

DIVORCE AND REMMARIAGE

BIBLE TEXT Genesis 2:18, 21-24; Malachi 2:14; Matthew 5:32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2, 3; I Corinthians 7:10-13; Ephesians 5:22-32

LESSON 271 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband" (Ephesians 5:33).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Genesis 2:18

¹⁸ And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:21-24

²¹ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

²² And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

²³ 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.

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

Malachi 2:14

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.

Matthew 5:32

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.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I God's Institution of Marriage

1. God's plan of marriage was from the beginning, Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:4-6;

Mark 10:6-9

⁶ But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

⁷ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

⁸ And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

⁹ What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

2. The marriage vow is terminated only when one of the two parties dies, Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:14; Matthew 19:6-8; I Corinthians 7:10-13, Romans 7:2, 3.

Mark 10:7-9

⁷ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

⁸ And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

⁹ What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

1 Corinthians 7:27

²⁷ Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

1 Corinthians 7:39

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.

3. A Christian must not marry an ungodly person,

1 Corinthians 7:39

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.

2 Corinthians 6:14

¹⁴ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

Genesis 24:3-4

³ And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

⁴ But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

Genesis 28:1

¹ And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Deuteronomy 7:2-4

² And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, *and* utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

³ Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

⁴ For they will turn away thy son from following me,

Matthew 19:3-9

³ The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

⁴ And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,

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?

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

⁷ They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

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.

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.

Mark 10:11-12

¹¹ And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

¹² And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

Luke 16:18

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

that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

Joshua 23:11-13

¹¹ Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.

¹² Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, *even* these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you:

¹³ Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out *any* of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.

Ezra 9:11-12

¹¹ Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness.

¹² Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave *it* for an inheritance to your children for ever.

Nehemiah 13:23-27

²³ In those days also saw I Jews *that* had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, *and* of Moab:

²⁴ And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.

²⁵ And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, *saying*, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

²⁶ Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.

²⁷ Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?

4. A person who has become a Christian after marriage will not separate from an unbelieving companion simply because he is an unbeliever, Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5, 6;

Mark 10:6-9

⁶ But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

⁷ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

⁸ And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

⁹ What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

1 Corinthians 7:10

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

1 Corinthians 7:12-16

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.

¹³ And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the

Romans 7:2-3

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.

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.

1 Corinthians 7:10-13

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

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.

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.

¹³ And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

Ephesians 5:22-32

²² Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

²⁴ Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

²⁶ That he might sanctify and

wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

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.

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?

5. God's requirements of both husband and wife are very exacting, Ephesians 5:22-33; I Corinthians 7:3.

II God's Forbiddance of Divorce and Remarriage

1. God permits the putting away of, or separation from, a companion for one thing only; but His perfect and original plan gave no grounds at all for divorce, Matthew 5:32; 19:3-9 and Mark 10:11, 12 cf. Deuteronomy 24:1-3; I Corinthians 7:10, 11, 27.

2. Marriage to another, while the rightful companion lives, is adultery, Matthew 5:31, 32; 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:3.

Matthew 5:31

³¹ It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

3. God will bring severe judgement on those who violate His commands in this regard,

Matthew 15:19-20

¹⁹ For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

²⁰ These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

Mark 7:20-23

²⁰ And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

²² Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

²³ All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

Galatians 5:19

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Galatians 5:21

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.

1 Corinthians 5:11-13

¹¹ But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

¹² For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

¹³ But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

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

cleansed it with the washing of water by the word,

²⁷ That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

²⁸ So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

²⁹ For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

³⁰ For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

³¹ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

³² This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 6:18

¹⁸ **Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.**

1 Corinthians 10:8

⁸ **Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.**

Ephesians 5:3

³ **But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;**

Ephesians 5:5

⁵ **For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.**

Malachi 3:5

⁵ **And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in *his* wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his right*, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.**

Hebrews 13:4

⁴ **Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.**

James 4:4

⁴ **Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.**

2 Peter 2:14-17

¹⁴ **Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:**

¹⁵ **Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son of Bosor*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;**

¹⁶ **But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.**

¹⁷ **These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.**

Revelation 2:22

²² **Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.**

NOTES:

God's Plan, and Man's Attitude Toward It

Marriage is binding for life. The Bible teaches us that the only time a marriage vow is ever broken is by the death of one of the two parties who have taken the vow. It clearly states: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mark 10:9; **Malachi 2:14** 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).** (1 Corinthians 7:39 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).** This was God's plan as revealed in the beginning, when God gave man a helpmeet; and we can see from the teachings of Christ that it is God's plan for us today. In fact, this was God's plan for all time.

As a rule, man has held contempt for the divine laws and plans in one way or another. Because of that contempt, conditions became so bad at one time in the world's history that God destroyed the great bulk of humanity. After the floodwaters had subsided He made a covenant with those whom He had spared, stating that He would never again destroy the world in that manner. He promised great benefits and blessings to those who would keep His covenants and claim His promises. But man soon began to disregard the Covenant that God had made with him, and there has been a steady decline in morals and an increase in lawlessness ever since.

God has carried out His plan — His part of the Covenant — in spite of the fact that man has repeatedly broken it and the other covenants He made with the various peoples of the world. God dealt in faithfulness and mercy with the Chosen Nation, but they rebelled again and again and finally committed the capital act of rejection by refusing their only hope of salvation and crucifying the Son of God.

The Gentiles, too, have had their opportunity to accept or reject the King of Love; but they, too, to a great extent, have rejected Him who paid the price that made their salvation possible. Jesus told His disciples that these sinful conditions would exist, and he prophesied that they would be especially present in the days immediately preceding His return to earth. He said: "As it was in the days of Noe [Noah], so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, **they married wives**, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe [Noah] entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:26-30).

Today we can see the fulfilment of these prophetic words. There has been an appalling decline in the morals of the people of the world, in the past years especially, and we can see that this is truly a sign of the soon return of the Son of God.

Times may change and man's customs may be altered with the passing of time. Man may disregard and cast aside that which is known and proved to be God's way — the right way and the best way — for that which is sensual and gratifying to his fleshy lusts. But God's Word, His plan, and His Law remain the same always. God said in the beginning that a man would leave his father and mother and would cleave unto his wife (not wives) and that they would be one flesh. There has been no altering of this divine statement. It stands today.

Abuses of God's Plan and God's Judgements

John the Baptist spoke out against the sin of adultery, in the case of a ruler who had taken for himself the wife of another man (**Matthew 14:3-4** ³ **For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.** ⁴ **For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her**). This sin of adultery was also taught against, and God's will clearly shown, in the examples in which God likened unfaithful Israel to an unfaithful marital companion who had gone out to marry into adultery or to commit the sinful act (**Malachi 2:11-15** ¹¹ **Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.** ¹² **The LORD will cut off the man that**

doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts. ¹³ And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth *it* with good will at your hand. 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. ¹⁵ And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth). When David sinned after this manner he caused the name of the Lord to be blasphemed among the heathen, and brought God's judgement upon himself because of his sin (2 Samuel 12:13-14 ¹³ And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. ¹⁴ Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also *that is* born unto thee shall surely die).

Jesus talked with a woman of Samaria and drew from her the admission that her fifth companion was not her husband (John 4:16-18 ¹⁶ Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. ¹⁷ The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: ¹⁸ For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly). And the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul, has taught us that those who commit this terrible sin of adultery will have no part in the Kingdom of Heaven unless they repent and cease from their sinful ways (1 Corinthians 6:9 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, Galatians 5:19-21 ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 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. 2 Peter 2:14-17 ¹⁴ Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: ¹⁵ Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; ¹⁶ But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. ¹⁷ These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever).

There is much in Scripture that condemns the prevalent abuse of the institution that God made for the benefit of all mankind. Many will distort and ignore the plain teachings of the Bible that they might cover up, excuse, or allow their sin. But the Word of God still remains, and the judgments of God will fall upon all who commit this sin, even though the state of adultery may be legalised or sanctioned by the laws or customs of the community.

The True Marriage

God's Word is plain regarding marriage. God has told us that it is not according to His plan for His people to unequally yoke themselves together with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14 ¹⁴ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 ¹⁰ And unto the married I command, *yet* not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from *her* husband: 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. 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. ¹³ And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. 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. 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. 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?) He has said that marriage is honourable (Hebrews 13:4 ⁴ Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.) but has also given solemn instructions regarding the obligations that the wife owes to her husband and that the husband owes to his wife (Ephesians 5:22-33 ²² Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. ²⁴ Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; ²⁶ That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. ²⁹ For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: ³⁰ For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. ³¹ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. ³² This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ³³ Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband. Romans 7:1-3 ¹ Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? 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. 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. 1 Corinthians 7:2-6 ² Nevertheless, *to avoid* fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. ³ Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. ⁴ The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. ⁵ Defraud ye not one the other, *except it be* with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. ⁶ But I speak this by permission, *and* not of commandment. 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 ¹⁰ And unto the married I command, *yet not* I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from *her* husband: 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. 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. ¹³ And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. 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. 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. 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? 1 Corinthians 7:27-33 ²⁷ Art thou bound unto a wife?

QUESTIONS

1. State God's original plan regarding marriage and how binding its requirements are.
2. Name some of God's warriors in the Bible who taught against the sin of adultery; and tell, in your own words, what they said about it.
3. When, and when only, is the marriage vow terminated?
4. Is it necessary that one be married in a church or before a minister in order for that marriage to be recognised by God as a true marriage? State the reasons for your answer.
5. What does God require of the wife in her attitude and duty toward her husband?
6. What does God require of the husband in his attitude and duty toward his wife?
7. When is a marriage wrong in the sight of God?
8. In looking forward to marriage, what has God said must be considered? Quote the verse in II Corinthians that is our authority for the correct answer to this question.
9. Was divorce allowed in God's original plan?
10. What was the answer the woman of Samaria gave to Jesus when He asked her to go call her husband? Why did Jesus say she had answered correctly?

seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. 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. ²⁹ But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; ³⁰ And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; ³¹ And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away. ³² But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: ³³ But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please *his wife*).

As we have stated already, no divorce proceedings are allowed in God's plan, and separation is countenanced by Him for only certain limited reasons. Death is the only thing that can fully separate those whom God has joined together. A full and complete consideration of this divine principle takes care of all difficulties and answers all problems. God honours all marriages. They do not necessarily have to be performed by a minister or in a sanctuary, so long as they are in accord with God's Word and in keeping with the established customs and civil laws or regulations of the particular locality where they are solemnised.

This being the case, the only marriages that are not regarded by God as being true marriages are those that are made between persons who, one or both of whom, have been married to another person who is still living. Therefore, when a right companion of a person seeking marriage is still living, the original marriage vows are still in force and the subsequent marriage is out of order and in direct violation to the commands of God. Such a subsequent marriage is the state of adultery. The original marriage bond, which can be dissolved only by death, is unbroken; and the subsequent marriage is in complete disregard of that bond.

The problems that confront the minister of the Gospel who is charged with the responsibility of instructing those who have been ensnared by the enemy of men's souls in this prevailing sin are many. A faithful man of God will pray much and examine every detail of the marriage relationship that he is considering, to see how it coincides with the divine plan. The original commands of God and the statement of the divine plan, which was made in the beginning, are usually sufficient to determine the true status of any relationship. This revelation of God's will, is the guide and measuring rule that we, as individuals, must apply to our own experience and relationships in order that our lives may be right in the sight of God and our conduct above reproach before men. Therefore, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).