

God's view of Divorce and Remarriage - Sept 2012, (updated April 2013)

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Why perform a Bible study on the topics of divorce and remarriage? *According to current statistics, "50% of all marriages in America end in divorce." That means that most churches of any size will likely have congregations that consist of some remarried people. How does the Lord expect us to deal with divorce or remarriage? As with any tough question of religious nature, the Bible must be our source of answers.*

In this study, I take no pleasure in presenting scripture that condemns the sin of people and would much rather avoid such contentious topics, but as ministers we have a directive from the Lord to preach the Word as the truth. As Revelation 22:19 warns, I have no desire to "take away" from the scripture nor add to it. Like any other sincere servant of Jesus Christ, I wish to find the real truth in God's Word and live by it (John 5:39) even if this is contrary to our modern society or church doctrine.

*Jesus warned us in Mark 8:38 that if we are ashamed of him or his words in this **adulterous** and sinful generation, that he would be ashamed of us. Has there ever been a generation in history that equals the divorce and remarriage rate of this present time? No doubt, Jesus looked down through the ages of time and saw our day and knew that we would need warning.*

Mark 8:38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words **in this adulterous and sinful generation**; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. (*Words of Jesus*)

This paper consists of questions that I have heard over the years and the Bible verses that I see as responding to those questions. Obviously there may be different interpretations of understanding with particular Bible doctrines, but I also believe that the Holy Ghost can and will reveal the real truth to his people. As Peter explained, this Word is sure and was given by holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We do not have the right of private interpretation with the Holy scripture, just to make it more compatible to our desires.

2Peter 1:19 We have also a more **sure word of prophecy**; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: **1:20** Knowing this first, that **no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. 1:21** For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but **holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**

Q1. We can read in both the New and Old testaments that God hates divorcement and that he made marriage to be until death. Does God still hate divorce or does he tolerate it now?

Malachi 2:14 Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. **2:16** **For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away:** for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

The term "putting away" is a reference to what we call divorce.

Mark 10:9 What therefore God hath joined together, **let not man put asunder.** (*Words of Jesus*)

The Lord sees marriage as a union that man is commanded to nurture and maintain. The word "asunder" means to separate or divide.

Gen 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they **shall be one flesh.**

Mat 19:5 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 **19:6** Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, **let not man put asunder. 19:7** They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away **19:8** He saith unto them, Moses **because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.** (*Words of Jesus*)

Jesus said that Moses allowed divorce because of the hardness of their hearts. We read in Malachi 2:14 that God hates "putting away" or divorce and it is obvious that it does not meet his design as an alternative in a marriage.

Q2. If I have been divorced, what options does the Bible provide for remarriage?

1 Corinthians 7:10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: **7:11** But and if she depart, **let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband:** and let not the husband put away his wife.

*Paul's writings in 1 Cor 7 provide for two options for members of a marriage which resulted in divorce or separation: **Option 1.** Remain unmarried (no option to marry another) **Option 2.** be reconciled to their spouse*

If we trust Paul's writings in other matters, how can we question what the Holy Ghost inspired him to write concerning marriage?

Q3. When are the bonds of marriage breakable in a marriage?

1 Co 7:39 The **wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth**; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

Romans 7: 2 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

When are the bonds of marriage broken in the Lord's eyes? Only when death separates the couple, and then the if the widow(er) chooses to remarry, it must be with another Christian.

Q4. What does the earliest Biblical laws say about adultery?

Exodus 20:14 Thou **shalt not commit adultery.** (*one of the Ten Commandments*)

How do people claiming to be Christians tread over one of the "Ten Commandments" with no fear? The same Ten Commandments that were once posted on the walls of our courthouses for decades, are now trodden under foot as adulterous unions are made under it's man-made laws.

Q5. Can a person living in Adultery go to heaven?

1 Corinthians 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: **neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 6:10** Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, **shall inherit the kingdom of God.**

This scripture is very clear that a person defined as an "adulterer" is not going to heaven.

Q6. It is evident from many scripture verses, including one of the Ten Commandments that God views adultery as Sin. But what is defined as adultery?

Dictionary references below taken from the "1829 Noah Webster's Dictionary" <http://webstersdictionary1828.com/>

*Dictionary definition: **ADULTERY** - voluntary **sexual intercourse** between a **married man** and **someone other than his wife** or between a **married woman** and someone **other than her husband**;*

The dictionary definition seems straight forward, so what does the Bible say?

Romans 7: 2 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. **7:3** So then if, **while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress:** but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

The book of Romans is clear that if a person is married to a second person while their first spouse is alive, they will be called an adulteress (or male version termed adulterer). That is the Bible definition, which should trump any man made variation. Why are they called an adulteress? Because they are committing sexual acts with a person other than the spouse (which they are bound to by God's law).

Some will say that divorce nullifies the first relationship but the Bible does not support that view, as it only presents death as legally breaking the bond.

It is important to acknowledge here that the sexual partnership of such a couple (see definition above) represents a repetitive act of adultery instead of just a single event at the time of the remarriage vows. Many people like to say that the "act of taking wedding vows" is the act of adultery and after it is in the past it can be forgiven of and not counted against them. That allows them to say that a repentant person can be forgiven of the

remarriage and stay in the adulterous union. As already stated, this definition is instead based on present sexual activity of a married person with someone other than their legitimate spouse.

Mark 10:11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, **committeth adultery** against her. **10:12** And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she **committeth adultery**. *(Words of Jesus)*

If you want a second opinion from the Bible, we can read Jesus' description in Mark 10:11. This is in complete and total agreement with Paul's writings, as one would expect from a consistent God.

1Cor 7:39 The wife is **bound by the law as long** as her husband **liveth**; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

The bonds of marriage are intact as long as both spouses live. When a person states that this is their second or third spouse, they are contradicting the Bible, as it is clear that the additional "marriages" are not recognized by the Lord.

Q7. What if a person was in this adulterous state before being saved, doesn't God forgive them of their sins?

1Jn 2:12 I write unto you, little children, because **your sins are forgiven you** for his name's sake.

Col 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having **forgiven you all trespasses**;

Rom 4:7 Saying, Blessed are they whose **iniquities are forgiven**, and **whose sins are covered**.

It is very obvious, from the scriptures above, that Jesus forgives our sins when we repent and become a new creature by his blood atonement. There is no question that an adulterous person can be forgiven of the sin of adultery.

The real question is can they continue to live in that same lifestyle and be considered free from sin? What does Rom 6:1 tell us?

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? **Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 6:2** God forbid. **How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 6:3** Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? **6:4** Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. **6:5** For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: **6:6** Knowing this, that **our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed**, that henceforth we should not serve sin. **6:7** For he that is dead is freed from sin. **6:8** Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

I think most Christians (at least most Holiness people) will agree that God expects us to forsake a sinful lifestyle once we are saved. Reviewing Romans 6, we see that Paul asks "how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein".

Do we expect an alcoholic to stop drinking, a drug addict to break from their addictions, a smoker to stop smoking, a liar to stop lying, or a homosexual to go straight once they are saved? Of course we do. Can you explain why continuing to maintain a sexual relationship with a person other than their spouse can be seen any different?

Can a person living in adultery after being saved, continue the lifestyle and stay under grace any more than a repenting homosexual that continues in their previous abominable actions? I would love to know how Satan pulled the wool over so many churches and Christians to make them think that double marriage and the resulting adulterous state is a "onetime event" and can be forgiven and forgotten like it was only in the past.

Does salvation change the fact that one of the spouses already has a living husband or wife? Again, if the sin in question is that of an alcoholic, can he continue drinking alcohol after being saved and be justified by the church because they "became" an alcoholic while in sin? How can the church have double standards with various sins? Is it just because the Lord's instructions aren't popular with today's loose living customs?

What we must ask is whether the results of a person “living with” and engaging in the behaviors of sexual partners (other than the first spouse) is the act of committing adultery. Jesus was very clear in Mark 10:11 (shown previously) that if the person is in this relationship with anyone other than their first / living spouse, it is adultery.

Q8. Does the Bible give an example of a person living in adultery being required to do more than repent of it?

Another Bible example of the need to separate from an adulterous marriage is found in the account of King Herod in Matthew 14.

Mat 14:3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, **his brother Philip's wife.** **14:4** For John said unto him, **It is not lawful for thee to have her.**

Why didn't John the Baptist just tell Herod to repent **to be saved and keep his brother's wife?** Instead, John gave his life by standing for the truth of God's Word. John stated that "it is not lawful" for Herod to have his brother's wife. Today, most churches would say that as long as a divorce was performed before the remarriage, then the union must be fine in God's eyes. Then if they repent of all their sins (adultery being one of them) then they are just as saved as the purest Christian. If there was an easier way for Herod to get out of this sinful state, John would have no doubt used that path instead of putting his life in jeopardy in confronting the King.

Q9. Doesn't the clause, "except / saving it be for fornication" allow for divorce and remarriage when a spouse is unfaithful?

Obviously most Christians agree that God's Word does not contradict itself. So if you compare what Jesus stated in Matthew 5:32/19:9 with what he stated in Mark 10:11 and Luke 16:18, you might think these to be contradictory. The key to understanding the clause given in Matthew 5:32/19:9 is to identify the difference between the terms Adultery (word "moichao" in Greek) and Fornication (word "porneia" in Greek) as used in the Bible.

Mat 5:32 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. *(Words of Jesus)*

Mat 19:5 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 **19:6** Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. **What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.** **19:7** They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away **19:8** He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. **19:9** And I say unto you, 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. **19:10** His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. *(Words of Jesus)*

Notice the **differences in the dictionary definitions of Fornication and Adultery** shown below:

Dictionary references below taken from "[1829 Noah Webster's Dictionary](http://webstersdictionary1828.com/)" <http://webstersdictionary1828.com/> (Serious students of the KJV Bible typically use this dictionary as a reference for early English language understanding)

Dictionary definition: **FORNICATION** - The incontinence (a failure to restrain sexual desires) or lewdness (the unlawful indulgence of lust, fornication, or adultery) **of unmarried persons.** (word "porneia" in Greek).

See also a consistent definition from the "[1859 American Tract Society Bible Dictionary](#)" and "[2004 Bridgeway Bible Dictionary](#)" sources.

While it is true that the Greek word porneia (fornication) can also be used secondarily or generically to reference adultery, incest, or idolatry; the use of both fornication (porneia) and adultery (moichao) within the same sentence illustrates that different meanings are being referenced by their use. Also note that [1Corinthians 6:9](#) presents these two words individually and uniquely as sinful conditions that will prevent a person from inheriting the kingdom of God. Obviously the Holy Ghost intended a uniqueness expressed by Matthews words.

Dictionary definition: **ADULTERY** - voluntary sexual intercourse between a **married man** and someone other than his wife or between a **married woman** and someone other than her husband. (word "moichao" in Greek)

The key to “rightly dividing the word” here is to understand what the differences in definition and context mean. Since adultery is used several places in the Bible, the use of the word Fornication here is not trivial (Matthew 5:32/19:9). If God had meant that unfaithfulness **after the marriage was consummated** was grounds for divorce and remarriage, then the word used would have been “**adultery**”. Since **Fornication** is referring to as unfaithfulness between **unmarried people**, how can you have fornication after a marriage is consummated? The answer is, you cannot by today’s dating/marriage customs, but by the old Jewish engagement and marriage ritual there was an espousal step in which it pertained. I’ll explain the Jewish customs below.

The Holy Ghost in his all-knowing wisdom knew that there would be people like us today that are ignorant to these Jewish wedding customs, so he provided a great example of it in Jesus’ own immediate family. Notice that in Matthew 1:18, that Joseph was only espoused (similar to engagement by our terms) to Mary, but to break their relationship (as he thought she was guilty of fornication as proved by her being with child) he would have to “put her away”. This phrase “put away” is also repeated many times in the Bible reference to divorce. Particularly of interest is that Jesus uses that phrase in the “fornication clause” verses of Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9.

Dictionary Definition: **Espoused** - Betrothed; affianced; promised in marriage by contract; married;

Mat 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was **espoused to** Joseph, **before they came together**, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. **1:19** Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to **put her away** privily.

In Matthew 1:18 (above) we see that Joseph and Mary had not consummated the marriage (“before they came together”) but were espoused to each other.

The Jewish Marriage of Biblical times has Four Phases

- 1) matchmaking (or falling in love)
- 2) espousal, betrothal, or engagement contract (*putting away required to break engagement*)
- 3) return of groom and then time alone together (*wedding consummated*)
- 4) week of celebrating

*In the Jewish customs, a woman was considered under contract or bound to the man while they were “espoused” or “betrothed.” Sexual immorality during this “betrothal” period would then be the **only valid reason** for “putting away”, divorce, or breaking this contract.*

*The espousal or engagement period was usually one-year in duration. This engagement could only be broken by a bill of **divorce** (not just “sorry, changed my mind”). During the year (or so) the husband would build a bridal chamber onto his father’s house (a Vanderhaan).*

*As mentioned above, you can find an example of this practice when you read the Christmas story of Jesus’ birth. You will see that Joseph was espoused (engaged) to Mary and finding that she was with child (**thus he assumed fornication was involved**) he would “**put her away**” privately (or divorce her).*

So the “except for fornication” clause does not apply to a couple “after the marriage is consummated” as that sin would be considered adultery and not fornication.

*Notice the **disciple’s reaction** to Jesus’ teaching on justifications for divorce or “putting away” in Mat 19:19:*

Mat 19:10 His disciples say unto him, **If the case** of the man be so with his wife, **it is not good to marry**.

The Jews were well aware of the two opposing schools of thought presented by 1st century Rabbi Hillel and Rabbi Shammai. The Shammai view held that a man may only divorce his wife for a serious transgression, but Hillel allowed divorce for even trivial offenses, such as burning a meal. Jesus’s position surprised the disciples as it was so strict that they thought “it is not good to marry”.

Why did Luke and Mark not include the “fornication exception clause” in their Gospels?

It is clear from reading the Gospel of Matthew that he wrote primarily to his fellow Jews, and thus the fornication exception clause would be expected to be understood based on their standard knowledge of marriage traditions.

Luke 16:18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, **committeth adultery**: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband **committeth adultery**.

Mark 10:11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, **committeth adultery** against her. **Mark 10:12** And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she **committeth adultery**.

Luke is the solitary Gentile writer of the Bible, yet his dual books of the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts constitute about one-fourth of the New Testament. By training he was a physician (Colossians 4:14). He joined Paul on the apostle's second missionary campaign (Acts 16:10) and was with him periodically during the apostle's ministry. Being a Gentile and ministering mostly to Gentile people, who did not honor the Jewish betrothal customs, Luke knew that the "fornication exception" did not apply to non-Jewish weddings customs. Thus he was very clear to his audience that there were no exceptions to divorce and remarriage resulting in adultery.

We also notice that the Gospel of Mark is remarkably different from that of Matthew in many aspects. A survey of the information in this book provides evidence that he did not assume a Jewish audience in his explanations. History also credits Mark as the founder of the gentile Church of Alexandria and the church of Africa. Thus he like Luke, did not include the exception clause in his writings as it did not pertain to his audience's customs.

Adultery meant a death sentence under the Mosaic Law, not just an option for divorce

We also know that the Mosaic law did not allow for a divorce on the basis of adultery, as the law required that the adulterer be put to death (Lev 20:10). You aren't required to "put away" or divorce a dead spouse so that also confirms the difference between fornication and adultery as used in scripture.

Lev 20:10 And the man that **committeth adultery** with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress **shall surely be put to death**.

This is also confirmed in the Gospel of John.

Joh 8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, **Joh 8:4** They say unto him, Master, **this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act**. **Joh 8:5** **Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned:** but what sayest thou?

Let's play the devil's advocate for a moment and say that the use of the word fornication in Matt 5:32/19:9 was really talking about the act of adultery after the marriage was consummated instead of sexual impurity during the betrothal period. What loopholes would be provided by this (incorrect) interpretation then?

*By saying that the word "fornication" really means "adultery", the exception clause would be allowing legitimate divorces for only those marriages where infidelity to one's spouse occurs. Recent statistics show that only 15% to 30% of modern day divorce cases are the result of one of the spouses having an affair. What excuse and resulting condition does that provide for the remaining 70% to 85% of divorcees? That would mean that the majority of divorces would still be without a cause in God's eyes. Would the spouse that was not unfaithful, be justified in remarrying? Would church leaders be required to be private detectives to research real the cause of the divorce before knowing if it was legitimate or not and whether they can be remarried? If this were the case, we would be left with much confusion and in the end, the majority of divorcees would still be considered adulterers and not eligible for remarriage. I am completely convinced that what we have already illustrated about the "exception clause" in the earlier discussion is true, and **since modern marriage customs do not require a divorce to break a betrothal (engagement) then the "fornication exception" does not apply today.***

If the word fornication meant adultery in Matt 5:32/19:9, then it would completely contradict what Jesus sated three verses before in Matt 19:6. We read here that marriage is a union that God ordains and man does not have the right to "put asunder" or separate or divide.

Mat 19:6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. **What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**

It would also contradict what Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 7:11 & 7:39. God is not the author of confusion and does not contradict himself. Thus we have more evidence that the word fornication does not equate to adultery (infidelity after marriage).

1Cor 7:11 But and if she depart, **let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband:** and let not the husband put away his wife.

1Cor 7:39 The **wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth;** but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

How can the husband cause a fornicator to commit adultery if she is already guilty of adultery?

If the word fornication (*porneia*) and adultery (*moichao*) in Matt 5:32 have the same meaning, **hasn't the woman already become an adulteress without the need of the husband's action of divorce?** If the marriage had proceeded past the betrothal stage and been consummated, before the illicit sexual act with another person, then she is already considered an adulteress. But instead, she is not yet an adulteress as the marriage has not been completed, thus she is labeled a fornicator. You must realize that the Holy Ghost did not allow the choice of words used in scripture to occur by accident, but instead it was divinely inspired and distinctions of word usage are in place for a reason.

Mat 5:32 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.

Q10. What if multiple marriages occurred since the first? Which one does God honor as the legitimate one? Example of Jesus stating that a woman's fifth husband is not the husband that the Lord recognizes

Even in the Holiness ranks, there is often acceptance that a person can be forgiven of adultery and stay in the relationship with the "new" partner, without it being considered sin. The Bible is clear that a marriage is binding as long as both original spouses are living. This is also illustrated in the text below where Jesus stated that the woman at the well had many husbands but the one she was with was not hers.

John 4:16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, **call thy husband**, and come hither. **4:17** The woman answered and said, **I have no husband**. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: **4:18** For thou hast **had five husbands**; and **he whom thou now hast is not thy husband**: in that saidst thou truly. **4:19** The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

Jesus referred to man's law allowing the woman to have five different husbands, but Jesus let her know that the one she had now was not the legitimate one. Only the first one (assuming he was still living) was recognized as her legitimate husband in God's eyes. I propose here that Jesus asked her to call for her husband so that he could expose her sins unto her and lead her to conviction for these deeds.

Q11. Some people have pointed out that when someone comes to Jesus and repents, all sins are forgiven. Then they ask why this does not include the sin of adultery?

I totally agree that **all past sins** are forgiven at the point of salvation, but **are future sins forgiven in advance?** Wouldn't we be as guilty as the Catholics in allowing pre-purchased redemption for future sins?

Is adultery a **onetime event** that occurs only at the time of the second (or third or fourth) wedding? Not by definition, as the term adultery describes the sexual sin that is being committed within the second (or third or fourth) relationship. (see definition below as it describes the sexual act, not the day of the wedding)

I personally don't see a difference in how God views the sin of adultery when the guilty couple are "married" (based on man's laws) or just living together "unmarried" in that state. I can't see that God honors the second marriage relationship at all (obviously I'm not referring to situations where first spouse has died) thus we can interpret that he sees every sexual encounter as **another act of adultery**. That means that the person is "continuing in sin". (**Romans 6:1** What shall we say then? **Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?**)

Dictionary definition: **ADULTERY**, voluntary **sexual intercourse** between a married man and someone other than his wife or between a married woman and someone other than her husband.

Q12. Isn't it a different standard for a sinner that was double married prior to getting saved? Doesn't God just forgive them?

What difference is there in an alcoholic that continues drinking after he repents and is born again and someone continuing to commit adultery? Is it approved by God for the alcoholic to continue drinking since he became an alcoholic prior to being saved? If you say no, then why is the sin of adultery considered differently?

Q13. Some preachers say “When a double married couple comes to our church, I ignore their marital state and look for fruits of righteousness to be brought forth to know if they are saved”. Is this what God expects from his ministers?

Mat 3:8 Bring forth therefore **fruits** meet for **repentance**:

Obviously an individual's state of salvation isn't determined by the pastor's opinion anyways, only by their own personal experience with the Lord.

Can any fruits of works (other than the fruit of repentance and righteousness) cover the presence of sin in a person's life? If this person is actively living in a known homosexual relationship, do we overlook that as well?

*Why didn't John the Baptist just tell Herod to repent and **bring forth fruits to be saved and keep his brother's wife**. Instead John gave his head standing for the truth of God's Word. Since this was the King, couldn't John have ignored the fact that he was living in adultery and provided him with encouraging words? Wouldn't God have let John get by without preaching such a contentious message to King Herod about adultery? Will the Lord let today's ministers get by without preaching against adulterous marriages? Did God give us permission to determine which commandments and Bible based standards we preach against or ignore?*

Mat 14:3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. **Mat 14:4** For John said unto him, **It is not lawful for thee to have her.**

Q14. Some will say “I can name several people that I have seen God use in a great way that had either been married before or their spouse had been married before”. They say “when I see fruits of the Holy Ghost moving in their lives, I will not argue with the Holy Ghost”. Is this a Biblical measurement?

Mat 7:20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. **7:21** **Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 7:22** Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, **have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name have cast out devils?** and in thy name **done many wonderful works?** **7:23** And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. 7:24** Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: *(Words of Jesus)*

I total believe in and have experienced the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in Tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, but I have also seen through the years that every tongue that speaks or every shout that quickens is not of God. The devil is crafty and attempts to “counterfeit” the real move of God in many ways. One thing that Satan definitely can't counterfeit is holy living though.

Who will enter into the Lord's Kingdom? Is it those that prophesied, cast out devils, or performed many wonderful works (Mat 7:20-24)? No it wasn't those works that justified them, but instead it is those that were saved and forsook their iniquities.

How does the Bible tell us that we can determine if a person loves the Lord? By keeping his commandments!
John 14:15 **If ye love me, keep my commandments.** *(Words of Jesus)*

In our church we welcome all people in and understand that their past sins (other than blaspheming the Holy Ghost) will not prevent them from getting saved, but the question is do they forsake their sins to stay under grace. Otherwise we would be viewing salvation as the “Eternal Security” or “Once in Grace” groups do.

Q15a. I've had preachers say that since the qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy chapter 3 or Titus chapter 1 explain that a Bishop or Deacon must be the husband of one wife, that they can derive that a non-office holding Christian isn't held to the same standard.

1Tim 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the **husband of one wife**, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; **1Tim 3:3** Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; **1Tim 3:4** One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

Titus 1:6 If any be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

Titus 1:7 For a **bishop must be blameless**, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; **Titus 1:8** But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; **Titus 1:9** Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

This is probably one of the lamest attempts that I have seen to twist the words of the Bible into supporting adultery as being approved by God.

Does the fact that a double-married person is directly excluded from a church office (Bishop) mean that they are automatically "included" in meeting the requirements for being a lay member Christian?

Based on this same logic, then the non-office holding Christians can lawfully "be given to wine", have "bad behavior", be non-sober (drunk minded), be "greedy of filthy lucre", "a brawler", "striker", possess a bad temperament, be unholy, and be "covetous", since these behaviors are also off limits for a Bishop and Deacon. (see other verses in 1 Timothy 3 & Titus 1 above).

Does that sound like attributes of a Christian? Can you imagine the Lord saying you do not live Holy so you can't be a Bishop, but no problem living that way if you are just a lay member Christian? My Bible says "be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15-16) and that isn't just for the church leadership positions!

I totally agree that all of these negative attributes would preclude a person from being a Bishop or Deacon, but they also preclude any person (even lay members) from living a Holy Christian life that pleases God.

Q15b. They say that a double married person can be saved and continue to live in this relationship, but at the same time they agree that the double married person is restricted from certain positions in the church leadership. Is this a correct understanding?

These same people say that the adulterous person is just as saved as they are, but due to their past actions they are limited from holding a church office. Isn't this a double standard? If they are just as saved as the pastor, why should their past be held against them? Do we restrict a former alcoholic or former liar from holding an office after they are saved? Of course not, as they are blood washed and cleansed from their sinful past. The problem here is that the sins of adultery are in the present and not just in the past.

If you read between the lines, even these ministers are noting a difference in the adulterous person's baggage and present state of sin. The problem is that the sin of adultery is retained as long as they are committing adultery. I believe that if Jesus really saves you, cleanses you from sin, and sanctifies you, then you are as much a candidate for any church office as the pastor. The problem here is that the adulterous person is not free from sin and should not hold a church office nor take an active leadership role in ministering to the saints (singing or otherwise).

Q16. A preacher once told me that adultery can be forgiven and that he could not find anywhere in Scripture where adultery is a "state" such as someone being in a state of depression. He said that adultery is an act. Remarriage is adultery, but when a person comes to Jesus that sin is forgiven. Do you agree?

I don't completely agree that adultery is not a state. Is a person that habitually drinks not a drunkard or alcoholic because he has a few hours of the day that he doesn't drink?

Does the title of a sinner require that the person sin at every action that they perform? They are a sinner because they commit sin and do not repent to Jesus and cease from sin.

If two people are double married, then every time that sexual activity is encountered, then adultery has been committed. Does that mean that during days when they are not sexually involved that they are not adulterous? They are obviously still in adultery just as the drinker is still an alcoholic when sober for a few days.

Q17. A minister told me that “In this day and time when someone comes to the church and gets saved they normally have a lot of baggage. Most of the time they have been remarried.” He asked “how do we deal with that?”

Ever preacher faces that same challenge but can we treat it any differently than any other persistent sin just because it has become more common? Jesus called the people an adulterous generation (spiritually and fleshly as well).

Mat 12:38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. **Mat 12:39** But he answered and said unto them, **An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign;** and there shall no sign be given to it, **but the sign of the prophet Jonah:**

Mat 12:40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (*Words of Jesus*)

Jonah was a type of Christ or at least a type of John the Baptist preaching “repentance” so I can’t see any other way around it except for repenting and having “our sins taken away”.

This view is definitely not popular but I’m glad that there are at least few people here and there that think that the Bible’s warnings are literal and not customizable for different situations.

What does God expect us to preach to people in adulterous marriages? Repent of your sins!

Joh 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the **Lamb of God**, which **taketh away the sin of the world.**

Q18. Can a person that is double married and professes that they are Christians, go to heaven if they die in this condition of adultery (“both” spouses living)?

1 Corinthians 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? **Be not deceived: neither fornicators,** nor idolaters, **nor adulterers,** nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, **10** Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, **shall inherit the kingdom of God.**

Paul’s reconfirmed this to the Galatians as well.

Gal 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; **adultery, fornication,** uncleanness, lasciviousness, **Gal 5:20** Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, **Gal 5:21** Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which **I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

Q19. If my preacher says it’s not sin, can’t I get by with God?

As the apostle wrote, we should not be “deceived” (1 Cor 6:9) by current religious teaching that is contrary to the Word of God.

It doesn’t excuse us that most modern preachers avoid this subject or teach that double marriage is compatible with Christianity. The Bible tells us that we are without excuse. We have the Word of God available to study for ourselves, so in judgment we can’t get by on “my preacher said it was fine”.

2Ti 2:15 **Study to show thyself approved unto God,** a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Php 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

Q20. Should we seek to please men or God?

Rom 3:4 God forbid: yea, **let God be true, but every man a liar;** as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

Paul uses strong verbiage in Galatian 1st chapter to confirm that any gospel that disagrees with what he has taught is to be accursed. He goes on to ask is we are trying to persuade men or God to change and then asked if we are men pleasers. I definitely want to be a God pleaser instead of a man pleaser. Why is Paul so confident in what he preached? Because it was given by revelation of Jesus Christ. How can we be confident that we are preaching and teaching the truth? By basing our doctrines and theologies on what “thus saith the Word of God” and not on modern alternations that are focused to please men.

When challenged with what was the ultimate religious truth the early Protestant Reformers use the Latin phrase "ad fontes" which means "to the sources". They understood that the Catholic Church and Church of England had corrupted the church world with man's doctrines so much that they must look to the ultimate authority in God's Word to obtain the truth.

Gal 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, **let him be accursed.** **Gal 1:9** As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. **Gal 1:10** For **do I now persuade men, or God?** or **do I seek to please men?** for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. **Gal 1:11** But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

Gal 1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but **by the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

Q21. What should a person that is in this condition do to correct the situation?

I would be afraid to provide any advice other than what the following scriptures instruct:

1Cor 7:11 But and if she depart, **let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband:** and let not the husband put away his wife.

1Cor 7:39 The **wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth;** but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

As long as there is a living spouse, there are only two option provided by the scripture: 1) remain unmarried 2) be reconciled to her husband. There is no third option to marry some else unless your first spouse is deceased.

Q22. It is so hard to believe that God would expect us to break up our 2nd (or 3rd. 4th...) marriage.

First off, the real marriage (first) was already broken up in divorce. What is it worth for you to go to heaven? Forsaking sin is never easy as there is often a lot of baggage that sin brings with it. When children are involved in the second (or later) marriage, doing the right thing becomes even more of a challenge, but does that excuse us from God's commandment? There are many sins with which we pay a physical and emotional price for, even after repenting. It is worth forsaking all to gain eternity in heaven!

Mat 19:29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and **shall inherit everlasting life.** (*Words of Jesus*)

Mar 9:43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is **better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell,** into the fire that never shall be quenched: **Mar 9:44** Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. **Mar 9:45** And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: **Mar 9:46** Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. **Mar 9:47** And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: **Mar 9:48** Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (*Words of Jesus*)

Mar 8:33 But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but **the things that be of men.** **Mar 8:34** And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. **Mar 8:35** For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. **Mar 8:36** For what shall it profit a man, **if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?** **Mar 8:37** Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? **Mar 8:38** **Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation;** of him also **shall the Son of man be ashamed,** when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. (*Words of Jesus*)

Q23. Are we ashamed of God's Word, when it isn't the popular choice? It was not by accident that Jesus was referring to this adulterous generation.

Mar 8:38 Whosoever therefore shall be **ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation;** of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. (*Words of Jesus*)

Q24. Why did preachers (even Holiness professing ones) start accepting people in adultery into the pulpit to sing, teach, and preach?

Jer 5:7 How shall I pardon thee for this? **thy children have forsaken me**, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, **they then committed adultery**, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots houses. **Jer 5:8** They were as fed horses in the morning: **every one neighed after his neighbor's wife**.

The Lord stated the condition of his people in Jeremiah's day as adulterers and desiring his neighbor's wife.

Jer 5:30 A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; **Jer 5:31** The **prophets prophesy falsely**, and the priests bear rule by their means; **and my people love to have it so**: and **what will ye do in the end thereof?**

Jeremiah closed this chapter by stating that the prophets prophesy falsely and use their own rules. The horrible thing is that the people "love to have it so". I truly wonder what the Lord thinks of this current church age and it's acceptance of sin in the church members? As the 31st verse concludes, what will ye do in the end thereof? If you can find enough compromising preachers to support your lifestyle, does that help you when you stand before the Lord on the judgment day? Why deceive ourselves with lies that are contrary with God's Word, when we know there will be a reckoning day that our life must stand up against these same scriptures. I definitely want to know and live the truth here and now, because to learn later that we missed the mark of God's expectations will be too late to make a difference.

2Ti 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. **2Ti 4:3** For the time will come when they **will not endure sound doctrine**; but **after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears**; **2Ti 4:4** And they shall **turn away their ears from the truth**, and shall be turned unto fables. **2Ti 4:5** But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

Q25. Should double married people be allowed to attend church?

1Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ **Jesus came into the world to save sinners**; of whom I am chief.

Rom 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? **and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?** and how shall they hear without a preacher?

Anyone whether sinner or Christian should be allowed and encouraged to attend church. How else will they hear the truth of God's Word and find help?

Q26. Should double married people be allowed to participate in leadership roles or to participate in activities in the pulpit (singing, ministering...)?

We could easily default to the typical reference verses in the third chapter of 1st Timothy as requiring a bishop or deacon to be the husband of one wife to determine that a remarried person does not have the right to a church office. Obviously this is a correct application of the scripture and utilized as the rule by many churches.

1Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. **3:2** A **bishop** then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; **3:3** Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

1Timothy 3:12 Let the deacons be the **husbands of one wife**, ruling their children and their own houses well. **3:13** For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

I know some ministers that would not allow double married persons to be in leadership but they do allow them to minister in song from the pulpit.

I want to reiterate a previous illustration for this matter as well. I don't mean to offend anyone with this comparison, but both an adulterous lifestyle and a homosexual lifestyle are both sins. So if the person in question was known to be involved in an active homosexual lifestyle (even though they had previously repented), would we still allow them to participate in ministering to the saints?

Obviously you would need to agree that adultery is sin before agreeing with me and also agree that actively committing adultery is an act of abiding in sin, before you see this as wrong.

Let me take this opportunity to expand on this comparison. Since some states now recognize "same sex marriages" (just like they do a remarriage of a man and women after divorce), how should the church stand on the issue of homosexual unions? So if two persons of the same sex are "legally married" and then they come to our church and repent of their sins (including that of the homosexual marriage), is God agreeable with the marriage continuing? Should the Church accept their lifestyle since they repented of the sin of a homosexual marriage? The act of taking the homosexual marriage vows are in the past, right? And the state's legal system recognizes their union, so who are we to question it? I hope you can see this mockery of God's commandments by this example of accepting this homosexual "couple's" marriage as being legitimate.

In the same token, can we see a double married heterosexual marriage as any more legitimate or acceptable? I think the verses below illustrate that a sinner should not have an active involvement behind the pulpit. Our responsibility to them is to present the reproofing power of the Gospel message.

Eph 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. **Eph 5:7** Be not ye therefore partakers with them. **Eph 5:8** **For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:** **Eph 5:9** (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) **Eph 5:10** Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. **Eph 5:11** And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, **but rather reprove them.** **Eph 5:12** For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

2Co 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for **what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?** and **what communion hath light with darkness?** **2Co 6:15** And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or **what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?** **2Co 6:16** And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. **2Co 6:17** Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and **touch not the unclean thing;** and I will receive you.

Q27. Is it fair for adultery to be compared to homosexuality? God calls homosexuality an abomination but he doesn't refer to double marriage as such. Didn't he even allow it at one time?

Here are some thoughts and scriptures to read....

The act of Adultery is definitely breaking one of the Ten Commandments: Jesus even confirmed them in the New Testament.

Mark 10:19 Thou knowest the commandments, **Do not commit adultery**, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother.

The Old Testament laws instructed that those guilty of adultery should put to death, so he sees it as a very severe sin. Obviously grace does not condone the killing of a person because of adultery today, but you can see how serious the Lord viewed this sin.

Lev 20:10 And the man that **committeth adultery** with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress **shall surely be put to death.**

You are also incorrect when you stated that the Lord does not classify adultery as an abomination. Read what he says about adultery in the book of Ezekiel.

Eze 22:11 And one hath **committed abomination with his neighbor's wife**; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter-in-law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter.

Eze 33:26 Ye stand upon your sword, **ye work abomination**, and ye defile every one **his neighbor's wife**: and shall ye possess the land?

Q28. Doesn't the verse in 1st Corinthians 7:15 provide a case for remarriage if the unbelieving spouse leaves?

Please read the context of Paul's instructions in verse 10 and 11. The subject of this scripture is regarding the fact that God **does not want a married couple to separate, but if they do separate they have two options or choices to remain right in God's eyes.**

- 1) The first choice is to remain unmarried or stay separated in a celibate state.
- 2) The second choice is to be reconciled or reunited to their spouse.

There is no third option provided while both spouses are living, as confirmed in verse 7:39 below. Please note that these verses allow for a separation in the marriage without the option for remarrying another (remain unmarried), which sets a baseline for the question of what a believing spouse should do if the unbelieving spouse leaves them (verses 1Cor 7:12 -15).

I want to again point out that the verse 7:10 says that **the Lord commands against** the wife **departing** from the husband. The Lord is not pleased with this separation at all or else he would not have commanded this restriction. But if that does occur due to the hardness of man's heart, he has provided allowances for the two options previously listed.

1Cor 7:10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, **but the Lord, Let not the wife depart** from her husband:

1Cor 7:11 **But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband:** and let not the husband **put away** his wife.

Verses 7:12 through 7:24 deals with the problem of a marriage where only one spouse is a believer. Paul prefaces his remarks with the statement: "But to the rest I, not the Lord, say." I want to strongly emphasize that this does not mean that what Paul is saying represents his own viewpoint and not the Lord's. The apostle Peter confirmed that Paul's teachings were considered scripture in 2Peter 3:15-3:16, so we have no reason to think them less than any other scripture.

Paul was simply stating that what he is going to explain had not been previously taught by Jesus (Lord's commandment) when he was on earth and that this topic hasn't been explained elsewhere in the scripture. Jesus simply did not discuss in detail the case of a marriage where only one member was a believer. Verse 7:12 and 7:13 explain that a married couple should not separate just because one is a Christian and the other isn't.

There are multiple commentaries and private interpretations that suggest that the use of the phrase "not under bondage" in verse 7:15 provides for a divorced person to remarry if the unbelieving spouse leaves them.

I suggest that we analyze this viewpoint in two ways:

- (1) Compare this principle with the surrounding verses and related teachings from the Bible.
- (2) Examine the choice of words used in verse 7:15 in describing "bondage" with the use of other words describing the union of marriage.

1Cor 7:12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any **brother hath a wife that believeth not**, and she be pleased to dwell with him, **let him not put her away.**

1Cor 7:13 And the woman which hath a **husband that believeth not**, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, **let her not leave him.**

1Cor 7:14 For the unbelieving husband **is sanctified** by the wife, and the unbelieving wife **is sanctified** by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

In this relationship, the saved spouse helps "sanctify" the other spouse and their children. The term "sanctify" means to make holy or purify and can be understood in the context of the witness that a Christian shows forth to the lost. As verse 16 states, this example of living a Christian life can result in the other spouse being saved.

1Cor 7:15 **But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart.** A brother or a sister **is not under bondage in such cases:** but God hath **called us to peace.**

1Cor 7:16 For what knowest thou, O wife, **whether thou shalt save thy husband?** or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

Would it not be conflicting if we suggest that verses 7:10-7:11 does not allow the “bond” of the first marriage to be broken when a spouse leaves, but then to state that verse 7:15 does allow a believer to be freed to remarry in the same situation? Of course it seems to be a conflict, because the Bible does not contradict itself and the Holy Ghost is not going to introduce confusion (1Co 14:33). Thus we must dig deeper to understand what the Holy Ghost was having Paul explain.

*Why does the scripture not say that the unbeliever was not under bondage, just the believer is not under bondage? I propose that the “bonds” of marriage are not allowed to be broken, but that the believer is not in “bondage” (or slavery) to stay with, or follow the unbeliever in their sinful way of life. Notice in verse 7:15 that God has **called us to peace** and does not allow us to enslave a person or prevent them from leaving. Neither is the believer enslaved to be forced to follow the one that leaves.*

Let’s review the use of the words chosen to see how they differ from other related verses.

*The word “**bondage**” used in 7:15 (based on Strong’s reference shown below) means that they are not under “slavery” to stay with them. There is no reason to think that the Lord would contradict what was stated in verses 7:11 and 7:39.*

*Strong’s reference: **Bondage** = (G1402) doo-lo'-o - to enslave (literally or figuratively): bring into (be under) bondage, become (make) servant.*

*Notice that the word “**bound**” (based on Strong’s reference shown below) is used in verse 7:39 when referring to the way that the married couple are knitted together until separated by death. There is definitely a difference in being a slave to someone and being equally knit together with someone.*

*Strong’s reference: **Bound** = (G1210) - deh'-o - A primary verb; to bind (in various applications, literally or figuratively): - bind, be in bonds, knit, tie, wind.*

Thus from the view of these multiple verses you can understand that Paul was stating that the believer is not enslaved to follow the unbeliever but they are still bound (knit together) by the law of marriage (as stated in 7:39) until death brings an end to that union. There is no loophole provided for remarriage in verse 7:15 at all.

1Cor 7:39 The **wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth**; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

As a litmus test, we should compare this understanding to the commands of Jesus’ own teaching. Please read the following verses of instructions from Jesus in Matthew 5:32, Matthew 19:8-19:9, Luke 16:18, and Mark 10:11-10:12 for reference.

Q29. Doesn’t the verse in 1st Corinthians 7:27-28 tell us that if a divorced person marries, they have not sinned?

1Cor 7:25 Now **concerning virgins** I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. **1Cor 7:26** I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be. **1Cor 7:27** Art thou **bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed**. Art thou **loosed from a wife? seek not a wife**. **1Cor 7:28** **But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned**; and if a **virgin marry**, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

Some people will take verse 28 to indicate that if a person is “loosed from a wife” or divorced that if they remarry another that they have not sinned. This view is totally contradictory to verse 7:11 where two choices are provided (remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband) for the divorced and verse 7:39 that states a wife is bound as long as her husband liveth. Friend, God is not double-minded and does not contradict himself, thus we must understand the context of verses 7:27-7:28.

What is the context of the subject that Paul is introducing now? In verse 7:25-26 we see that there is a present distress in the church at Corinth that could affect a “virgins” (a woman who has not known a man in a sensual sense) choice in regards to their future married state. Actually from verse 7:25 through verse 7:40 the primary topic is regarding whether a “virgin” should be married or stay single.

I think the ‘Holman KJV Study Bible’ commentary does an excellent job of explaining what 1 Cor 7:27 is telling us (quote shown below):

Excerpt from ‘Holman KJV Study Bible’: “Virgins in this context refer to betrothed females. Their dilemma was brought about by an unnamed present distress, possibly famine, that called the practicality of marital plans into doubt. Paul’s talk about being bound or loosed from a wife in verse 27 can be summarized as follows: (1) the man who was betrothed to a virgin was not to seek release from future obligations to consummate the marriage. (2) the man who had already been released from obligation to a virgin was not to seek betrothal to another woman. In other words, keep your commitments and/or remain as you are.”

As you can see, this commentary brings forth the view that the current distress applies to “engaged” people in the Jewish Betrothal period (wedding not consummated yet), which is agreeable to the initial topic of verse 25 and the other commandments in this chapter. Under the context of the surrounding scriptures, I totally agree with this interpretation.

In verse 7:28, the phrase “if thou marry” is referring to the man who is in this betrothed state (fiancé) as the preceding verse 27 is stated from perspective of the man’s view. The term “a virgin” in verse 7:28 is referring to the maiden or woman (fiancée) in this engagement. The term “loosed from a wife” does not apply to people divorced after a wedding is consummated (as occurs today), but the “putting away” that was allowed between the Betrothal period and consummation period if fornication (Mat 5:32) was discovered.

So in summary of verses 7:27 and 7:28, this is letting the betrothed (engaged) know that they should not cancel their marriage plans due to the distress at Corinth and in Paul’s wisdom nor should someone not betrothed during this distress to look to become so. Again this guideline was for a “present distress” at Corinth which could have been persecution of the church or other oppositions to the general population. Considering the distress of those times, the unmarried state was deemed best by Paul for those who were not yet engaged. Notwithstanding, the apostle does not condemn the practice of marriage and if they proceed to that state, they “have not sinned” as is confirmed in verse 7:28.

I find no evidence to support the view that these verses allow a couple involved with a fully consummated marriage and later divorce, to legally remarry another person as long as both spouses are living.

Conclusion:

Obviously this is a serious and difficult topic to discuss. I have put forth my best effort to take the Word of God as the basis for the views expressed in this paper. Like most people, I have friends and family members that are in double marriage relationships and truly wish that we could find a loophole in God’s Word to excuse their sin of adultery. I would love to tell them that I found a verse that truly supports their remarriage and will not cause them to miss out on eternity in heaven. The problem is that God sets the standards just like he does with homosexuality, alcoholism, drug addiction, promiscuous lifestyles, or any other type of sin.

A friend of mine, whose first wife left him, once stated that “God doesn’t expect me to live alone for the rest of my life just because my wife left me”. He was convinced that since the separation was a choice of his wife’s, that God would not require him to live a lonely single life. This justification allowed this former Baptist preacher to remarry another woman without a feeling of guilt. A man’s ways always seem right in their own eyes, as we can justify them just like Proverbs 14:12 states.

Pro 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

I have heard multiple Ministers make the statement that they were not going to deal with the double marriage/adultery subject in their churches but would leave that problem to God to handle. What does Ezekiel 33 tell us about our responsibility to warn others of their iniquity and the charge against the watchman that does not? If we know and hold this fact for other sins, how do we make exceptions for adultery?

I can guarantee you that there are many more straight forward scriptures against adultery than there are for some of the other holiness standards which we are quick to preach against. I do not want to have the blood of anyone held against me in judgment, do you?

Eze 33:7 So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. **Eze 33:8** When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. **Eze 33:9** Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

Can people get by because they are ignorant (sometimes willingly so) to God's views? (Acts 17:30) If the preacher doesn't preach it, are lay members still held to God's standard? (2 Timothy 2:15)

Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

2Tim 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Perhaps you still do not accept the view presented in this paper regarding divorce, remarriage, and adultery. Whether you agree or not, I would suggest that you sincerely seek the Lord for a clear understanding of his expectations with this subject. We must be diligent to avoid adding undue burdens to our Christian responsibilities as well as avoiding compromising the Word to make it more convenient.

I pray that this simple study stirs you to search God's Word for the truths that it contains and he reveals them to you and those that you encounter. If we can help a person overcome the "error of his way" and make it to heaven how much greater thing can we accomplish?

Jas 5:20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

May the Lord enrich your spiritual understanding and lead you by the Holy Ghost!

Bro. S. Evans