b. **Mt 5:32; 19:9** – Some divorced people will be guilty of what when they remarry?
 - c. **Rom 7:1-3** – This woman is married to “another” man—one different from her first husband. What is it that makes her an adulteress?
2. “Released,” NASB, may connote that one was bound, but the original word does NOT.³⁶ Better as KJV, NKJV, ASV - “loosed”
 3. The context, beginning in **v25f**, is concerning (choose answer from the text)
 - a. divorced
 - b. virgins
 4. NIV (1984 edition) - “Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried?...” This is *interpretation* instead of *translation*. The word “bound” in **v27** (KJV, NKJV, NASB, ASV, NRSV) is NOT the words used throughout N.T. for “married,” and the same writer in another passage used “bound” in such a way as to distinguish it from marriage...**Rom 7:1-3**. (Even in **v28** the word for marry, *gameO*, is different from the word for “bound” in **v27**, *deO*.)³⁷

XI. DESERTED BELIEVER NOT UNDER BONDAGE – 1Co 7:15

A. The Position

1Co 7:15 teaches that the believer deserted by the unbeliever is “not under bondage” and therefore free to marry.

B. The Answer

This was dealt with in the “Passages” lesson when studying **1Co 7**. The following is a brief review of some of the points.

1. **Mt 5:32** and **19:9** show that one who has been put away by their mate is not free to remarry without committing adultery.
2. The argument that **Mt 5** and **19** do not apply is based on the false assumption that they do not apply to marriages with unbelievers. What the Lord said applies to all lawful marriages —between believers, unbelievers, inter-racial marriages.
3. The “bondage” of the context of **vv12-15** is to “live with” the unbeliever. If the unbeliever leaves, they are “not under bondage” to “live with” them. It does not refer to the legal bond of **Rom 7:1-3**.
4. This position results in making those who marry Christians having no rights of remarriage in case of desertion, but those who marry non-Christians do have such right!

XII. PROCEDURE NOT SPECIFIED

A. The Position

The “procedure” of divorce is not specified, i.e. how to initiate the divorce. As long as the marriage is “**sundered for the cause of fornication,**” the innocent party has the right to remarry.

Note: if by “procedure” not specified, one means it is not specified that one must divorce through the civil courts, this is true. But, if what is meant is that *who initiates* the divorce is not specified, this is NOT true.

B. The Answer

1. NOT what *the text* says.
 - a. **Mt 19:9** - Does the *scripture* read, “whenever a marriage is sundered...”? If not, what does *the text* say?
 - b. The *text must be changed*

Simply plugging in “*whenever a marriage is sundered*” for “*whoever divorces his wife*” results in: “And I say to you, **when a marriage is sundered**, except for immorality, **and marries** [??]”

another woman commits adultery.” This doesn’t make sense. So, *additional changes to the text* must be made ...

The position says: “And I say unto you, **When a marriage is sundered**, except for fornication, if **the fornicator** shall marry another, he commits adultery: and he who marries her when she is put away, **unless the marriage was sundered for fornication**, commits adultery.”

The position is **not** this: “**Whoever** sunders a marriage, except for fornication...” for *the position says it makes no difference who sunders the marriage*. It is simply the fact that the marriage was sundered and “fornication must proceed biblical putting away.” As long as fornication has taken place before the marriage was sundered, even though it is the person who committed the fornication that is sundering the marriage, the innocent can remarry. *But the text must be changed* in order for it to say what this position maintains.

Let’s try again: “**When a marriage is sundered**, except for fornication, **those who** marry another commit adultery.”

But, this won’t work, for it allows even the guilty to remarry without committing adultery—something this position does not allow! Thus the need to *add to the text*, “if the fornicator shall marry.”

Is there any evidence *in the context or by the law of harmony* to justify the conclusion that, “the text says ... but means ...”?

c. Compare **Mk 16:16**:

“He who has *believed and has been baptized shall be saved.*”

“He who has *believed shall be saved and should be baptized.*”

“He who has *been baptized is saved and should later believe.*”

The first is what Jesus said; the second is Baptist doctrine; the third is Roman Catholicism. **Can we change the text?**

d. Is who sunders the marriage important?

“Whosoever sunders a marriage [the “innocent” party or the “guilty” party?], except for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery: and he that marries her when she is put away commits adultery. (**Mt 19:9**). *Unless one contends the “guilty” party can sunder the marriage for their own fornication and*

remarry without adultery, it must be recognized that *it does make a difference who is in view in the first part of the verse!* Thus the need to *change the text* by removing the “who” and replacing it with a “when.”

2. Inconsistent (“except” clause)

There is no “except” clause in the last part of the verse. However, for this position to work, one is *assumed*: “and he who marries a divorced woman [except if she was *divorced by a fornicator due to his (her husband’s) own fornication*] commits adultery.” If this *assumed* clause is inserted, then after discovering his fornication she could continue to try and make the marriage work without the liability that he might later divorce her and leave her in an un-marriageable state. *But, if this meaning is given “except for fornication” in the last part of the verse, it must be given the SAME meaning in the first part of the verse.*

“Whoever divorces his wife, *except for [his own] fornication*, and marries another commits adultery”—so that if he divorces his wife for his OWN fornication he can marry again *without committing adultery...!* This position does *not* support this, so it must be *inconsistent* in what the except clause is in the *first* part of the verse and what the *assumed* except clause is in the *latter* part of the verse.

3. Mt 5:32 - why specifically mention only the woman?

- a. Try **substituting “whenever a marriage is sundered”** in **Mt 5:32** and see if it works. “**a marriage sundered**, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery.” So, if a “marriage is sundered” for any other reason than fornication, that makes her commit adultery when she has sex with another man. This is true. But, as **Mt 19:9** shows, it is *also true of the man* in these cases where divorce is not for fornication.

So, this raises the question: *why did Jesus specifically mention only the woman in Mt 5?* The context provides an answer IF the verse is left as translated in our Bibles, “**everyone who divorces his wife...**” The context of the sermon shows he is contrasting the claimed “righteousness” of the scribes and Pharisees with the righteousness necessary to be a citizen of the kingdom of heaven (**5:17-20**). They did teach it was wrong to commit the act of adultery, **v27**, but Jesus taught that to be a citizen of the kingdom of heaven one must also deny *lust*, **vv28-30**, and *divorce*, **vv31-32**, for these *lead to adultery* (which is the context of this section,

vv27,28.32). So, the self-righteous scribe or Pharisee could not argue they were free of guilt if all they did was divorce their wives. *They would be held responsible for “causing” adultery when their divorced wife satisfied the natural passions with another man.*

- b. Try translating *apoluO* “releases”: “whoever releases his wife, except for fornication...” This allows the situation where she desires, intends, or seeks to be severed from the relationship. Now, if he “releases” her because she desired and sought it, and there is no fornication involved, is he still guilty of “causing her to commit adultery”?! Would this not be true in the case of **1Co 7:15**, i.e. you “release” (*apoluO*) them, or “let them leave” (*chOrizO*), you “make them commit adultery”?!

4. **1Co 7:10-11,15** - Who initiates the divorce makes a difference

- a. “If the unbelieving one leaves (*chOrizO*), let him leave (*chOrizO*)...” **v15**. It is evident here that it is the *unbeliever* that is initiating the action.
- b. “the wife should not leave her husband...the husband should not divorce his wife” **vv10,11**. It is clear here that it is the *believer* that would be initiating the action.
- c. If to “leave”/“divorce”/“send away” in **1Co 7:10-11,15** and thus sunder the marriage simply refers to action that *results in an “alienated state,” regardless of who “left”* (whether *active* or *passive* in the event) then it places the other party in disobedience to **vv10-13** *though they cannot control it* (“should not leave... should not divorce...must not divorce...must not send away”). It does make a difference who “leaves,” “divorces,” or “puts away”!

5. Not HOW, but WHO

This position stresses that the issue is not “procedure” but “cause.” The “who” in “Whoever puts away ...” is completely *removed* from the equation. Rather it is, “WHENever a marriage is sundered...” But, the issue is NOT *procedure*, but WHO “put away.” *How* (procedure) they put away is not the issue. In the fifties and sixties one issue between the “liberals” and “conservatives” was whether the orphan home was a “how” the church did it’s work or a “who”—another organization. Some say, “Who took action is not the point, but that it is a completed fact.” Is the “who took action” a point? The text says, “WHOever divorces...and marries...” If the *guilty* party is the

“whoever” that divorces *for his own fornication* (resulting in a “completed fact”), *is he free to marry?* Does the “who” in “whoever divorces” make a difference?

6. All “put away” parties forbidden to marry?

A question is raised, “Are all ‘put away’ parties forbidden to marry?” It is shown, correctly so, that the answer is “no” (those put away who remarry their lawful mate; those put away who marry after the death of their mate; those put away from unscriptural marriages—these “put away” persons can lawfully marry). However, because *some* put away parties can remarry, does not mean *all* put away persons can remarry. The question is, *what about the put away woman of Mt 5 and 19?* Can *she* remarry? According to these two scriptures, if the put away woman remarries, she *commits adultery*.

7. Active/passive

This is a point based on Greek to attempt to defend the position. Because it is based on Greek and so demanding to follow, it is in an endnote³⁸ for those who wish to study it. We will not do so in class.

8. Sense of the passage

1. Some might argue that if **Mt 5** and **Mt 19** allow the innocent party to remarry when the *innocent* party put away a mate for fornication, the “sense of the passage” would allow the innocent party to remarry when the *guilty* party put away the innocent mate.
2. However, as noted above ...
 1. That is *not what the text says* and it *would have to be changed* to make it allow this.
 2. Who *initiates* the divorce is important according to **1Co 7**.
3. When there are two allowable options *in the text*, the sense can help us decide which is correct (see above **Mt 5**,H,2; **Mt 19**,E,2, teacher’s notes; footnote #27; Position VI, B,3,b). The sense of the passage must be derived from *context and harmony*, *not* from our desires and emotions (see Position VII).
4. In cases of divorce where there is *no fornication* involved, can the “innocent” party—the one who does not want a divorce and did nothing to give reasons for wanting it—remarry without sin? Even those who hold this position would say, “no.”

9. 1Co 7:10-16

1. Since **1Co 7:10-16** focuses on one who *leaves* or *sends away* their mate, and prohibits one who *leaves* from remarrying but says nothing about the one left without their consent being able to remarry, could one argue that the “sense” of the passage gives the one who was left the freedom to remarry? Is it not “better to marry than to burn,” **v9b**
2. There is *nothing* in the text giving *anyone* the right to marry someone else *other than their original mate*. The “sense” of marrying someone else must be derived totally outside of the text.
3. Moreover,, **Rom 7:1-3** says one is “bound by law” “as long as her husband lives” — if the put away (or, left behind) party is free to marry, *what set them free?*

10. Encourage divorce?

1. Upon learning a mate is guilty of fornication, if a person cannot try to work things out without the liability that they may be put away by the guilty mate and leave them in an unmarriageable state, this seems to encourage divorce rather than keeping the marriage in tact. This seems counter to God’s hatred of divorce throughout the Bible.
2. None of the Scriptures against divorce are dealing with a marriage where sexual immorality of one mate is involved. The fact is, God *does* want divorce in clearly *unlawful* marriages, **Ezra 10; Mk 6:17,18**. Where sexual immorality has occurred, it is clear God *allows* divorce, **Mt 5:32; 19:9**. In those cases, it is *not* against His will.

XIII. OTHER REASONS FOR LAWFUL DIVORCE - EZRA 9,10

A. The Position

“One could make the argument that according to Matt. 19, the only reason for a lawful divorce is due to fornication of the offending mate. However, there are other reasons why one may have a lawful divorce. Ezra 9 and 10 illustrate this. In this example, the people were told to divorce because they violated God’s will in marrying foreign women. Hence, when other [of] God’s Laws are violated, then divorce other than for fornication may be lawful. For example, God intended for man not to be alone. If he or she is divorced, then God intends for them to remarry.

Another example, according to 1 Cor. 7, if the unmarried are unable to remain pure then they are told to marry. Another example, we are to withdraw from people who can lead us astray to violate God's will. If are [our] mate is doing this, then we should divorce them."³⁹

B. The Answer

Ezra 9 and 10 illustrate lawful divorce *when the marriage was unlawful*. Yes, when other of God's laws are violated, then divorce other than for fornication may be lawful. For example, a person may have married a person who still bound to a previous mate, or a man married a man. In these cases it *is* lawful to divorce.

But, the examples given are *not* unlawful states, and this is where the argument fails.

1. It is not *unlawful* to be alone. In fact, that may be the recommended course, **Mt 19:10-12**.
2. It is not *unlawful* to be unmarried and struggle against evil passion. ALL people struggle with evil passion! If "unable to remain pure" justifies violating God's law about marriage, throw out **Mt 5,19!** In fact, what wouldn't be justified? If I am "unable to control my temper" is it OK to murder? If an single young man is "unable to remain pure" is it OK to commit fornication? Why not?—because of a law against fornication? *But there is also a law against some remarriages!* That any person will give up their moral integrity if the pressure is great enough is *Satan's* argument, **Job 1:10-11; 2:4-5**.
3. It is not *unlawful* to be married to an unbeliever (whether never having obeyed the gospel or an apostate), **1Co 7:12-13; 1Pt 3:1-2**. Of course, if one is "unable to remain pure" justifies satisfying the passion, we can ignore these restrictions, or better yet, just kill the rascal!

³⁰ "**Matthew 19:3-9** is a part of the covenant that the Christian lives under, *not* the alien. One cannot be judged by a law that he is not subject to. Jesus states three laws regarding divorce: (1) No divorce (Gen. 2:24); (2) Moses' divorce law (Deut. 24:1); and (3) His divorce law for two disciples in covenant with Him. The alien is not dealt with." Homer Hailey, *The Divorced and Remarried Who Would Come to God* (Nevada Pub., Las Vegas, Nevada, 1991), p. 59.

³¹ Textus Receptus has *de*, ""but""; LTrA has *gar*, ""for""

³² See David Bonner's work, *A Study of Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage*, pp. 2,3.

³³ Considering the *sense* of the passage in interpretation is legitimate. But, that sense must be derived *from context and harmony*. See "Questions" on **Mt 5:31,32** in the section on "Passages."

³⁴ “This is taking directly from the sermon on the mount where Jesus is specifically address principles. If we are to take what he says literally, then 1) according to the context we should be cutting off body parts that cause us to sin, 2) we should not ever give our word, 3) we are guilty of murder if we hate, 4) we are guilty of adultery for even thinking about it. Now it is quite obvious that all 4 of these are absurdities, but what they do get at is the principle of righteous living. Jesus in all the cases of the Sermon on the Mount is specifically address Jewish abuses of the Old Law. The Jews had taken the Law and abused it. In every case of this sermon Jesus starts with a “you have heard” and finishes with an extreme conclusion that is in the opposite direction of what the Jews went in. It is hyperbole, extreme exaggeration to prove a point. Why do you choose to examine vs. 32 and state it as law, when you would never advocate using vs. 30 as law?” (email from an advocate of this position)

³⁵ “The Bible does not specifically address the person who is being divorced, other than to give them the liberty to remarry as can be seen in 1 Cor. 7:27-28.” (email from advocate of this position)

³⁶ “Bachelors as well as widowers are included in *lelusai*...” RWP. “*are you free from a wife*, i.e. not bound to a wife? 1Co 7:27 (a previous state of being ‘bound’ need not be assumed...)” A&G. Mt 16:19, “whatever you shall loose (*lusEs*, subj. aor. act. - *luO*) on earth shall be loosed (*lelumenon*, perf. pass. part. - *luO*).”

³⁷ “loosed”/“released” - 1st occurrence in **v27** = *luisis* from *luO*. 2nd occurrence = *lelusai* from *luO*. This is the only occurrence of *luisis* in the NT; *lelusai* occurs 28 times and never used of divorce. *luO* occurs 43 times in the N.T. and is never used of divorce. The word *apoluO* (loose from) is used of divorce in **Mt 5:31,32; 19:3f**; etc. NIV 2011 edition changed the translation to: “Are you pledged to a woman? Do not seek to be released.”

³⁸ A point is made that, while Jesus uses the *active*, Paul used the *passive* when talking about divorcing one’s mate? (*chOrizO*—“leave” or “depart”—is passive in **1Co 7:10,11**. *apoluO*—“divorces” or “shall put away”— is active in **Mt 19:9; Mk 10:11,12; Lk 16:18**; *chOrizO* is active in **Mt 19:6**). It is said that this shows “alienated state” is the point and not “who took action.”

In **1Co 7:10,11**, Paul uses *chOrizO* in the passive voice *grammatically*, but if the *meaning* is that the woman is *receiving* the action (passive), why does Paul write a command to *her*—she cannot control what her husband does to her (i.e.. whether he leaves her)! Robertson in his *Word Pictures* says, “This passive infinitive is almost **reflexive in force** according to a **constant tendency in the *Koiné*** [bold mine, srf] (Robertson, Grammar, p. 817).” “Reflexive in force” points back to her—compare Green’s Literal, “not to be separated from.” It evidently refers to something *she* can control. In Moulton’s *Analytical Greek Lexicon*, under *chOrizO*, he says “*to sunder, sever, disunite*, Mt 19:6 [active voice, srf] ... *to dissociate one’s self, to part*, 1 Co. 7:10,11,15; *to withdraw, depart*, Ac. 1:4 [passive, srf]; 18:1 [aorist passive, just as in 1Co 7:10,11, srf], 2 [passive, srf]; Phile. 15 [aorist, passive, indicative, exactly like 1Co 7:11; 7:10 is aorist, passive, infinitive - srf]...” Thayer says on *chOrizO*, “Mid. and 1 aor. pass. with a reflex. signif. [like Robertson, srf] *to separate one’s self from, to depart*; a. *to leave a husband or wife*: of divorce, 1Co 7:11,15 ...ib. 10” *Green’s Literal Translation* captures the grammatical passive, but still the burden of action is hers: “But I command the ones being married (not I, but the Lord), a woman not to be separated from her husband;” NKJV says, “is not to depart”; KJV says, “Let not the wife depart”; ASV says, “I give charge ... that the wife depart not”; NASB says, “should not leave”; NRSV, NIV say, “should not separate from.” None of these lexicographers or translations support a passive *sense*, as if she is but the *recipient* of the action. So, can any argument be made on Paul using the passive voice to the effect that who does the action is not important? It still seems like there is a “Who” that “took action” (or, in 1Co 7, was *not* supposed to take action). Again, *how* she took that action (“procedure”) is not the issue, but Paul forbids her (the “Who”) to do so. This reference to the active/passive uses do not prove that all in view is an “alienated state” regardless of who took the action.

³⁹ A question sent to me via email