

THE Monarch

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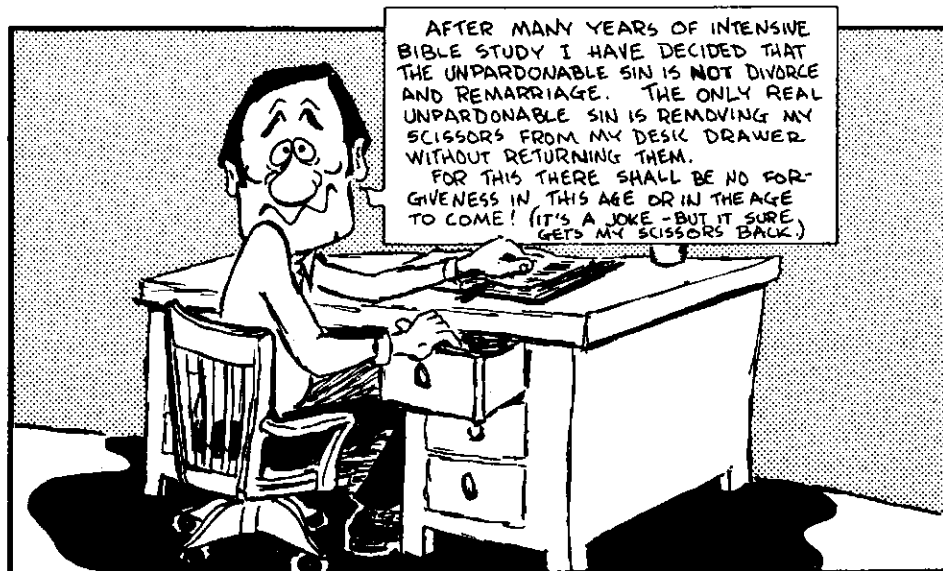
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D · I · V · O · R · C · E



AFTER MANY YEARS OF INTENSIVE BIBLE STUDY I HAVE DECIDED THAT THE UNPARDONABLE SIN IS NOT DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE. THE ONLY REAL UNPARDONABLE SIN IS REMOVING MY SCISSORS FROM MY DESIC DRAWER WITHOUT RETURNING THEM. FOR THIS THERE SHALL BE NO FORGIVENESS IN THIS AGE OR IN THE AGE TO COME! (IT'S A JOKE - BUT IT SURE GETS MY SCISSORS BACK)

God got a divorce. And Jesus' disciples said it wasn't worth getting married if it wasn't possible to get a divorce.

GOD GOT UN DIWORCE!



JESUS' DISCIPLES SAID WHAT?

56

We opened with two shocking statements. They're true statements and we'll get to the proof of them shortly but we wanted you to know right away that this isn't going to be the 'run of the mill' teaching about the subject of divorce.



MARTA, DON'T LET THE KIDS READ DIS VUN TIL I DO!

We're not going to quote statistics about divorce. We know more and more marriages are failing each year. And we know that every preacher worth his salt is decrying this sorry state of affairs. But, the "church" has been grossly unfair when it comes to handling this subject and we think it's time to look at the Bible closely to see what it says about divorce & remarriage.

Just so you know where we're headed we'll tell you our conclusion first. We do not

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believe the Bible teaches that divorce and remarriage are unforgivable sins. We do believe divorce is forgivable and that remarriage is not a sin at all. We do believe Jesus and Paul dealt constructively with these problems and showed us how to cope with them. But in order to understand them we are going to have to separate what the "church" says from what the Bible truly says about divorce.



CAN DIS BE?
DE CHURCH SAY
VUN TING
UN DER BIBLE
SAY ANUDDER
TING?

When we use the word "church" in this article we will be referring to the leaders of many denominations and sectarian groups and even misinformed (though often sincere) christians at all levels of temporal authority.

The word "church" in the Bible means all the believers in Jesus Christ who reside in a specific geographical area. In this article we do not refer to all believers like the Bible does, but rather we use the popular sense of the word "church" meaning the structured society.

Let's take a look at I Corinthians 7. We'll skip the first part of the chapter where Paul says it's best not to get married in the first place and go right to verses 10 & 11. Paul writes "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord. Let not the wife depart from her husband. 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 DIDN'T
SLAM THE DOOR
ON SEPARATION
AND DIVORCE.

In verse 10 Paul closed the door on separation by saying "let not the wife depart." But in verse 11 he set it ajar by

saying "But and if she depart", recognizing that some could not follow the instruction and they would have to depart.

A pastor we know was called to counsel a woman who was having marriage problems. She had three little children in diapers, was pregnant with the fourth and her arms and legs were black and blue from beatings suffered from a cruel drunken husband. The pastor told her, on the basis of his holiness training and verse 10, that she was commanded to never leave that beastly man. (Let not the wife depart from her husband.)

The woman had turned to the pastor, believing he was a man of God, trusting that a God of love would give relief from her desperate situation. Instead she found the door locked tight by the pastor. In an act of final desperation she committed suicide. Her god (Pastor, denomination, etc.) could provide no answer, so she provided her own.



MARTA! COME
READ DIS RIGHT
AWAY NOW. UND
BRING VIS YOU
DER KIDDO'S.

The horrified pastor turned to prayer and more Bible study to see if this was really the way of God or if it was the commandment of his "church." Finally his eyes were opened to the very next verse (verse 11) which would have given that poor woman the opportunity to depart, if only that pastor had known it. (If she depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled.)

Thus, his self-righteous zeal to defend his belief in "no separation" had helped to kill a woman who desperately needed to know the freedom of verse 11. He had to leave his denomination later when he began to advise others about the truth of verse 11, because his superiors in his denomination wanted him to teach people that they could

not separate. But the haunting sound of the suicide pistol made him choose the Bible rather than "church" tradition.

TRADITION
BLINDED
THEM FROM
THE TRUTH..
WHAT A TRADGEDY.



I Corinthians 7:15 says, "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases; but God hath called us to peace." But the commandments and traditions of the "church" do keep the brother or sister under bondage. The Bible says they are not under bondage but the "church" says, yes they are!

WE ARE NOT
CALLED TO
FIGHTING,
COURT ORDERS,
ARGUMENTS, ETC.



Many denominations teach that it is God's will to fight a divorce with every means available. They teach people to act opposite of verse 15. The "church" fights a legal divorce when in actuality the divorce has already taken place in God's sight. (As far as the Bible is concerned a divorce occurs when cohabitation in the bedroom ceases.)

The Bible says, let them go (depart). A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases because God called us to peace. But the "church" says "Oh yes they are under bondage!" They say that if a man leaves his wife, she is still bound to him as long as he lives because of I Cor. 7:10-11 (and because of their mistaken ideas of what they thought Jesus said about it.)

WE HAVE
BEEN CALLED
TO PEACE!



But God has called His people to peace-- not wrath, not court

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arguments, etc., but peace. I Cor. 7:15 says let them go; the remaining person is not under bondage, they are not bound, they are free as far as the Bible is concerned. But the "church" says they are bound because the "church" mixes Moses' commandments with what Jesus said.

Did Jesus tell the woman at the well (John 4:18) "Go find your first husband"? No! Jesus told her to worship God. But some churches order a divorced person to find the mate they first had and order them to leave the one they are presently with. They say the first one is the proper mate and subsequent ones they had were in adultery.

JESUS DIDN'T TELL THE WOMAN AT THE WELL TO FIND HER FIRST HUSBAND.



HE ONLY TOLD HER TO WORSHIP GOD!

I Cor. 7:16 says, "For what knowest thou, oh wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" This is another verse used to keep two people together forever. But, the Bible says if they have already departed, let them go. If the situation is intolerable, the God of love says "let them go." (I Cor. 7:15). But life would be better for both partners if they would try to work out the problems together.

God knows what they're going through. He went through his own divorce and He knows how tough it can be trying to stick it out with a partner who's causing pain to everyone concerned.

Let's turn to Jeremiah 3:6-8. Here we'll find that God got so upset with Israel that he finally broke his covenant with her and divorced her. The book of Hosea refers to the same fact but does not use the word 'divorce' rather it refers to 'cutting off', a form of divorce.

Jeremiah 3:6-8 "...Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And I said after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, AND GIVEN HER A BILL OF DIVORCE..."

GOD KNOWS SOME MARRIAGES ARE UNBEARABLE.



God knows some situations are just plain unbearable and unrepairable and He doesn't expect anyone to endure such a relationship forever. Even He himself didn't do it. He divorced Israel. We know you'll have to chew on that one for awhile so lets hop back to the New Testament and nose in on a conversation between Jesus, His disciples and a few foxy Pharisees.

Matt. 19:3-8 "...The Pharisees came also unto Him, tempting Him, and saying unto Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? (Modern translators say "for any cause.") And He answered and said unto them, 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 shall be one flesh.

THE HARDNESS OF OUR HEARTS CAUSES DIVORCE.



Therefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. They say unto Him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? 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."

Jesus reached back in time beyond Moses' law to the creation and showed how God really intended things to be. By doing this Jesus demonstrated that there were weak points in Moses' law.

JESUS CHANGED MOSES' LAW!

OFFICIAL DOCUMENT
J.C.A. REPLACES MOSES
EFFECTIVE DATE #
TO BE NEW ACT
IT IS ALLY. WARE
TO BE...

-HEB. 7:12-

Many years after Moses gave the law of God king David and king Solomon appeared on the scene and God told them to change many of the laws that Moses had given. Then, even later, the son of David - Jesus Christ made even more changes in the law that Moses gave.

So many changes were made that now we have a New Testament rather than an Old Testament. Some people call it the New Covenant rather than the Old Covenant. It's the same idea. God's laws for us change as we continue to mature and change.

AS WE GROW UP OUR RULES CHANGE!

OKAY!
SOMETIMES
MAYBE.
NO!

There is nothing wrong with any of the laws. The problem is that some people are still trying to keep the rules of their kindergarten teacher years later while they are in high school.

An area of confusion often exists in the mind of present day Christians because they find it difficult to separate the different laws into different time periods. And this is especially true regarding some things Jesus said because he talked to Jews who were trying to find favor with God by keeping the law of Moses. He told them what the spirit of Moses' law was with the idea that it is impossible to please God through that Old Testament.

JESUS TAUGHT THE SPIRIT OF MOSES' LAW.



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But some Christians mistakenly think they are obliged to keep the amplified Old Testament laws Jesus used for examples. Two thousand years ago Jesus said the law of Moses couldn't be kept by anyone. So Jesus gave a New Commandment (testament). But two thousand years later some people are still trying to keep the law that Jesus crucified when he nailed it to the cross. - Col. 2:14.

Matthew 19:9-11 says, "And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another committeth adultery; and who so marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. His disciples say unto Him, If the case of the man be so with his wife it is good not to marry. (His disciples were actually saying that, in their opinion, if divorce and remarriage are not possible they didn't want anything to do with marriage.) But He said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given."

JESUS TOLD HOW IT OUGHT TO BE ... BUT REALIZED EVERYONE COULDN'T MEET THAT STANDARD.

Jesus closed the door on remarriage and then added that the saying was not given to everyone because he had been explaining the depth and the tightness of the letter of Moses' law.

Here we find Jesus saying that not all men are able to accept and live with what He said about Moses' commandment on divorce. Even His own disciples didn't want to hear it; it was too much for them. Jesus said, If you can take it, take it, if you can't, then leave it. He said it was a rule that was best kept but realized fully that not all could keep it. God's grace provides for all situations.

Many well meaning Christians get hopelessly mixed up trying to figure out what Jesus taught about divorce because they fail to notice three major divisions in the text of the New Testament. They are: 1.) What Moses said 2.) What Jesus

said Moses said, and 3.) What Jesus said.

WHEN READING THE NEW TESTAMENT BE AWARE OF:
1. What Jesus said
2. What Moses said.
3. What Jesus said Moses said.

Often, when Jesus was explaining what Moses said in more detail, then people mistakenly thought that was what Jesus said and taught. It is easy to see how such a mistake could occur when reading the section on divorce in Matthew 5. So, we will ask our students to be very careful on this point, though none of us should expect the mainline of the present church to be careful about it.

Jesus' comments about putting someone away (divorce) and fornication and adultery are an amplification of what Moses had commanded. After we are delivered from Moses' law then the teachings of the New Testament in I Cor. 7 take precedent.

We did not say Paul's teachings take precedent over Jesus' teaching. We said that the passage in Matthew was Jesus' explanation of what Moses taught and Jesus was showing that no one could keep the law of Moses so they needed a new law!

THE NEW TESTAMENT IS A WHOLE NEW AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOD & MAN.

The closely connected scripture about "looking on a woman" is a case in point. Jesus said that looking on a woman to lust was the same as committing adultery with her. This was an explanation of the true spirit of Moses' law. Some people quote this scripture as though it was a law Jesus instituted. Really it was an explanation of the fact that no one in the world could find favor with God through Moses' law. And then Jesus summed up the subject by saying anyone who builds

his house on Moses' law builds on sand. And anyone who builds on Jesus' New Testament builds upon a rock.

In I Cor. 7:27 Paul says, "Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed." Bound is a form of the Greek "deo." It is translated 'bind' 37 times and 'tied' once. It means 'are you bound, tied or married.' It means "Are you married - tied to a wife? Do not try to get untied."

IN EXTREME CASES.... DIVORCE IS THE ONLY SOLUTION



The answer to your problem is not a divorce. Jesus and Paul both left the door ajar to divorce. That indicates that in EXTREME cases divorce is permitted. They said, "Don't get a divorce," but added, "If you do, these new controls apply."

I Cor. 7:27 says, "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife (divorced)? seek not a wife."

