

DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE—A CONTEXTUAL STUDY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The following study is provided to you with my prayer that you will seek to know the Lord's will concerning divorce and remarriage.

Using the Contextual Method of Bible Interpretation, I have researched all of the New Testament scriptures that I could find regarding the subject of divorce and remarriage. Although I have purchased dozens of scholarly books on this subject over the past 30 years, I have not found one that has provided a thorough examination of these scriptures observed within their surrounding context.

In case you may wonder why this research topic is important to me, I will share that through my work, I have accompanied people through the emotional mine field of divorce recovery for 10 years. From my vantage point, it appears more wretched and life-altering than coping with a mate's physical death. It has become unthinkable to me that God would sanction such rending of the human heart. I decided to make my own diligent search to clearly understand God's word, as I must answer to the Lord for the Biblical ministry that I provide to other Christians.

In order to begin such a study, it is important for the reader to understand what the Context Principle of Bible interpretation is and why is it so relevant to Bible study. The following information by Hurt (2006) is used with permission and is provided through the internet from Precept Ministries International:

“CONTEXT PRINCIPLE: Context always rules in interpretation, whether you are studying a single word, one verse or a larger section of Scripture. Always check to see who the “neighbors” are!

Context is the setting in which something “dwells”. If you take a fish out of water, it doesn't function well! This principle holds for any passage of Scripture which is taken out of context. In simple terms, context is that which goes with the text, the “neighbors” so to speak—that which comes before and after. Webster says that “context” is

“The parts of a discourse that surround a word or passage and can throw light on its meaning”.

The word “context” is derived from a Latin word meaning “to weave together”. Any time we break into the middle of a book, a chapter or paragraph, we need to look at the surrounding context. When you interpret Scripture, whether it is a single word, a verse or a paragraph, you must always consider the Scripture in light of the surrounding verses, chapters and book in which it is found and finally in the context of the entire Bible. Your interpretation should never contradict the context of the book, chapter or paragraph you are studying. If you ignore context, the accuracy of your interpretation will suffer. Remember that a text taken out of context potentially can become a pretext (a fictitious reason given in order to conceal the real one which is how many cults have originated.)”

The context principle is well-known by Bible interpreters and can be subdivided into the following group of interrelated principles, as explained by Wikipedia (2006):

“The Context Principle: God gives light upon a subject through either near or remote passages bearing upon the same subject.

Subdivided Context/Mention Principles:

The First Mention Principle: God indicates in the first mention of a subject the truth with which that subject stands connected in the mind of God.

The Progressive Mention Principle: God makes the revelation of any truth increasingly clear as the word proceeds to its consummation.

The Comparative Mention Principle: God allows illumination of a subject by comparing or contrasting a verse or verses with a related verse or verses. (Connor, 1983)

The Complete Mention Principle: God declares His full mind upon any subject vital to our spiritual life.”

A Progressive Mention study may be performed by looking at the scriptures in chronological order according to the date of writing of the books of scripture. However, I have chosen to use the Progressive Mention Principle according to the sequential order of the books as listed in the New Testament. I believe that the subject of marriage is close to the heart of God and is written so that a person of nominal literal ability would be able to understand about marriage and divorce by reading through the New Testament noting passages that relate to it. I do not believe that important Biblical truths would be hidden to the heart that seeks to do the will of God (*Deut. 30:10-14; Matt. 13:10-17; Col. 1:25-29*). But spiritual truths are hidden from the natural man (*1 Cor. 2:14; Prov. 25:2*).

As you study the following Bible texts, it will be helpful to review the meaning of the Four Context/Mention Principles.

OF CRITICAL INTEREST TO THE READER, I have learned that even if one follows the identical scripture sequence of complete mention that I have followed, modern Bible versions (that is, any except King James Version) do not produce the same interpretive results. The modern Bible versions change key Greek word meanings which obscure the reader from fully comprehending word meanings. I have provided Greek definitions throughout the text using Strong's Concordance numbering system retrieved from www.blueletterbible.org. A complete listing of the definitions is found at the end of the paper.

A note of explanations must be added about Old Testament and New Testament gender and marital references. In the N.T. the words used for “man” and “husband” are the same Greek word “*Aner*” (435), and the same applies to the words used for “woman” and “wife” “*Gune*” (1135). This means that when the translators use the word, “husband”, they could often just as easily have used the word “man”. So, we cannot say, “the Bible calls them “husband” or “wife”, so they must be living as married”, because it is a matter of translation while understanding the cultural and contextual setting. A closer look at the context of the passage within the context of the book, within the context of the testament, within the context of the whole of the Bible will provide accuracy of translation and clarity of understanding. (This will be noted in the 1st, 9th and 13th Progressive Mentions.)

The first Progressive Mention: *Matt. 1:18-20*

18“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was **espoused** (3423) to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph, her **husband** (435), being a just [man], and not willing to make her a public example was minded to **put her away** (630) privily.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy **wife** (1135): for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.”

This passage provides us with a New Testament example of the Jewish custom of betrothal which needed to be addressed in the *Book of Matthew* because of the unusual circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus and because this cultural practice dates back to *Genesis 19:8-14*. From the following text we learn that Lot’s daughters were betrothed, but they had not begun living intimately with their intended mates. Although Lot stated that his daughters were virgins, he referred to their intended husbands as his sons-in-law:

8“*I have two daughters who have not known men...*

14...*Lot spoke unto his sons-in-law, who married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city, But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law.*”

Joseph considered divorcing Mary as he believed her to be guilty of the sin of fornication. One of the definitions of fornication is “lewdness of an unmarried person of either sex” (Unger). “Putting away” is the Jewish cultural “divorce” procedure in the case of fornication practiced by a woman before the couple had begun living together as husband and wife.

The second Progressive Mention text: *Matt. 5 (Table 1)*

1“*And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:*

2*And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,*

3*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

4*Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*

5*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

6*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

7*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

8*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*

9*Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.*

10*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of God.*

11*Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*

12*Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

13*Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

14*Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

15Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

18For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

21Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

23Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

24Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

25Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

27Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

31It hath been said, Whosoever shall **put away** (630) his wife (1135), let him give her a **writing of divorcement** (647):

32But I say unto you, That whosoever shall **put away** (630) his **wife** (1135), saving for the cause of **fornication** (4202) causeth her to commit **adultery** (3429): and whosoever shall marry her that is **divorced** (630) commiteth **adultery** (3429)

33Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

34But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

35Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

36Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37But let your communication be, Yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

*38Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:
39But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

40And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

41And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

43Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.

44But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?

47And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?

48Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

It is a very important point in this passage and its **Comparative Mention** passage in *Matt. 19:9* to note that the word "fornication" is used in KJV instead of the words "marital unfaithfulness" which are found in modern Bible versions in the "exception clause". I have provided the Greek meanings of these and other words at the end of this study. It is important to study all of the meanings of the word "fornication". In *Matt. 5:32; 15:19; 19:19; Mark 7:21 1 Cor. 6:9 and Gal. 5:19-21* "fornication" (4202) is used of illicit sexual relations in general, but it is distinguished from adultery (3430) in each of these texts. See the following example:

*"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, **adultery** (3430), **fornication** (4202), uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revelings, 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." Gal. 5:19-21*

This and the context of the *Book of Matthew* show us that "fornication" can mean various illicit sexual sins. If Jesus had meant marital unfaithfulness/adultery which is only one of the meanings of "fornication", **He would have used the word for adultery**, since he used that word in the verse also. He clearly used a different word.

The context of *Matt. 5* teaches the following points:

- The blessed ones are, "*the poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, they that hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers and they which are persecuted for righteousness sake*". *Mt. 5:3-11*
- The blessed ones retard corruption as the "*salt of the earth*". *Mt. 5:13*
- The blessed ones illuminate darkness as the "*light of the world*". *Mt. 5:14*
- Jesus speaks repeatedly of a higher way than has formerly been required:
 - "**Ye have heard that it was said** by them of old time...**But I say unto you...**" *Mt. 5:21,22*
 - "**Ye have heard that it was said** of them of old time...**But I say unto you...**" *Mt. 5:27,28*

- ***“It hath been said...But I say unto you...” Mt. 5:32,33***
- ***“Again, ye have heard that it was said of them of old time...But I say unto you...” Mt. 5:38,39***
- ***“Ye have heard that it was said...But I say unto you...” Mt. 5:43,44***
- The higher way required meekness and merciful peacemaking (Mt. 5:5, 7, 9).
- The higher way results in reconciliation (Mt. 5:24).
- The higher way forsakes the breaking of oaths (Mt. 5:33).
- The higher way removes believer’s rights to retaliation (Mt. 5:38). *“Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also.”*
- The higher way teaches to take the hurt if you are sued at law, i.e. divorced (Mt. 5:40).
- The higher way teaches us to *“love, bless, do good and to pray for those who use and persecute you, that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.”* (Mt. 5:44,45)
- The higher way teaches us to be “perfect” (mature, virtuous) *“even as your Father which in heaven is perfect”*. (Mt. 5:48)

The message of the context of this passage is that Jesus expects His follower’s righteousness to exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, just as He is righteous. The higher way, as described in this passage could not allow divorce for marital unfaithfulness as has been suggested in this generation. Believers may be mournfully rejected and persecuted, but the mature and virtuous response is to imitate the Lord Jesus Christ through the love that lays down ones right to retaliation, leaving open doors to reconciliation. This is the love commanded in *1 Corinthians 13*.

In light of the context, another explanation must be found for the meaning of the “exception” for divorce noted by Jesus. According to Old Testament law which was currently being practiced by the Jews, those who were guilty of fornication during betrothal may be rejected through a writing of divorcement as allowed in *Deut. 24:1*. Since Mary was known to be pregnant, Joseph planned to divorce her, until the angel of the Lord intervened.

The third Progressive Mention text: *Mt. 14:1-10 (Table 3)*

- 1*“At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus.*
- 2*And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist, he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.*
- 3***For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias’ sake, his brother Philip’s wife (1135).***
- 4***For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.***
- 5*And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.*
- 6*But when Herod’s birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.*
- 7*Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.*
- 8*And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist’s head in a charger.*
- 9*And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath’s sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.*
- 10*And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.”*

John the Baptist deemed the unlawful alliance between Herod and Herodias an important enough moral issue to suffer King Herod's wrath, resulting in his imprisonment and death. Herod had violated the Mosaic and covenantal laws of the scriptures.

"The Mosaic law forbade the marriage of a brother's wife (*Lev. 18:16; 20:21*) with the exception of raising children to a deceased childless brother by levirate marriage (*Deut. 25:5; Mark 12:19*). However, in Antipas' case his brother had offspring, viz., Salome, and even more blatantly Antipas' brother was still alive!" (Zondervan)

Herod could not have been considered a believer; he was an evil, figure-head of a Hebrew king, whom Jesus called, "*that fox*" (*Lu. 13:32*). Herod was already married to the daughter of Arêtes, an Arabian king of Petraea. (Unger) His brother, Phillip's marriage was acknowledged and upheld as valid and Herod's lifestyle with Herodias was resisted by the righteous John Baptist. Here is provided strong support that God's marriage laws are universal before and after salvation.

Although an example could have been provided in this passage for an offended mate (Phillip) to be exonerated to remarry after his wife's adultery, we do not find this to have taken place. **There are no New Testament examples of an offended mate being allowed to divorce and remarry.** It is a weighty matter that there are no New Testament examples allowing divorce in the case of marital unfaithfulness. But we do have Biblical example of a "just man's" consideration of divorce for his betrothed's premarital pregnancy. If Jesus had truly made exception to His commands for the case of marital unfaithfulness, He surely would have provided examples within the scriptures in support of it.

The fourth **Progressive Mention** text: **Mt. 19:1-12 (Table 1)** Note: The last 11 words of Matt. 19:9 have been omitted in modern Bible versions!

1"And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan;

2And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.

*3The Pharisees also came unto him tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a **man** (444) to **put away** (630) his **wife** (1135) for every cause?*

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

*5And said, For this cause shall a **man** (444) leave father and mother, and shall **cleave** (4347) to his **wife** (1135); and they twain shall be one flesh?*

*6Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined (4801) together, let not **man** (444) **put asunder** (5563).*

*7They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a **writing of divorcement** (647) and to **put her away** (630)?*

*8He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you **to put away** (630) your wives (1135); but from the beginning it was not so.*

*9And I say unto you, Whosoever shall **put away** (630) his **wife** (1135), except it be for **fornication** (4202), and shall marry another, committeth **adultery** (3429): and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit **adultery** (3429).*

*10His disciples say unto him, If the case of the **man** (444) be so with his **wife** (1135), it is not good to marry.*

11But he said unto them, All [men] cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.

*12For there are some **eunuchs** (2135), which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some **eunuchs** (2135), which were made **eunuchs** (2135) of men: and there be **eunuchs** (2135), which have made themselves **eunuchs** (2135) for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."*

The context of this passage teaches the following points:

- The Pharisees' motive in addressing divorce was to 'tempt' Jesus (v-3); perhaps to assume a divisive position and to suffer John Baptist's end.
- Jesus reaffirms the higher way in the beginning (which provides the **First Mention in the Old Testament** of God's intent for marriage),
"Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." Gen. 2:24
- Jesus declares that the married can never be two again.
- He acknowledges God's involvement in marital joining.
- Man is not to separate the married.
- Jesus corrected the Pharisees words of Moses' divorce involvement.
- Moses suffered the hardness of the hearts of men.
- Again, Jesus reiterated about divorce, ***"but from the beginning it was not so"***. The word "but" in this passage is crucial to attend to. It means "on the contrary" or "contrary to expectation" (Webster). It would be error to disregard Jesus' statements about the beginning which have been mentioned twice in the text.
- Jesus taught that ***"except it be for fornication"***, subsequent remarriage causes the persons to commit adultery. (In order for remarriage to be called adultery there must be a former valid marriage covenant/living spouse.)
- Jesus words clearly shocked His disciples (***"If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry"***), so Jesus could not have sided with any of the cultural remarriage attitudes of that day. This must be so, because he was not trapped into siding for or against the Pharisees view when they ***"came unto him, tempting him..."*** Jesus' view was completely fresh and new from what anyone had suspected.
- Jesus noted that all men cannot abstain from marriage as the disciples had suggested.
- Jesus presented the subject of eunuchs into this discussion in which he also includes "one who voluntarily abstains from marriage" (2135) ***"for the kingdom of heaven's sake"***. This discussion lends support to the interpretation that remarriage is not allowed after divorce. The disciples clearly understood the higher way of embracing the marriage covenant. The following verse in *Isaiah 56:3-5* reveals God's heart toward His eunuchs:

"Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant, even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off."

- Within this chapter Jesus states, ***"Thou shalt not commit adultery"***. *Mt. 19:18*

- This chapter closes with strong support for one who may have been “put away” and has not sought remarriage, “*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 an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.*” *Mt. 19:29*

In light of the context, this passage forbids divorce and all remarriage when one has a living spouse. The context contends with the interpretation which would allow for divorce or remarriage because of a mate’s adultery.

Concluding remarks about the subject of divorce and remarriage in the *Book of Matthew*:

Some modern Bible versions translate “*except for fornication*” in the *Matthew Chapter 5 and 19* passages as “except for marital unfaithfulness”. If we say that Jesus allows for divorce for marital unfaithfulness, we must consider *Matt. 5:28*, “*whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after hath committed **adultery** (3431) with her already in his heart.*” This sin could be considered grounds for divorce, since Jesus calls it adultery. However, Jesus’ intent is not condoning divorce for marital unfaithfulness. The context shows that the intent of this passage is pointing to a higher way of looking into our own hearts, resisting the anger, retaliation, pride, lust, and hatred which leads one to forsake their marriage covenant. He is asking us to be mature and complete in Him no matter what situations we may face in life. As Jesus states in V-32, this higher way includes our marriages. He was thoroughly condemning divorce as the former way.

To look further within the **Context Principle**, the subject must be viewed in the **context of the book** to whom it is written. The *Book of Matthew* identifies many issues specific to the Jewish culture. To interpret the exception clause to address premarital sexual sin/fornication (KJV) provides explanation of the unusual account of Mary and Joseph surrounding the birth of Christ. Allowance for the Jewish cultural betrothal practice of “putting away” is necessary to that audience. This reference helps us to understand Joseph’s original intent to “*put Mary away privily*” (*Mt. 2:19*) yet he is called “a just man”. This provides understanding of the gospels of Mark and Luke where Jesus condemns divorce, however, the exception clause is not found in Jesus’ discussion. Jewish cultural principles would not need to be revisited in these other gospels.

Note: John Piper provides a credible exposition of the meaning of the *Greek, Porneia*, as it appears throughout the gospels. I recommend that the reader examine his short study located at this web site: http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/divorce_remarriage/dr_adultery.html

The fifth Progressive Mention text: *Mark 6:14-18 (Table 3)*

14“And King Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad;) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

*15*Others said, That it is Elijah. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

*16*But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

*17***For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias’ sake, his brother Philip’s wife (1135); for he had married her.**

*18***For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife (1135).”**

In Mark's account we are given more detail about the sinful alliance of Herod and Herodias that John the Baptist was condemning. Mark relates that Herod "had married her". This **Progressive Mention** follows Jesus' affirmation of the *Genesis 2:24* text indicating that Herod would have violated his covenantal one-flesh union with his wife through his adulterous marriage to Herodias.

The sixth Progressive & Comparative (Mt. 19:1-12) Mention text: Mk 10:1-12 (Table 1)

1"And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

*2And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a **man** (435) to **put away** (630) his **wife** (1135)? Tempting him.*

3And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

5And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

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

*7For this cause shall a **man** leave his father and mother, and **cleave** (4347) to his **wife** (1135);*

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

9What therefore God hath joined (4801) together, let not man put asunder (5563).

10And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.

*11And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall **put away** (630) his **wife** (1135), and marry another, committeth **adultery** (3429) against her.*

*12And if a **woman** (1135) shall **put away** (630) her **husband** (435), and be married to another, she committeth **adultery** (3429)."*

It is noteworthy that there is no mention of any exception clause in Mark's gospel. This is an important aspect in light of this **Comparative Mention** passage. Jesus' words cannot indicate a different command than what was taught in Matthew's gospel. The exception clause of Matthew can only be fitting for the Jewish audience.

The seventh Progressive Mention text: Luke 3:15-20 (Table 3)

15"And as the people were in expectation and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

17Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

18And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife (1135), for all the evils which Herod had done,

20Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison."

Luke's account provides yet more information regarding John Baptist's rebuke of Herod. John reproved Herod for "all the evils which Herod had done". This indicates that he was guilty of more than incest and adultery. Luke declares that Herod was guilty of multiple evils, including "this above all", the imprisonment and murder of John the Baptist.

The eighth Progressive Mention text: Luke 16:9-23, 27-31 (Table 1)

9*“And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*

10*He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.*

11*If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?*

12*And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?*

13*No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

14*And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.*

15*And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.*

16*The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.*

17*And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.*

18*Whosoever **putteth away** (630) his **wife** (1135) and marrieth another, committeth **adultery** (3429): and whosoever marrieth her that is **put away** (630) from her **husband** (435) committeth **adultery** (3429).*

19*There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:*

20*And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores.*

21*And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.*

22*And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried.*

23*And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom....*

27...*then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house:*

28*For I have five brethren: that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.*

29*And Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets, and let them hear them.*

30*And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent.*

31*And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”*

Again, it is noteworthy that there is no mention of any exception clause in Luke’s gospel in this **Comparative Mention** passage. This passage clearly forbids divorce and remarriage, no exception.

The context of the passage is about faithfulness in the realm of stewardship and power. We can choose to serve God or man. The Pharisees “derided” Jesus for his teaching and He accused them of justifying themselves before men rather than before God. Jesus upheld the law and preaching of the kingdom of God, teaching that the law will prevail. In this context He reminds us of the marriage command that remarriage is adultery.

The passage closes much as it began: with a warning. The marriage commandment is sandwiched in between. In this account of the rich man and Lazarus, we learn that it is possible to use our power and goods to our own advantage and to regret the reward that we will reap. It will be too late to wish for a preacher in hell. *“And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.” Luke 16:9*

The chapter closes with another sobering thought. There will be those who will not receive correction by the law given through Moses, the voice of the prophets or Jesus Christ, though He rose from the dead.

The ninth **Progressive Mention** text: **John 4:15-19**

The context of this passage is Jesus passing through Samaria and resting at Jacob’s well when a woman of Samaria arrived to draw water. Asking her for a drink, she marveled that He would do such a thing because the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus offered to give her water that, *“shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”*

*15“The **woman** (1135) saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.*

*16Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy **husband** (435), and come hither.*

*17The **woman** (1135) answered and said, I have no **husband** (435). Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no **husband** (435):*

*18For thou hast had five **husbands** (435); and he whom thou now hast is not thy **husband** (435) in that saidst thou truly.*

*19The **woman** (1135) saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.*

As I mentioned in my introductory comments, please remember that the Greek word (435) is the same word used for “man” and “husband” and that the translator determines which word is used. Notice that the conjunctive word “and” (v18) was used which means “additionally”, **not** “but” which means “conversely”. Jesus may have told her, “For thou hast had five **men**; **and** he whom thou now hast is not thy husband”. This passage provides support that the woman’s harlotry had not produced a one-flesh union **or** could be called “marriage” by Jesus. (This issue is cross referenced in 1 Cor. 6:16 where the context in that passage shows that there was a husband who was one-flesh with a wife guilty of harlotry.)

This is an important verse to consider in our study of remarriage. I believe that we are given sufficient examples within the scriptures in order to determine what Jesus could have meant by His explicit teachings of divorce and remarriage.

The tenth **Progressive Mention** text: **John 8:3-11** (NOTE: John 7:53-8:11 is omitted from modern translations [NIV, NAS, RS, NRD, LB, NC] of the Bible!)

It is critical to understand why “*fornication*” (4202) in *Matt. 5:32 and 19:9* would not mean “*marital unfaithfulness*” (NIV). Jewish law provided a very severe penalty for adultery. The law stated that both adulterer and adulteress were to be put to death.

“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.” Lev. 20:10

“If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shall thou put away evil from Israel.” Deut. 22:22.

John’s gospel tells us that this law was still being practiced to some degree in Jesus’ lifetime. (I include it because a married person was involved for the sin to be called adultery.)

*3“The scribes and Pharisees brought unto him **a woman** (1135) taken in **adultery** (3430); and when they set her in the midst,*

*4they say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in **adultery** (3431), in the very act.*

5Now Moses in the law commanded us that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

6This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

7So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her”.

8And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

*9And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the **woman** (1135) standing in the midst.*

*10When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the **woman** (1135), he said unto her, **Woman** (1135), where are those thine accusers? Hath no **man** (3762) condemned thee?*

*11She said, No **man** (3762), Lord. And Jesus saith unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more.” John. 8:3-11*

Jesus knew the requirements of the law. He was aware that the scribes and Pharisees did not fulfill those requirements in this case being brought before him. The law required **the man and the woman to be brought forth in judgment for stoning; they brought only the woman**. He knew that they were protecting a man and the law did not allow for stoning of only one. When he asked who was without sin, he made them aware that they all were sinning against the law. Perhaps, he wrote in the sand the references to the law that they were breaking so that they were convicted and walked away. **Jesus would not have broken the law by accusing her—he was not an eye witness to the sin** (*Deut. 19:1; Jn. 8:16,17; Heb. 10:28*). But he did acknowledge their witnessed testimony of her sin before her.

How is it possible that “except it be for fornication” (KJV) could mean “except for marital unfaithfulness” when (to Matthew’s Jewish audience) an offended spouse could have their marriage ended through stoning for the mate’s adulteries? Why would Jesus need to offer an additional opportunity to end the marriage? Why would He affirm continued hard-heartedness as Moses allowed and not affirm His Father’s will from the beginning?

Divorce appears to offer a more civilized hatred than the physical stoning of a sinner. We are only beginning to understand how the image of God is diminished through divorce. Our offspring do not have living examples of enduring, committed and selfless love. Hardheartedness is a transgression against God and the social order of His creation. Modern ominous social ills are pointing to the dissolution of marriages.

The eleventh **Progressive Mention** text: **Rom. 6:19-7:6 (Table 2)**

19I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

22But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man (444) as long as he liveth?

2For the woman (1135) which hath a husband (435) is bound (1210) by the law to her husband (435) so long as he liveth; but if the husband (435) be dead, she is loosed (2673) from the law of her husband (435).

3So then if, while her husband (435) liveth, she be married to another man (435), she shall be called an adulteress (3428): but if her husband (435) be dead, she is free (1658) from that law; so that she is no adulteress (3428), though she be married to another man (435).

4Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

5For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

6But now we are delivered from the law that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

In this passage the Apostle Paul is using a simile of the one-flesh earthly marriage union to compare and contrast a believer’s union with Christ instead of justification by his own obedience to the law. (A simile is a figure of speech in which the subject is compared to another subject, frequently marked by the use of the words like or as. [Wikipedia])

“By death we are freed from obligation to the law as a covenant, as the wife is from her vows at the death of her husband. In our believing powerfully and effectually, we are dead to the law, and have no more to do with it than the dead servant, who is freed from his master, has to do with his master’s yoke. The day of our believing is the day of being united to the Lord Jesus. We enter upon a life of dependence on him and duty to him. Good works are from union with Christ; as the fruitfulness of the vine is the product of its being united to its roots; there is not fruit to God, till we are united to Christ. Nothing more than a formal obedience to the outward letter of any precept, can be performed by us, without the renewing, new-creating grace of the new covenant.” (Henry)

This passage context continues into Chapter 8 instructing believers to “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.” v4-5 When believers are walking in the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, they are enabled to live in right relationship with God and with one another, keeping covenant with man and God.

The twelfth **Progressive Mention** text: **1 Cor. 5-6**

1“It is reported commonly that there is **fornication** (4202) among you, and such **fornication** (4202) as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife (1135).

*2*And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

*3*For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed.

*4*In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

*5*To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

*6*Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

*7*Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:

*8*Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

*9*I wrote unto you in an epistle not to keep company with **fornicators** (4205):

*10*Yet not altogether with the **fornicators** (4205) of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

*11*But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any **man** (5100) that is called a brother be a **fornicator** (4205), or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a 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.

Chapter 6

*1*Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

*2*Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

3Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?

4If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

5I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? No not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

6But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

7Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

8Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

*9Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither **fornicators** (4205), nor idolaters, nor **adulterers** (3432), nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,*

10Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Spirit of our God.

12All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

*13Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for **fornication** (4202), but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.*

14And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

*15Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a **harlot** (4204)? God forbid.*

*16What? Know ye not that he which is **joined** (2853) to a **harlot** (4204) is one body? For two saith he, shall be one flesh.*

*17But he that is **joined** (2853) unto the Lord is one spirit.*

*18Flee **fornication** (4202). Every sin that a **man** (444) doeth is without the body: but he that committeth **fornication** (4203) sinneth against his own body.*

19What know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"

This text provides a New Testament example of the marriage covenant being upheld in the event of marital unfaithfulness. Chapter five begins with the reported fornication within the church membership and chapter six closes with command to flee fornication because we are to glorify God in our body and our spirit, which are God's.

In 1 Cor. 6:15, 16 we learn that in spite of a wife's harlotry with her husband's son, the one flesh union is upheld. Paul warns the church body to put the fornicating son out of the church that he may be saved through repentance.

We are given example that the son's **fornication** (4202) may apply to being single and to incest. The interpretation should be gained from the context. Paul gives sharp and resounding rebuke to the church for taking the issue of fornicating saints lightly. Revelation 2:12 and 2:20 records a fearful warning to the Churches of Pergamos and Thyatira:

“...I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication...”

“...Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.”

The thirteenth Progressive Mention text: 1 Cor. 7:10-16 (Table 2)

10“*And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the **wife** (1135) **depart** (5563) from her **husband** (435): and let not the **husband** (435) **put away** (863) his **wife** (1135).*

11*But and if she **depart** (5563), let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her **husband** (1135): and let not the **husband** (435) **put away** (863) his **wife** (1135).*

12*But to the rest speak I, not the Lord; If any brother hath a **wife** (1135) that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not **put her away** (863).*

13*And the **woman** (1135) which hath a **husband** (435) that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, **let her not leave** (863) him.*

14*For the unbelieving **husband** (435) is sanctified by the **wife** (1135) and the unbelieving **wife** (1135) is sanctified by the **husband** (435): else were your children unclean; but now they are holy.*

15*But if the unbelieving **depart** (5563), let him **depart** (5563). A brother or a sister is not under **bondage** (1402) in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.*

16*For what knowest thou, O **wife** (1135), whether thou shalt save thy **husband** (435)? Or how knoweth thou, O **man** (435), whether thou shalt save thy **wife** (1135)?”*

The context of this passage begins with strong command from the Lord against the separation and divorce. Again, you must note that there are no remarks about any exception for marital unfaithfulness. The Apostle Paul uses the word, “depart” to mean separation.

If an unbelieving mate separates from a believer, peace is to be granted to both parties. The believer is not bound to grant servitude to the unbeliever; coercing their marital involvement. I have watched this typical immediate reaction of servitude experienced as the believing mate tries “to cleave” to the departing mate. Peace does not result until the believer submits to the reality of their rejection.

The Apostle Paul presents a question lending toward hope for the believer’s submission to their mate’s separation or divorce, “*For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knoweth thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?*” The faithful action of the believer may at some point cause the unbeliever to be saved. Why would Paul encourage hope for the possibility of spiritual reconciliation while granting freedom from the marriage covenant? The context denies this possibility. We must also remember that Paul here states that the unbeliever is “sanctified” or set apart for a special work of God. This is for the sake of their children and a witness to the world.

It is important to remember the New Testament example of John the Baptist who recognized the unbelieving Herod’s original marriage, though he had remarried. Perhaps, like Herod, we expect God to repent for His witness to marriage covenant so we can form new covenants. But God expects us to repent for violating our vows to Him and to seek Him for the grace to fulfill those vows. This agrees with His words to us in *Mal. 2:11-3:5*, as you will read in the sixteenth mention.

The fourteenth Progressive Mention text: 1 Cor. 7:25-38

25“Now concerning virgins: I have no command of the Lord, yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

26I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say that it is good for a **man** (444) so to be.

27Art thou **bound** (1210) unto a **wife** (1135) ? Seek not to be **loosed** (3080). Art thou **loosed** (3089) from a wife (1135)? Seek not a wife (1135).

28But 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.

29But I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;

30And 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;

31And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

32But 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:

33But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

34There is a difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

35And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

36But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.

37Nevertheless he that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.

38So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not doeth better.”

In light of the Progressive Mention Principle, a person could only be loosed from marriage through the death of a mate, so we must look carefully into the context of this passage in light of the cultural setting of that day. Paul was speaking to virgins in the above text, virgin women and virgin men. They could have been betrothed virgins or single virgins. Paul offered advice to them which has been interpreted as follows:

“Art thou (betrothed ‘virgin’) bound (by a promise of marriage or engaged) unto a wife? (This word is better translated ‘woman’, however a woman who is betrothed is considered a wife.) Seek not to be loosed. (Do not break off or seek to be released from your promise or engagement due to the present distress.) Art thou (single man – a ‘virgin’ who is not engaged) loosed (free of an obligation or promise to marry) from a wife? (Or ‘woman’, as this Greek word is translated most of the time in the Bible). Seek not a wife (or woman). But 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.”
(Anthony)

This interpretation agrees with the context of the surrounding passage. Because of the “present distress” which resulted from propagating the gospel in an evil day, Paul recommended that the single Christians could serve the Lord without distraction if they remained single. However, he did not forbid singles to marry.

The fifteenth **Progressive Mention** text: **1 Cor. 7:39-40**

*39“The **wife** (1135) is **bound** (1210) by the law as long as her **husband** (435) liveth; but if her **husband** (435) be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.*

40But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.”

Paul closes his discourse on marriage, restating what he said in *Roman 7:1-3*. The marriage covenant is until the mate’s death. He cannot conclude with direction that contradicts his former teaching. He proceeds consistent with the Context/Mention Principles of Bible interpretation. (See Table 2)

The sixteenth **Progressive Mention** text: **Galatians 3:13-18**

13“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:”

14that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

*15Brethren, I speak after the manner of men (444): **Though it be but a man’s (444) covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man (3762) disannulleth (114), or addeth thereto.***

16Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

18For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.”

This passage is important to the issue of marriage and divorce because of the Old Testament *Malachi 2:10-3:5* passage in which God made reference to marriage being a covenant:

10“Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?

11Judah 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.

12The 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.

13And this ye have 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.

14Yet ye say, Wherefore? **Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom though hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.**

15And 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.

16For 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.

17Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Everyone that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of Judgment?

CHAPTER 3

1Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

2But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

4Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

5And I will come near to you in 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."

The *Galatians* passage teaches us that a human-made covenant confirmed by witnesses cannot be disannulled or added to. The *Malachi* passage teaches us that God calls marriage a covenant and is witness unto it. This teaching is in agreement with the many Biblical references to the endurance of vows made before God and man. (*Num. 30:2, De. 23:21, Ec. 5:4-5*) Legal marriages have to be confirmed by human witnesses in order to be valid; however, God says that He is a witness also. This indicates that divorce must not be acknowledged except for illegitimate marriages based on porneia (premarital sin of one betrothed, incestual relations, same-sex "marriage" or remarriage by one who has a living former spouse.)

The closing verses of Malachi speak of the Lord coming "near to you in judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers..." who, "fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts." God's judgment of adultery is also stated in Mention eighteen.

The seventeenth Progressive Mention: *Ephesians 5:22-33*

22"**Wives** (1135), submit yourselves unto your own **husbands** (435), as unto the Lord, 23for the **husband** (435) is the head of the **wife** (1135), even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body.

24Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the **wives** (1135) be to their own **husbands** (435) in every thing.

25**Husbands** (435), love your **wives** (1135), even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 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.

*28So ought **men** (435) to love their **wives** (1135) as their own bodies. He that loveth his **wife** (1135) loveth himself.*

*29For no **man** (3762) ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:*

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

*31For this cause shall a **man** (444) leave his father and mother, and shall be **joined** (4347) unto his **wife** (1135), and they two shall be one flesh.*

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

*33Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his **wife** (1135) even as himself; and the **wife** (1135) see that she reverence her **husband** (435).”*

The context teaches that the church is to submit to the Lord in everything. The husband and wife relationship is to be a picture of Christ and the church, a joining of what had formerly been two into one. There is no latitude granted to either mate to view themselves as separated or divorced because that is hating rather than nourishing and cherishing one's own flesh. Divorce must be considered unthinkable behavior especially within the body of Christ. One could view it as a type of cancer, where mutated cells begin to attack healthy cells.

The eighteenth **Progressive Mention** text: **Hebrews 13:1-6**

1“Let brotherly love continue.

2Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

3Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

*4**Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled (283): but whoremongers (4205) and adulterers (3432) God will judge.***

5Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

6So that we may boldly say, “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me”. (Ps. 27:1; 56:4,11; 118:6)

In this closing chapter of Hebrews, the apostle cites Christian duties to be performed by believers. Through brotherly love we are to minister hospitality to strangers and allow ourselves to feel caring and sympathy for those who are bound or suffering adversity, including them as part of ourselves. In this context he honors marriage and esteems chaste and pure physical relations between husband and wife. He gives solemn warning that God will judge whoremongers and adulterers. We are reminded not to covet, but to be contented by the presence of the Lord.

One of the ways that we can honor marriage is to stand by the marriage covenants of those whose wedding vows we witness, bringing strong interventions to struggling couples of hope and commitment to pray for healing and reconciliation.

Old and New Testament and Whole Bible Context Summary

This subject must also be viewed in the **context of the testament** in which it is found. In the Old Testament the blood of animals was a sacrifice pointing to the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. There was a promised covenant yet to be fulfilled in Jesus' sacrifice. Old Testament sanctions for divorce came into place because of hardness of heart without immediate remedy. Following is a quote which provides key understanding of God's expectations from the Old to New Testaments:

In the Old Testament God functioned in a time when man's weakness was tolerated, as explained in *Acts 17:30-31*, "*For as much then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver or stone, graven by art and man's device. At the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*"

When Christ came to earth, He moved mankind up a notch. The entire Sermon on the Mount deals a higher level to which man is called. Jesus says, "you have heard." And then He says, "but I say unto you.." In each case man's capacity has raised the bar. Instead of just avoiding murder, we are to avoid hate. Instead of just not committing sexual sin, we are to not allow our minds to drift into thinking about that sin. Polygamy is portrayed as something God winked at because of the hardness of man's heart, but something God does not want us to do." (Clayton)

The New Testament speaks of a new and enduring covenant which is written upon tender hearts, not upon tables of stone. It is a covenant which is portrayed through Christ and His bride, for whom Christ took the hurt for all of her former sin by laying down his life. The high example of the measure of grace that He has lived before us is the same grace that is offered through Christ to us to faithfully live out our covenant marriage promises.

The abundance of New Testament scriptures do not give evidence that Jesus was allowing for people to divorce because of marital unfaithfulness. It does not fit with the Context Principle. If we say that God allows divorce for believers who experience their mate's adultery, we are saying, essentially, that adultery is greater than the effect of the blood sacrifice of Christ. We are saying, "Adultery is a sin that is great enough to break covenant. It is a sin that deserves breaking covenant." However this is Old Covenant limited thinking, inappropriate for New Covenant believers. It is thinking that falls back to its old, limited, injurious, hardhearted ways. It is not the higher way of redemptive thinking reflecting Christ's power to bring about healing and change in the injured and the injurer for the sake of a godly seed and a witness in the earth.

Jesus compares earthly marriage to His marriage with the church. Faulty thinking about the marriage covenant is diametrically opposed to His righteous covenantal intentions toward us. It is no wonder that the church can be perceived to be a professing, yet powerless body of Christ. Weakened faith in earthly and heavenly covenants can produce faithless, unbelieving people – especially when the error starts in our homes.

What is so heartbreaking about the popular interpretation of Matthew's "exception clause" is that it evidences the **faithlessness** of all who believe it. This is **faithlessness** of the full counsel of God, in the face of numerous scriptures that clearly condemn divorce and remarriage/covenant breaking. **The fruit shows us the root:**

-Faithlessness of the **offender** in choosing the sin of adultery, **produces...**
-faithlessness of the **offended** for choosing hardheartedness and denying their “until death” marriage vows by choosing another to mate with, **which produces...**
-faithlessness of the **leaders** for choosing to put asunder what they “believe” has been put asunder by the adultery, **which produces...**
-faithlessness of the **church** for choosing to be in agreement with covenant breaking, setting a pattern for all to choose sexual expression over covenant-keeping when their marriage is tried as promised, *“The married shall have trouble in the flesh” (1 Cor. 7:28).*

Instead of sowing and reaping **righteousness** in the face of sin, we are sowing and reaping sin upon sin and we are reaping the harvest of confusion. We are no different than the world, since we are not salt and light but covenant breakers through and through. *“...When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8*

Sadly, in many instances we don’t even consider the power of Christ to turn the tide against adultery. Prayer for parking places, the weather, finances, healing and protection can take a higher priority than considering God’s intervention for working in the lives of adulterous mates. So, adultery can be the covenant-breaker. It can be the thing that God can’t touch. To add insult to injury, the remnant of offended, yet faithful, covenant-keeping injured mates who suffer what should be termed “covenant-violation” are often scorned for their misplaced faith. Surely, this is calling evil, “good”, and good, “evil”, resulting in judgment. *(Mal. 2:17-3:5).*

Finally, the subject must be viewed in the **context of the whole Bible**. God says that He hates divorce. *(Mal. 2:16)*. Although God used language of divorce in dealing with His people in order to help them to understand His view of sin and resulting separation, He does not cast Israel aside but reserves time for the repentance and salvation of Israel, His people *(Hosea)*. Question must be drawn to the meaning of the bill of divorcement of Israel by God, when six verses later, God states,

“I am married to you” (Jer. 8-14).

Surely, the language of divorce was meant to be redemptive, not the end of covenant. God even asks the question,

“Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement, whom I have put away?” (Is. 50:1)

Unlike the tablets of stone, the golden pot of manna and the rod that budded, (which were secured for exhibit); the bill of divorcement was not to be secured as a document. Surely it could have been preserved, as legal documents are safely secured, if the Lord so desired. It is most interesting that God brings question as to where it is.

Does God need to speak to us in familial terms—son, daughter, betrothed, wife, or divorcement? No, He does not. He could simply withdraw and abandon us to our own destruction, without comment. However, He speaks to us in terms of earthly relationships which we can comprehend. He uses words that bond and help to draw us back into fellowship with Him. He continues to stand at the line of reconciliation for Israel, as He has promised *(Jer. 3:1-14)*. [This can only be understood clearly in King James Version, as it has been altered in modern Bible versions.] He waits until the last breaths of sinners to repent and to turn to Him—till death.

Our postmodern, highly sexual, divorcing Christian society does not model the long-suffering of a loving Father Whom the Bible speaks about. In the story of the prodigal son, the father waited expectantly for the recovery of his son. In the context of the whole Bible we find the heart of the Father is other-serving and willing to endure the sinful state chosen by His people. This is the kind of love spoken of in *First Corinthians 13* which is often shared at wedding ceremonies. God's love is "*long-suffering, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance*" *2 Peter 3:9*. Paul evidences God's heart in *Ephesians 4:1-3*:

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

This is a critical subject in these last days since the Lord warns us that deception and lawlessness of Christians will abound in the church before His return. Since marriage reflects the image of God, through Christ and His church, Satan would be determined to destroy that image of enduring, committed and selfless love (*1 Cor. 3:16-20; Col. 2:8*).

It is my prayer that each one who reads this study will make a diligent search to understand the counsel of God for marriage, divorce and remarriage. Each Christian must, "*Study to show thyself approved unto God; a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*" (*2 Tim. 2:15*).

Respectfully submitted,

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Strong's Concordance Definitions

114. Atheteo:

From a compound of 1 (as a negative participle) and a derivative of 5087

Definition: 1. to do away with, to set aside, disregard
 2. to thwart the efficacy of anything, nullify, make void, frustrate
 3. to reject, to refuse, to slight

Translated: AV - despise 8, reject 4, bring to nothing 1, frustrate 1, disannul 1, cast off 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*atheteo* (Strong's 114) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=114&page=1>>

283. Amiantos:

From (1) (as a negative particle) and a derivative of 3392

Definition: 1. not defiled, unsoiled

- a. free from that by which the nature of a thing is deformed and debased, or its force and vigour impaired

Translated: AV - undefiled 4

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*amiantos (Strong's 283)* '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 20066 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=283&page=1>>

435. Aner:

A primary word cf 444

Definition: 1. with reference to sex

- a. of a male
- b. of a husband
- c. of a betrothed or future husband
2. with ref. to age, and to distinguish an adult man from a boy
3. any male
4. used generically of a group of both men and women

Translated: AV - man 156, husband 50, sir 6, fellow 1, not translated 2

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*aner (Strong's 435)* '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 20068 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=435&page=1>>

444. Anthropos:

From 435 and ops (the countenance, from 3700); man-faced, i.e. a human being

Definition: 1. a human being, whether male or female

- a. generically, to include all human individuals
- b. to distinguish man from beings of a different order
 - 1) of animals and plants
 - 2) of from God and Christ
 - 3) of the angels
- c. with the added notion of weakness, by which man is led into a mistake or prompted to sin
- d. with the adjunct notion of contempt or disdainful pity
- e. with reference to two fold nature of man, body and soul
- f. with reference to the two fold nature of man, the corrupt and the truly Christian man, conformed to the nature of God
- g. with reference to sex, a male
2. indefinitely, someone, a man, one
3. in the plural, people
4. joined with other words, merchantman

Translated: AV - man 552, not tr 4, misc 3

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*anthropos* (Strong's 444) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 18 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=444&page=1>>

630. Apoluo:

From 575 and 3089

- Definition:
1. to set free
 2. to let go, dismiss, (to detain no longer)
 - a. a petitioner to whom liberty to depart is given by a decisive answer
 - b. to bid depart, send away
 3. to let go free, release
 - a. a captive i.e. to loose his bonds and bid him depart, to give him liberty to depart
 - b. to acquit one accused of a crime and set him at liberty
 - c. indulgently to grant a prisoner leave to depart
 - d. to release a debtor, i.e. not to press one's claim against him, to remit his debt
 4. used of divorce, to dismiss from the house, to repudiate. The wife of a Greek or Roman may divorce her husband.
 5. to send one's self away, to depart

Translated: AV - release 17, put away 14, send away 13, let go 13, set at liberty 2, let depart 2, dismiss 2, misc 6

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*apoluo* (Strong's 630) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=630&page=1>>

647. Apostasion:

neuter of a (presumed) adj. from a derivative of 868

- Definition:
1. divorce, repudiation
 2. a bill of divorce

Translated: AV – divorcement 2, writing of divorcement 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*apostasion* (Strong's 647) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=647&page=1>>

863. Aphiemi:

From 575 and hiemi (to send, an intens. form of eimi, to go)

- Definition:
1. to send away
 - a. to bid going away or depart
 - 1) of a husband divorcing his wife
 - b. to send forth, yield up, to expire
 - c. to let go, let alone, let be
 - 1) to disregard
 - 2) to leave, not to discuss now, (a topic)
 - a. of teachers, writers and speakers
 - 3) to omit, neglect
 - d. to let go, give up a debt, forgive, to remit
 - e. to give up, keep no longer

2. to permit, allow, not to hinder, to give up a thing to a person
3. to leave, go way from one
 - a. in order to go to another place
 - b. to depart from any one
 - c. to depart from one and leave him to himself so that all mutual claims are abandoned
 - d. to desert wrongfully
 - e. to go away leaving something behind
 - f. to leave one by not taking him as a companion
 - g. to leave on dying, leave behind one
 - h. to leave so that what is left may remain, leave remaining
 - i. abandon, leave destitute

Translated: AV - leave 52, forgive 47, suffer 14, let 8, forsake 6, let alone 6, miscellaneous 13

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*aphiemi* (Strong's 863) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=863&page=1>>

1135. Gune:

probably from the base of 1096

- Definition:
1. a woman of any age, whether a virgin, or married, or a widow
 2. a wife
 - a. of a betrothed woman

Translated: AV – woman 129, wife 92

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*gune* (Strong's 1135) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 18 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=1135&page=1>>

1210. Deo:

A root

- Definition:
1. to bind tie, fasten
 - a. to bind, fasten with chains, to throw into chains
 - b. metaph.
 - 1) Satan is said to bind a woman bent together by means of a demon, as his messenger, taking possession of the woman and preventing her from standing upright
 - 2) to bind, put under obligation, of the law, duty etc.
 - a. to be bound to one, a wife, a husband
 - 3) to forbid, prohibit, declare to be illicit

Translated: AV - bind 37, tie 4, knit 1, be in bonds 1, wind 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*deo* (Strong's 1210) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=1210&page=1>>

1401. Doulos

From 1210, part of speech (n)

- Definition: 1. a slave, bondman, man of servile condition

- a. a slave
- b. metaph., one who gives himself up to another's will those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing his cause among men
- c. a servant, attendant

Translated: AV – servant 120, bond 6, bondman 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*doulos (Strong's 1401)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 16 May 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=1401&page=1>>

1658. Eleutheros:

probably from the alternate of 2064

- Definition:
- 1. freeborn
 - a. in a civil sense, one who is not a slave
 - b. of one who ceases to be a slave, freed, manumitted
 - 2. free, exempt, unrestrained, not bound by an obligation
 - 3. in an ethical sense: free from the yoke of the Mosaic Law

Translated: AV – free 18, free woman 3, at liberty 1, free man 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*eleutheros (Strong's 1658)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=1658&page=1>>

2135. Eunouchos:

from eune (a bed) and 2192

- Definition:
- 1. a bed keeper, bed guard, superintendent of the bed chamber, chamberlain
 - a. in the palace of oriental monarchs who support numerous wives the superintendent of the women's apartment or harem, an office held by eunuchs
 - b. an emasculated man, a eunuch
 - 1) eunuchs in oriental courts held by other offices of greater, held by the Ethiopian eunuch mentioned in AC. 8:27-39.
 - c. one naturally incapacitated
 - 1) for marriage
 - 2) begetting children
 - d. one who voluntarily abstains from marriage

Translated: AV - eunuch 8

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*eunouchos (Strong's 2135)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=2135&page=1>>

2673. Katargeo:

from 2596 and 691

- Definition:
- 1. to render idle, unemployed, inactivate, inoperative
 - a. to cause a person or thing to have no further efficiency
 - b. to deprive of force, influence, power
 - 2. to cause to cease, put an end to, do away with, annul, abolish
 - a. to cease, to pass away, be done away

- b. to be severed from, separated from, discharged from, loosed from any one
- c. to terminate all intercourse with one

Translated: AV – destroy 5, do away 3, abolish 3, cumber 1, loose 1, cease 1, fall 1, deliver 1, misc 11

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*katargeo (Strong's 2673)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 18 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=2673&page=1>>

2853. Kollao:

from kolla ("glue")

Definition: 1. to glue, to glue together, cement, fasten together
 2. to join or fasten firmly together
 3. to join one's self to, cleave to

Translated: AV – join (one's) self 4, cleave 3, be joined 2, keep company 1, vr reach 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*kollao (Strong's 2853)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=2853&page=1>>

3080. Lusic:

from (3089)

Definition: 1. a loosing, setting free
 a. of a prisoner
 b. of the bond of marriage, divorce
 2. release, ransoming, deliverance
 a. of liquidating a debt
 3. means or power of releasing or loosing

Translated: AV - to be loosed 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*lusic (Strong's 3080)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=3080&page=1>>

3089. Luo:

a root word

Definition: 1. to loose any person (or thing) tied or fastened
 a. bandages of the feet, the shoes
 b. of a husband and wife joined together by the bond of matrimony
 c. of a single man, whether he has already had a wife or has not yet married
 2. to loose one bound, i.e. to unbind, release from bonds, set free
 a. of one bound up (swathed in bandages)
 b. bound with chains (a prisoner), discharge from prison, let go
 3. to loosen, undo, dissolve, anything bound, tied, or compacted together
 a. an assembly, i.e. to dismiss, break up
 b. laws, as having a binding force, are likened to bonds
 c. to annul, subvert
 d. to do away with, to deprive of authority, whether by precept or act

- e. to declare unlawful
- f. to loose what is compacted or built together, to break up, demolish, destroy
- g. to dissolve something coherent into parts, to destroy
- h. metaph., to overthrow, to do away with

Translated: AV - loose 27, break 5, unloose 3, destroy 2, dissolve 2, put off 1, melt 1, break up 1, break down 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*luo (Strong's 3089)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=3089&page=1>>

3423. Mnesteuo:

from a derivative of 3415

- Definition: 1. to woo her and ask her in marriage
 2. to be promised in marriage, be betrothed

Translated: AV – espouse 3

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*mnesteuo (Strong's 3423)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=3423&page=1>>

3428. Moichalis:

a prolonged form of the feminine of 3432

- Definition: 1. an adulteress
 2. as the intimate alliance of God with the people of Israel was likened to a marriage, those who relapse into idolatry are said to commit adultery or play the harlot
 a. fig. equiv. to faithless to God, unclean, apostate

Translated: AV - adulterous 3, adulteress 3, adultery 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*moichalis (Strong's 3428)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=3428&page=1>>

3429. Moichao:

from 3432

- Definition: 1. to have unlawful intercourse with another's wife, to commit adultery with

Translated: AV - commit adultery 6

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*moichao (Strong's 3429)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=3429&page=1>>

3430. Moicheia:

from 3431

- Definition: 1. adultery

Translated: AV - adultery 4

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*moicheia* (Strong's 3430) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=3430&page=1>>

3431. Moicheuo:

from 3432

Definition: 1. to commit adultery

- a. to be an adulterer
- b. to commit adultery with, have unlawful intercourse with another's wife
- c. of the wife: to suffer adultery, be debauched
- d. A Hebrew idiom, the word is used of those who at a woman's solicitation are drawn away to idolatry, i.e. to the eating of things sacrificed to idols

Translated: AV - commit adultery 13, in adultery 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*moicheuo* (Strong's 3431) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=3431&page=1>>

3432. Moichos:

perhaps a primary word

Definition: 1. an adulterer

2. metaph. One who is faithless toward God, ungodly

Translated: AV - adulterer 4

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*moichos* (Strong's 3432) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=3432&page=1>>

3762. Oudeis:

from 3761 and 1520

Definition: 1. no one, nothing

Translated: AV - no man 94, nothing 68, none 27, no 24, any man 3, any 3, man 2,
Neither any man 2, misc 13

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*oudeis* (Strong's 3762) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=3762&page=1>>

4202. Porneia:

from 4203

Definition: 1. illicit sexual intercourse

- a. adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals etc.
- b. sexual intercourse with close relatives; Lev 18
- c. sexual intercourse with a divorced man or woman; Mk 10:11,12

2. metaph. the worship of idols

- a. of the defilement of idolatry, as incurred by eating the sacrifices offered to idols

Translated: AV - fornication 26

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*porneia* (Strong's 4202) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=4202&page=1>>

4203. Porneuo:

from 4204

- Definition:
1. to prostitute one's body to the lust of another
 2. to give one's self to unlawful sexual intercourse
 - a. to commit fornication
 3. metaph. to be given to idolatry, to worship idols
 - a. to permit one's self to be drawn away by another into idolatry

Translated: AV - commit fornication 7, commit 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*porneuo* (Strong's 4203) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=4203&page=1>>

4204. Porne:

from 4205

- Definition:
1. a woman who sells her body for sexual uses
 - a. a prostitute, a harlot, one who yields here to defilement for the sake of gain
 - b. any woman indulging in unlawful sexual intercourse, whether for gain or for lust
 2. metaph. an idolatress
 - a. of "Babylon" i.e. Rome, the chief seat of idolatry

Translated: AV - harlot 8, whore 4

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*porne* (Strong's 4204) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=4204&page=1>>

4205. Pornos:

from *pernemi* (to sell, akin to the base of 4097)

- Definition:
1. a man who prostitutes his body to another's lust for hire
 2. a male prostitute
 3. a man who indulges in unlawful sexual intercourse, a fornicator

Translated: AV - fornicator 5, whoremonger 5

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*pornos* (Strong's 4205) '" . Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=4205&page=1>>

4347. Proskollao:

from 4314 and 2853

Definition: 1. to glue upon, glue to
2. to join one's self to closely, cleave to, stick to

Translated: AV - cleave 2, be joined 1, join (one's) self 1

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*proskollao (Strong's 4347)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=4347&page=1>>

4801. Suzeugnumi:

from 4862 and the base of 2201

Definition: 1. to fasten to one yoke, yoke together
2. to join together unite
a. of the marriage tie

Translated: AV - join together 2

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*suzeugnumi (Strong's 4801)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=4801&page=1>>

5100. Tis:

An enclitic indefinite pronoun

Definition: 1. a certain, a certain one
2. some, some time, a while

Translated: AV – certain 104, some 73, any man 55, any 37, one 34, man 34, anything 24, a 9, certain man 7, something 6, somewhat 6, ought 5, some man 4, certain thing 2, nothing + 3756 2, divers 2, he 2, thing 1, another 2, not tr 17, misc. 22

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*tis (Strong's 5100)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 29 Mar 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=5100&page=1>>

5563. Chorizo:

from 5561

Definition: 1. to separate, divide, part, put asunder, to separate one's self from to depart
a. to leave a husband or wife
b. of divorce
c. to depart, go away

Translated: AV - depart 8, separate 3, put asunder 2

Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for '*chorizo (Strong's 5563)*' ". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2002. 17 May 2006 11 Feb 2006. <<http://www.blueletterbible.org/cgi-bin/words.pl?word=5563&page=1>>

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Table 1 - Divorce and Remarriage Comparison Passages of Jesus

Matthew 5:1,2,31,32	Matthew 19:1-9	Mark 10:1-12	Luke 15:1,2; 16:18
(Audience) Mt.5:1-2 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain and when he was set, his disciples came to him and he opened his mouth and taught them saying.....	(Audience) And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came unto the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan; And great multitudes followed him and he healed them there.	(Audience) And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan; and the people resort unto him again ; and as he was wont, he taught them again .	(Audience) Lk. 15:1 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured.... Lk. 16:1 And he said also unto his disciples ...
	The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him and saying,	And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him... ...tempting him.	
	Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?	...Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?...	
	And he answered and said unto them,	And he answered and said unto them,	
	Have you not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,	What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement and to put her away.	
	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?	And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.	
	Wherefore they are no more twain but one flesh.	But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.	
	What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder	For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. And they twain shall be one flesh	
	They say unto him, Why did Moses command to give a writing of divorcement and to put her away?	so then they are no more twain but one flesh.	
	He 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.	What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder	

Table 1 - Divorce and Remarriage Comparison Passages of Jesus (cont.)

Matthew 5:1,2,31,32	Matthew 19:1-9	Mark 10:1-12	Luke 15:1,2; 16:18
		And in the house	
		(Audience change) His disciples asked him again of the same matter	
It hath been said,			
Whosoever			
Shall put away his wife			
Let him give her a writing of divorcement			
But I say unto you,	And I say unto you,	And he saith unto them,	
that whosoever	whosoever	Whosoever	Whosoever
shall put away his wife	shall put away his wife	shall put away his wife	putteth away his wife
saving for the cause of fornication	except it be for fornication		
	and shall marry another committeth adultery	and marry another committeth adultery	and marrieth another committeth adultery
		against her	
causeth her to commit adultery			
		and if a woman shall put away her husband	
and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced	and whosoever marrieth her which is put away	And be married to another	and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband
committeth adultery	commit adultery	she committeth adultery.	committeth adultery

Table 2 - Divorce and Remarriage Comparison Passages of Paul

Romans 7:1-3	1 Corinthians 7:24,39
(Audience) Know ye not, brethren ,	(Audience) Brethren , let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God...
(for I speak to them that know the law,)	
how that the law hath dominion over a man	
as long as he liveth?	
For the woman which hath a husband	...The wife
is bound by the law to her husband	is bound by the law
so long as he liveth;	as long as her husband liveth;
but if the husband be dead,	but if her husband be dead,
she is loosed from the law of her husband	she is at liberty to be married
	to whom she will;
	only in the Lord.
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 the law;	
so she is no adulteress,	
though she be married to another man.	

Table 3 - Divorce and Remarriage Comparison Passages of John Baptist & King Herod

Matthew 14:1-14	Mark 6:14-29	Luke 3:15-20
		And as the people were in expectation and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not;
		John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:
		Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.
		And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.
At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus.	And King Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad;)	
and said unto his servants	and he said,	
This is John the Baptist, he is risen from the dead;	that John the Baptist was risen from the dead,	
and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.	and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.	
	Others said, That it is Elijah. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.	
	But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.	
For Herod had laid hold on John and bound him, and put him in prison	For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold on John, and bound him in prison	But Herod the tetrarch
For Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife,	For Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife;	Being reproved by him For Herodias, his brother Philip's wife,
	For he married her.	
		For all the evils which Herod had done, added yet this above all, that
		he shut up John in prison.
For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.	For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.	
	Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:	
He feared	For Herod feared	
the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.	John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.	

Table 3 - Divorce and Remarriage Comparison Passages of John Baptist & King Herod (cont.)

Matthew 14:1-14	Mark 6:14-29	Luke 3:15-20
But when Herod's birthday was kept,	And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee;	
the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.	And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him,	
Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.	The king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.	
And she, being before instructed of her mother,	And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.	
.	And she came in straightway with haste unto the king,	
said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.	And asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.	
And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat,	And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for the sakes which sat with him,	
he commanded it to be given her.	he would not reject her.	
And he sent,	And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went	
and beheaded John in the prison.	and beheaded him in prison.	
And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel; and she brought it to her mother	And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.	
And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.	And when the disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.	
When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.		
And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.		

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