

Supplement 18: Various Readings

Adultery, Grounds for Divorce?

Again, the Son of God confronted the hardness of heart of the religious leaders. This time, they dragged into the temple (the church building) someone's wife who was caught in the very act of adultery. (I wonder why the man wasn't brought in, too?) This incident took place in John 8:1-11.

After the accusations and indictments have been hurled out, Jesus said, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (John 8:7). Jesus then stooped down again and wrote in the dirt. When He stood up, every one of her accusers were gone, and not a stone was thrown. He said to her, "*Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?*" She said, *'No one, Lord'*. And Jesus said to her, *'Neither do I condemn you; GO and sin no more'*" (John 8:10-11).

Go where? Go back to her husband and be the kind of wife that God wants her to be. Jesus did not say that adultery was grounds for divorce. He did not even tell her to make it right with her husband, even though she may have been convicted to do just that. But Jesus did say, "Neither do I condemn you; GO AND SIN NO MORE" (John 8:11).

The religious leaders said that she should be stoned to death for adultery, NOT DIVORCED! There were different adulteric situations in applying the law to have her stoned. The stoning punishment that they applied was for a man and woman caught in the act, and a "betrothed damsel" — an engaged young lady. This was spelled out in Deuteronomy 22:24 and Leviticus 20:10. It appeared that Jesus applied the law of Numbers 5:11-31 because this woman was "another man's wife". In this case the wife was to be taken to the Priest. The curses were pronounced and written down regarding her supposed sinfulness. She was then to drink a certain mixture prepared by the Priest and then to say, "Amen, so be it". She was then able to leave and the punishment was left up to God according to what was written. This is probably why Jesus was writing in the dirt — the curses of the sin. But Jesus showed mercy. Even though there are consequences, He wanted to forgive and to cleanse.

ADULTERY IS NOT A MANDATORY REASON FOR A DIVORCE. If it were, that would mean that we could, according to Jesus, divorce our spouse if they only committed the act of adultery in their heart. Jesus said, "*You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'you shall not commit adultery.'* But I say to you that **WHOEVER LOOKS AT A WOMAN TO LUST for her HAS ALREADY COMMITTED ADULTERY WITH HER IN HIS HEART**" (Matthew 5:27, 28). If this were the case, every man would probably have been stoned to death

Staying in a Marriage for the Wrong Reasons

"For how do you know, O wife, whether YOU will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether YOU will save your wife?" (1Corinthians 7:16).

Supplement 18: Various Readings Re: Divorce Page 2

But after much pain they find out it doesn't normally work that way. It takes God to change a person's heart and to free them from such things.

The Wuest translation put it this way: For "ONLY as the Lord has assigned to each one his lot [in life], as God has called each one, IN THAT WAY let him be ordering his manner of life..." (1Corinthians 7:17). Many have taken this Scripture to mean that the spouse that wants to walk with God is supposed to submit to the ungodliness of the other spouse. This is foolishness!

The real questions for this Scripture are, "what has the LORD assigned to each of us as our lot in life? As we walk in that assignment, how shall we order our manner of living?" The answer to both of these questions must culminate into this one thing. "Be holy, for I am holy" (1Peter 1:16).

Some have even said that if a wife for instance, is in a bad marriage, whether they're being abused or however their husband is treating them, that that is their lot from God. This is nothing but foolishness and stupidity in its purest sense. They don't know it's the "...GOODNESS OF GOD [that] leads you to repentance" (Romans 2:4). An abusive type of environment in the home is just not good. A healthy home environment is brought about by seeking "...those things which are above, where Christ is..." (Colossians 3:1).

How can a person live a godly life and at the same time submit that life to someone who practices ungodliness? "For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other..." (Matthew 6:24). You cannot love the Lord your God with all your heart while lowering and yielding yourself and your children to accept, partake and participate in things that the Lord Himself detests.

What has the Lord assigned as our lot in life? Surely it can't be a life you hate so much you want to die to escape the pain. No! The Scriptures are so powerfully clear. Let's take a look:

For "...we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you! I will be a father to you and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. THEREFORE, HAVING THESE PROMISES, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2Corinthians 6:16b-17:1).

If that's not powerful enough, the Scripture also says to, "Let love be without hypocrisy. ABHOR WHAT IS EVIL. CLING TO WHAT IS GOOD" (Romans 12:9).

How could you not hate evil, and truly love, at the same time? That is hypocritical love. Hypocritical love does not hate evil. It allows evil to dwell beside it in its own home. Love MUST hate evil to be true in itself. Let our love be WITHOUT hypocrisy. Otherwise, it's not love at all, but bondage. And for one to "cling" to that which is good, one must at the same time separate from that which is evil. As we move closer to that which is good, there is always a moving away from that which is evil. TRUE LOVE ALWAYS HATES EVIL!

Supplement 18: Various Readings Re: Divorce Page 3

by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is SANCTIFIED by the husband; otherwise, your children would be unclean, but now THEY ARE HOLY” (1Corinthians 7:14).

To be “sanctified” simply means that there is a process of cleaning up going on in a person’s life by God that causes them to be separated from that which is not like Himself and being made into that which is like Himself. (Actually, the words sanctified, separated, holy and hallowed that are used in the Bible are basically the same Greek word. They mean the same thing.) Because the “unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife,” the wife must be sanctified herself and because the “unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband,” would mean the husband must be sanctified himself. And if the “children would be unclean [unholy], but now they are holy,” a mother or father MUST be serving God. Between the husband and wife, one being a Christian and the other a non-Christian, someone must give their whole life to God for Him to make the rest of the family holy. I have heard it said all too often that when a husband lives ungodly and the wife wants to live godly, that the wife must stay with her spouse and do whatever he tells her to do no matter what it is because he is the head even to the point of not serving God. How ridiculous! The wife is seeking for a way out of a bad situation, but is only sentenced back to her prison by “holy men of God.” They want to serve God with all their heart, only to find out they must bear the heavy yoke again. Many times this situation ends in tragedy and the so-called “glory” is given to God. Then the spouse who wants to live godly ends up as a “slave of man” instead of a “slave of righteousness.”

Slaves Of Men Or Slaves Of Righteousness?

“But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister IS NOT UNDER BONDAGE IN SUCH CASES. But God has called us to peace” (1Corinthians 7:15).

Notice the word “bondage” in verse 15. The word in the Greek text is “doulou,” which is the same word for “slave,” or “to be enslaved.” Most clearly, when one is in bondage, they are a slave to whomever or whatever has them bound. .. Let’s read verse 15 from the Wuest translation: “But assuming that the unbelieving husband departs, let him be departing. A [CHRISTIAN] BROTHER OR [CHRISTIAN] SISTER IS NOT IN THE POSITION OF A SLAVE, NAMELY, BOUND TO THE UNBELIEVING HUSBAND OR UNBELIEVING WIFE IN AN INDISSOLUBLE UNION IN CASES SUCH AS THESE; but God has called us [to live] in peace” (1Corinthians 7:15 WUEST).

Notice the “peace” in this case, comes from a separation, not a union. “...God has called us [to live] in peace” (1Corinthians 7:15b). A home that has become a war zone because of two opposing hearts that have been tied together is not peaceful. Being at peace is having the same heart. Again, the Scripture says that a Christian brother or sister “is not in the position of a slave” and goes on to say that they ARE NOT “bound to the unbelieving husband or unbelieving wife in an indissoluble union in cases such as these.” Which means, if we stayed in a situation such as this, we would actually become a slave. And if we become a slave, then someone would have to be the master! You can’t be a slave without having a master over you. And you can’t be in bondage without someone or something binding you. **THE SLAVE ALWAYS PORTENDS THE**

Supplement 18: Various Readings Re: Divorce

Page 4

was holy becomes corrupted and sinful. Thus, no spring yields BOTH salt water and fresh. When polluted water is mixed with clean water, the clean ALWAYS becomes polluted.

The “slave” living under the “master” and the “fresh water” being mixed with the “salt water” is the godly spouse being polluted by the ways and actions of the ungodly spouse. The godly spouse will become a slave and polluted. Good apples in a bushel do not make the rotten apples better. The good become rotten. God is always saying, “come out of her my people, lest YOU share in her sins, and lest YOU receive of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4). “DO NOT BE DECEIVED: “EVIL COMPANY CORRUPTS GOOD HABITS. AWAKE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND DO NOT SIN; FOR SOME DO NOT HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD” (1Corinthians 15:33,34).

Does God Hate Marriage?

Have you ever heard anyone say, “God hates marriage”? Of course not! Have you ever heard anyone say, “God hates divorce”? Sure we have, especially when they are not the ones faced with that dilemma. The phrase, “God hates divorce” has been used against married couples as a blanket answer to cover all types of marriage problems. As we will find out from God’s Word, that is just not true. Neither is it true that “God hates marriage.” On the contrary, God is the one who instituted marriage between a man and a woman. “*Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh*” (Genesis 2:24).

Even though God instituted marriage, He does not approve of ALL marriages. This can be clearly seen in the lives of the people of Israel written in Ezra, chapter 9 and 10, and Deuteronomy 7:15. In Ezra, God disapproved of the marriages and His judgment was on them until they corrected the situation by divorcing their spouses and even separating from their children that were born from those marriages. In Deuteronomy, God said, “*NOR SHALL YOU MAKE MARRIAGES WITH THEM. For they will turn your sons away from following Me*” (Deuteronomy 7:3,4). In this situation, God hated these kind of marriages!

When people say, “God hates divorce” as quoted from Malachi 2:16, normally that has been taught to mean that divorce is not allowed AT ALL. We shall see that this is only a half-truth.

In Jeremiah the eighth chapter, Jeremiah mourns over the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The Lord gave them a warning through the prophet in verses 4-22. In verse 5, it says that they were “*...in a perpetual backsliding [condition]*” and in verse 9 that “*...they have rejected the Word of the Lord.*” Our wrong motives and attitudes will always reject “the Word of the Lord.”

Because their motives and attitudes toward God and people were so bad, God said in verse 10, “*Therefore I WILL GIVE THEIR WIVES TO OTHERS, AND THEIR FIELDS TO THOSE WHO WILL INHERIT THEM.*” Notice God’s attitude concerning the marriage. The marriage itself was not first priority, but second. God did not save the marriage, but broke it up because of their continual disobedience. There is a curse that actually comes upon the marriage relationship because of continual disobedience to God (See Deuteronomy 28:30).