

The 7th Commandment says: Thou shalt not commit adultery.

MARRIAGE, DIVORCE REMARRIAGE

What does GOD have to say ?

For the woman which hath a husband is bound by law to her husband so long as He liveth: but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress, but, if the husband be dead, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she be married to another man. Romans 7 v 2-3.

Unto the married I command, yet not I, but The Lord. Let not the wife depart from her husband: but, if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband, and let not the husband put away his wife. Corinthians 7 v 10-11.

Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For The Lord, The God of Israel saith that He hateth the putting away... Malachi. 2 v 15-16.

According to God's Word, If you have been Married, Divorced and Remarried *while your first husband/wife is still alive* – then you are '*living in sin*' – *committing adultery*. When you acknowledge this fact, and desire to regain favour with GOD - then there is only *one* course of action open to you, that is, *repent* of your sin and *refrain* from it. That obviously would mean living apart until such times as the situation permitted you to be together *legally, according to God's laws*. This may not be easy but it is the *only* way.

In fact, no matter how difficult it may be, God can and will make a way. Any couple taking this stand in honour of God and in obedience to His Commandments, would receive His help and His strength, He would bless and honour them in a way which would pass all human comprehension. With men many things may seem impossible but:-

With God all things are possible. Matthew 19 v 26. The Bible reaffirms in 1 Samuel 2 v 30Them that honour Me, I will honour...

So many couples delve into marriage with the attitude – if it doesn't work, we'll just get a Divorce. Such is the state of society today. Marriages breaking down, children torn between parents. Very often another 'live-in' partner comes along, possibly more children are added to the family, and so it goes on.

Divorce seems to be the 'in thing'. It has become a real money-spinner for lawyers as the number of couples entering the divorce courts is soaring every year. There is no longer any determination to make marriage work. If a rough patch comes along many immediately opt for the divorce courts. The marriage vows 'for better, for worse, till death us do part', are forgotten.

Even Christian people are not exempt. Divorce is like a cancer spreading through the Church, yet because there are so many different views on the subject, it is allowed to proceed rampantly. Just as cancer destroys the natural body, so divorce is destroying the spiritual body.

Now we are not condemning any man or woman whose marriage has broken down through no fault of their own, in fact we sympathise with those who are left broken-hearted, maybe facing the prospect of bringing up a young family single-handed. We also realise that sometimes, as a result of adultery, abuse or cruelty, a husband or a wife has no alternative but to live apart.

BUT

**What does The Bible have to say on the subject of
MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE?**

The rib, which The Lord has taken from man made He a woman and brought her unto the man, and Adam said, 'This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.' Genesis 2 v 22.

Again we read the same words in:- *Matthew 19 v 3-9. The Pharisees came unto Jesus, tempting Him and saying unto Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?' Jesus 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 his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'*

Then they said unto Him, 'Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement and to put her away?' Jesus said 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, 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.'

God hates divorce - he never intended it to be !!

BUT, you may say, go to Matthew 5 v 32 and Matthew 19 v 9 and you will read:- Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another committeth adultery...

Surely this indicates that there must be a legitimate reason for divorce. What does the phrase **"except it be for fornication"** mean? Answer:- These five words have been distorted and manipulated, even amongst Christian people, to make an excuse or a means whereby there could be 'so called' scriptural grounds for divorce – when in fact there are *no* scriptural grounds whatsoever.

Many believe the word 'Fornication' means 'Adultery'. This is wrong. Fornication and Adultery are two completely different things – they have distinctly different meanings. This is made very clear in the two scriptures mentioned, Matthew 5 v 32 and Matthew 19 v 9 where the word 'fornication' is used once and 'adultery' used twice in the same verse, thus proving that their meanings are different.

Fornication - means - Any illegitimate sexual relationship on the part of an unmarried person, in other words, sex before marriage.

In Corinthians 7 v 2 we read:- 'To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.'

Adultery - means - Any illegitimate sexual relationship on the part of a married person, with one who is not his/her spouse.

Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.....but whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach (disgrace) shall not be wiped away. Proverbs 6 v 27-33.

So how can we find the truth of this matter regarding Fornication and Adultery? The Bible must be our only source. As we search the Scriptures we discover that in Biblical times 'Betrothal' or 'Engagement' as we call it, was a very serious affair, so that even *before* the marriage had taken place, the young woman was known as 'a wife'. In Deuteronomy 22 v 24 we see the words 'husband and wife' used to describe a young couple 'engaged to be married.' This is also seen in Matthew 1 v 18-19 where we read of Mary and Joseph:-

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: when as His Mother Mary was 'espoused' (engaged) to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph, her husband, not willing to make her public example, was minded to put her away privily.

At this stage Joseph was *not* Mary's husband, as we would recognise it – they were *engaged to be married*. If they had been married, Joseph would *not* have considered putting Mary away privily – nor would she have been a public example because she was having a baby.

Matthew 1 v 20 The angel Gabriel appears to Joseph in a dream saying, 'Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of The Holy Ghost.'

Here we see that on the assurance of the angel, Joseph was convinced that Mary had *not* committed fornication. In other words she had not been unfaithful to him before marriage. So the phrase '*except it be for fornication*' indicates that provision was made for the termination of an 'engagement' or 'betrothal' if the woman or man was found guilty of unfaithfulness *before* the marriage, but certainly *not after* the marriage vows were taken.

With this matter clearly defined through the truth of The Bible, that leaves one plain and simple fact which is:-

If a man / woman divorce, for whatever reason, and either remarry, whilst the first partner is still alive – they commit adultery !

There is no way round it. No scriptural grounds to justify it !

In Mark 10 v 2-12 and Luke 16 v 18. Jesus speaks again with regard to the unbreakable nature of the marriage bond. Here we see that the phrase 'except it be for fornication,' *is omitted*, thus making it very clear:-

Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another committeth adultery against her, and if a woman shall put away her husband and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

The 7th Commandment. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

So according to God's word -
Divorce and Remarriage is most definitely forbidden
while the first partner is still alive!
Neither is it an option to just live together.

The permanence of Marriage.

Marriage is one of the most binding and meaningful commitments in life, the permanence of which is stressed throughout The Bible, therefore it should never be entered into lightly or carelessly. Choosing the right partner is of utmost importance. An unequal yoke always results in problems, no matter how compatible the relationship may appear. For example:- A Christian should never marry a non-Christian.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. 2nd Corinthians 6 v14.

The unequal yoke with a partner of a different race or a different culture could also create problems. The individual should *always* seek a partner who has a similar cultural or racial background. Outside of these Biblical principles – couples could experience major difficulties.

The question has been raised ‘What if the couple are both Christians but are from different cultural or racial backgrounds?’ This is a fair question and yes, Christians are all one in Christ, but we believe, being from different cultural /racial backgrounds can still cause problems. However, if both are committed Christians then the decision would ultimately rest with the couple who would obviously pray concerning their compatibility..

Can two walk together, except they be agreed. Amos 3v3

Many a marriage has taken place which was *not* made in heaven. Many a couple have married outside of God’s will and have experienced severe difficulties as a result, nevertheless, *they made that choice*, taking upon themselves the marriage vows, ‘till death us do part,’ etc.

Again we emphasise how important it is to seek God’s guidance regarding your marriage partner. If you make a mistake in your choice and the marriage fails, with no reconciliation, then according to God’s law, you *must remain unmarried* while your husband/wife is still alive.

When a marriage breaks down it is often the children who suffer most. No matter what the reason, we believe children who live in a divided home, live under great emotional stress, which could leave its mark upon those young lives.

Couples should be very aware of the responsibilities they are taking on before they get married.

When the marriage ceremony has taken place and those special vows made, the Bride and Groom enter into a contract before God, which neither they nor anyone else should ever violate – that’s the way God wants it to be - a lifelong commitment to each other. (Till death us do part !!)

Important Note: Some people believe if they are divorced and remarried they will never be accepted by God. This is not true. God is a merciful God. Anyone who turns from their sin and wholeheartedly comes to The Lord Jesus Christ in repentance of those sins, will be accepted.

*Jesus said, He that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out. John 6 v 37.
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and
Cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1 v 19.*