

# Seek The Old Paths

*"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths...and walk therein" (Jeremiah 6:16)*

Vol. 1 No. 4

January 1990

## Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage

*Garland M. Robinson*

Other than the day you become a Christian, the most important day of your life is the day you get married. It is most important because whom you marry is for life. There is no trial period wherein if things do not work out you get a divorce and try again. God's law regarding marriage is quite specific. There's no misunderstanding it. It applies equally to all.

### **GOD'S LAW OF MARRIAGE**

God's law of marriage was revealed in the garden of Eden. "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:22-24). This is the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 19:4-6. "...Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For

this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

By inspiration, Paul said marriage was for life. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband *so long as he liveth*; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband" (Rom. 7:2). It is stated in I Corinthians 7:2 that every man is to have his own wife and every wife is to have her own husband. This is so unlike the way people act today that desire someone else's wife or husband!

God's LAW regarding marriage is **ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN, FOR LIFE!** Marriage is a very serious matter. The unmarried better make sure what they are doing before they transgress God's law.

### **GOD'S LAW OF DIVORCE**

What about divorce? God has not

left us without law. His word is just as plain on this subject as it is on marriage in general. Luke 16:18 sets forth the principle. "*Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.*"

There's no misunderstanding what Jesus said. The problem comes when people are not willing to believe and follow it! It's sad indeed when people begin to make excuse and search to find some loop-hole through which they may escape the consequences of breaking God's decree. This statement of Jesus is plain and simple. **Whoever divorces their mate and marries again commits adultery!**

Romans 7:3 states, "So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress...." Now, how serious is God's law? Is it to be taken lightly? Can one simply ignore it? no! No!! NO!!!

I've sought to emphasize Luke 16:18 and Romans 7:3 because it is God's principle concerning divorce. Remember how Jesus said, "what therefore God hath joined together, *let not man put asunder.*" Where does man get the right to seek a divorce or grant a divorce when God's law will not allow it?

### ONE EXCEPTION

The Lord has given one cause, and **ONE CAUSE ONLY**, wherein one may divorce their mate and marry again and not be guilty of adultery. The one and only exception to Luke 16:18 and Romans 7:3 is found in Matthew 5:32

& 19:9. Matthew 5:32 reads, "but I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, *saving for the cause of fornication*, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

This verse is as plain and simple as Luke 16:18. One who divorces their mate for ANY reason other than their mate's fornication (sexual intercourse with someone other than their spouse), and marries someone else, commits adultery, and continues to live in adultery as long as they live with their new partner.

---

## **God's LAW regarding marriage is ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN, FOR LIFE!**

---

It's amazing that many have added other exceptions to the one the Lord gave. Some say you are free to remarry if your mate deserts you. Some say you can remarry if they are unable to fulfill your needs. While others say God's law does not apply to non-Christians.

Either "except" means "except" or it doesn't. We don't have any problem believing it in John 3:5 where Jesus told Nicodemus "*except* a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." We understand, and rightly so, there is one exception to entrance into the Lord's kingdom. One is "born of water and of the Spirit" or he does not become a

child of God. So then why try to make the Lord's exception in Matthew 19:9 mean only one of many exceptions? The only conceivable reason is that in John 3:5 one believes what the Lord said and in Matthew 19:9 he does not.

### ADULTERY IS CONTINUOUS

Those who divorce their mate for a reason other than their mate's fornication and marry again *continue* to live in the state of adultery. Though some say you cannot "live in adultery," the Bible says you can. Matthew 19:9 reads, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, *committeth* adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." The word *committeth* in this verse is present tense which means "continuous action." As long as one continues married to their new partner, they continue to commit adultery. It is a continuous state - relationship.

The tense of "continuous action" is recognized in many other passages. "But *seek* ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness..." (Matt. 6:33). "Seek" means to "keep on seeking." "Blessed is the man that *endureth* temptation..." (James 1:12). "Endureth" means to "keep on enduring."

Colossians 3:5-7 gives further evidence of this. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; *fornication*, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time,

when *ye lived in them.*" Some of those at Colossae had "lived" in the continual state of fornication before they became Christians! It is therefore possible, regardless of what some say!!

### ADULTERERS MUST REPENT

Those guilty of adultery must repent just like thieves, liars, those guilty of homosexuality, or anyone else. No such persons can enter the kingdom of heaven (Gal. 5:19-21). When one repents, he stops the action and changes his relationship to it. He no longer continues in the state of stealing, lying, homosexuality, adultery.

To say that one can repent of the act of adultery and continue in the marriage is a false statement. Example: when one joins a denominational church, he must not only repent of it but must also get out of his *relationship* with this unscriptural body. When one enters an unscriptural marriage, he must not only repent of the sin of adultery but must get out of the *adulterous relationship* to his unlawful partner. Continuing the relationship is just as wrong as the sin of entering the relationship. It is just as true with an unscriptural marriage as it is with an unscriptural church.

### CONCLUSION

To read the passages relating to marriage, divorce and remarriage drives home the thought of just how serious God's law is regarding marriage. Make sure you know what God's will is and choose your life-long companion carefully. With only one exception for divorce, there's no second chance.

1801 Cruise St., Corinth, MS 38834

# FOES OF THE FAMILY

*Winfred Clark*

Thinking people and casual observers must see by now that the family as defined by the Bible is in a battle for survival. When you speak of a family you speak of something as old as man. It started in Eden with God's blessings (Gen. 2:22-25). The first mention of a man and his wife is in Genesis 2:25. No other institution reaches back beyond that, but it has forever had its foes.

**EASY DIVORCE.** Over one million couples will learn of "divorce granted" this year from some court in our land. That means millions of people are to be affected by the breakup of a family. Some are now saying one out of two marriages will end in divorce. To what would one attribute such a victory for this foe of the home?

One thing is the legal side of the coin. Divorces are being made easier and easier. In California there is a no-fault divorce so one doesn't have to give a reason for the divorce. One judge specializes in group divorce, on one occasion giving sixteen at the same time. Thus the embarrassment is removed and divorce comes easily.

Sometimes it is made easier by those who preach and teach. Some now would justify one's being divorced and remarried for reasons other than the one the Lord gave (Matt. 19:9). We are now told (though it is not new) that if one was divorced for some cause

other than fornication before he was baptized, he could remain with his or her second, third or fourth partner after he was baptized, thus making it easy for the divorced person to live on in adultery just as he did before his baptism. We are told that baptism changes the nature of adultery to something pure and wholesome, an undefiled relationship (Heb. 13:4).

Sometimes counselors advise people to divorce because they are not compatible. This is in spite of Paul's admonition that those who are married should not seek to be loosed (I Cor. 7:22).

Some try to salve the conscience by saying, "It would be better for the children." Anybody knows that is a cop-out. This is nothing more than an excuse for one to run from an obligation. This ignores the effect the breakup of the home has on children. It is hard for a child to lose a parent either by death or divorce. At least, though, children could say about death, that if the parent had the choice he (or she) would still be with them. This could not always be the reasoning in the case of divorce.

Surely, we know that a home where war is the norm and not the exception is a hard place for a child; but as long as two people try they can work through their problems. Even that gives the children more than they have where divorce finally raises its

ugly head.

Loose morals also contribute to easy divorce. Divorce is not hard for those who have their eye on the back door at the time of marriage. They approached it as though they were buying an article that could be exchanged if they were not satisfied.

If one goes into marriage without the intent to be faithful, reserving the right to live as though not married, divorce would come easily. Such would untie him or her legally from a partner to whom he or she was never committed from the start.

**EVILS OF DRUGS AND DRINK.** Does anybody doubt the effects these have on the home? Ask a few battered and bereaved wives who

have lived with drunkard husbands. Ask some young lady trying to raise a small child in a drugs-infested home and circle of friends if such things are not foes to homes of today. Imagine a young lady married to a man who must smoke his "joint" with his friends while she tries to protect her child from such influences.

Doesn't your heart go out to Abigail who was married to Nabal who was given to drunkenness (I Sam. 25)? Think of all the shame she had to endure and all the uncertainty that faced her day and night because she never knew what to expect.

Yes, these are foes of the home and family that must be opposed by the faithful.

## **IN ORDER TO HAVE A HAPPY HOME, WHAT ARE SOME BASIC NEEDS OF THAT HOME?**

*Billy Bland*

The home is in serious trouble. Many, many homes have come under attack in recent years. Nearly half of all marriages are ending in divorce. The year 1975 marked, for the first time, one million recorded divorces in the United States. Sadly, it has gotten even worse! All are losers when a home is destroyed. The husband loses as does the wife, but many times there are also innocent victims - the chil-

dren. There are many things which have contributed to the break down of the home. And, many homes, which have not ended in divorce, are not happy homes. What is the answer? What are some basic needs in order to have a happy home?

**FIRST - THERE NEEDS TO BE A REALIZATION OF GOD AND HIS WORD IN THE HOME.** The home did not evolve, but was planned

and purposed of God. After God created man it is written: "And God saw that it was not good that the man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18). Thus, woman was made from the rib of man and brought unto him. The one who made the home knows what is best for the home. God has given us a book by which we can have happy homes, if we will but put it to use (II Tim. 3:16-17). When the husband, wife and children are following God's word there will be happiness in the home.

**SECOND - TRUE BIBLICAL LOVE MUST REPLACE SELFISHNESS IN THE HOME.** Many homes are wrecked or have become unhappy because of selfishness. How many husbands have left their wives, or wives left their husbands because of their personal wants and desires rather than looking out for the welfare of the home?

We need to replace that selfishness with true Biblical love. Paul, in I Corinthians 13:4-7, informs us as to what love does. It has long been my contention that if we would apply these scriptures to our marriage, we would have much happier and harmonious

marriages throughout the world.

**THIRD - THERE MUST BE COMMITMENT TO THE HOME.** Jesus shows the commitment that should be in our marriages when he said; "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:4-6). There is to be A LEAVING AND A CLEAVING. Man leaves father and mother and CLEAVES to his wife. God intends for there to be one husband and one wife till death (Rom. 7:1-4).

Successful happy marriages don't just happen. We must make them happen. We can do so by adding such basic needs as God, His word, true love, and commitment to our marriages. God wants our marriages to be successful and happy, and they will be, if we apply His will to our marriage.

*Coldwater Church Of Christ  
P.O. Box 321, Coldwater, MS 38618*

---

(Continued from page 8, PURITY)

David asked, "Who may stand in his holy place?" He then answered, "He who has clean hands and a pure heart" (Psalm 24:3-4). John wrote about the privilege of being God's children, seeing him and becoming like him (I John 3:1-2). He then said, "And everyone

who had this hope purifies himself, just as he is pure" (v.3).

**WHAT IS THE KEY TO PURE LIVING?** Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). We are to "love one another fervently with a pure heart" (I Peter 1:22). We are to "call on the  
(Continued on bottom of next page)

## Teens, Marry A Christian

There is almost always an uneasiness when "marrying a Christian," is discussed in the church. The reason usually seems to be an honest desire not to injure the feelings of those in the church who are associated with a marriage where one is not a Christian. It may be a husband, a wife, a mother, a child, or a relative. Rarely is a family totally untouched by this subject.

This within itself is an indication of the importance of the subject and of the implications which seem to be life-long. I would like to share these reasons with the reader for marrying a Christian.

You can begin your home with Christ as the center of all planning.

You can, in all good conscience, pray together.

When one of you is ill, the other can be expected to carry on with taking the children to worship, leading them in study, and general helpfulness.

You have the most important thing in life in common.

You can assist each other in spiritual growth in specific ways.

You can look toward the possibility of being an "elder" or a "deacon" family.

You can enjoy the same friends and the same type of recreation for the most part.

You can be confident that your mate really understands about your attitude toward the spiritual things of life and their importance to you.

But most of all, you can say "Good-bye" on earth for the last time without the bitterness of an eternal "Good-bye."

I have never heard one who married a non-Christian recommend it. I have heard many regret it. I have seen many suffer through it. I have seen a few who were able to convert their mate. But most simply hope in silence.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33). Now I ask, what kind of mate does God want you to have for your home?

—Bill Keele—

Lord out of a pure heart" (II Tim. 2:22). We are what we think (Prov. 23:7). The key to pure living is pure thinking! Think on pure things (Phil. 4:8)!

**WHAT ARE THE PRACTICAL REWARDS OF PURITY?** Solomon wrote that "the words of the pure are

pleasant" (Prov. 15:26) and "his work is right" (Prov. 21:8). Paul gives us a good summary: "Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith" (I Tim. 1:5). My brother, keep yourself pure!

P.O. Box 42, Hartsville, TN 37074

# Some Questions About Purity

*Dwight Fuqua*

**WHAT IS PURITY?** "Purity" is the state or quality of being pure. The root word "pure" means free from defilement, not contaminated. The Greek word often translated "pure" or "purity" in the New Testament (*hagnos*) is from the same root word as the word "holy" (*hagios*).

## WHY SHOULD WE BE PURE?

We should be pure because God wants us to be pure! We are often admonished in the word of God to be pure. James exhorted, "Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded" (James 4:8). Earlier in his epistle, he stated that "pure religion" involves keeping oneself unspotted from the world (James 1:27). Paul charged Timothy not to share in other people's sins and then added, "Keep yourself pure" (I Tim. 5:22).

**HOW DO WE PURIFY OUR LIVES?** We purify our souls by following the word of God and receiving the cleansing he promises. David loved God's word because it is pure (Psalm 119:140). He wrote that "the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes" (Psalm 19:8). Since it is possible to be pure in one's own eyes but not washed from defilement (Prov. 30:12), we must be sure to seek God's view and way. And, we must obey his word to be purified! Peter reminded Christians that they had purified their souls "in obeying the truth" (I Peter 1:22).

**WHAT MOTIVATION IS**

**THERE TO BE PURE?** First, there is the desire of cleansing itself. We want our sins to be "as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18). Second, there is the desire to be "a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master" (II Tim. 2:21). Third, there is the desire to bring greater glory to God by bearing "more fruit" (John 15:2,8). Fourth, there is the desire to go to heaven.

*(Continued on bottom of page 6)*

**Seek The Old Paths** is a publication of the East Corinth church of Christ and is under the oversight of its elders. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3; II Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:13; 2:1; II Peter 1:12. Manuscripts are welcome.

Editor: **Garland M. Robinson**  
Associate editors: **Ken Burleson, Sidney White**

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Tupelo, MS  
Permit #248

EAST CORINTH CHURCH OF CHRIST  
1801 CRUISE ST.  
CORINTH, MS 38834-5108

FORWARDING & RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED  
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED