

Not Under Bondage

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“The apostles were the ambassadors of Christ—the last interpreters of his will. Perhaps we should study from this angle more than we have yet done so.” (R. L. Whiteside, *Reflections*, 412)

Are mixed marriages and the marriage of two aliens governed by Matthew 19:9 on divorce and remarriage?

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**Dedication
To
Leslie G. Thomas
Devoted Disciple
of Christ**

**who has never stopped studying, and who has the
courage to change when change is necessary in order
to agree with the Word**

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INTRODUCTION

The divorce problem is being increasingly thrust on us as we evangelize various parts of the world which have a low standard of marriage and divorce, and as in our own country divorce and remarriage are taking place at an accelerated rate. The world in this respect is becoming more and more like the world which the first century church faced. The only question to which this book addresses itself is whether those in the world, who have been divorced on some ground other than fornication and then remarried, must break up their marriages and homes in order to come into Christ, as some claim. (*Your*, 441, 476, 552, 576) If someone were baptized without dissolving the marriage, they must then dissolve it or be disfellowshipped. I believe these positions are unscriptural. Foy E. Wallace, Jr. said it was "a presumptuous procedure." (*Sermon*, 40-41)

I have been accused of encouraging a loose attitude toward marriage, which will fill the church with adulterers. But it is also a serious matter for those who differ with me. If my position is right, they are guilty of making a law where Christ did not make one, they are shutting the kingdom against some people, and they are home wreckers.

A position is not true just because it is old or because it has been advocated by some prominent brethren. However, they are wrong who say that the position in this book is a new interpretation conjured up to deal with current problems. Alexander Campbell and Walter Scott took the position that Matthew 19:9 is not a universal principle which covers mixed marriages or divorce and remarriage in the world. Therefore, they thought that the deserted believer was free to remarry. (*Millennial Harbinger*, 1834, 71-73)

Robertson L. Whiteside had a question and answer column in the *Gospel Advocate*. Although he did not take the full position which I take, he clearly taught that Matthew 19:9 must be interpreted in the light of the later revelation set forth in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 and that the deserted believer has the right to remarry. (*Reflections*, 102-107, 408-427)

In the *Gospel Advocate* for May 3, 1945, P. W. Stonestreet set forth certain aspects of this position. On June 14, 1945, Stonestreet said that 1 Corinthians 7:15 means the Christian is not under the marriage bond if the unbeliever departs. (315-316)

The *Firm Foundation* commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians, which was published in 1977, teaches that 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 refers to Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:9; Luke 16:18, that Christ had not legislated on the marriage of a believer and an unbeliever, that Paul legislated on these mixed marriages, that his legislation differs from Christ's legislation for two believers, and that the believer deserted by the unbeliever is free to remarry. (102-105) This is the basic argument in my book, i.e., that Christ's legislation in His personal ministry was for those in His covenant who were married to one another. Therefore, it is unscriptural for us to extend it to include mixed marriages (Paul did not), or to marriages of two people outside the covenant.

We usually misunderstand passages and subjects because we do not apply, or do not correctly apply, principles of interpretation which we already know. The fundamentals set forth in 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 are so clear and simple that when one sees them he will ask: Why did I overlook something which is so obvious? When brethren explain why 1 Corinthians 7:12 does not deny the inspiration of Paul, they understand 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, and 12-15. It is only when they try to make 1 Corinthians 7:15 harmonize with their *uninspired* universalization of Matthew 19:9 and 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, and cover all marriages in and out of the church, that they fail to apply truths which they understand and use on other passages.

Regardless of how brilliant the intellect and how logically one reasons, if one adopts false assumptions or ignores true principles, the brilliant intellect and penetrating logic cannot enable one to arrive at the truth. A brilliant man blinded by preconceptions, or by the failure to apply in a given case principles whose truth he recognizes, can no more arrive at the truth than can a person who is not nearly as bright. This is the reason all of us must be willing to have our positions carefully examined by others and honestly to examine what those who differ with us have to say.

Thomas B. Warren presented in his book a chapter by Roy H. Lanier, Sr., (and Warren has registered no dissent) which makes unnecessary a discussion of the right of remarriage for most divorced people in the world. If Lanier's position is right, a multitude of people in the world who think they were divorced and *remarried* were not married the first time. Therefore, dissolving their first relationship was not a violation of the

teaching of Christ in His personal ministry on *marriage, divorce, and remarriage*. See Lanier's chapter on: "Who Is Married?"

The following statement of G. C. Brewer doubtless applies to all of us with reference to some situations which are raised on one or another of the questions which can be raised concerning divorce and remarriage in general. Of course, some do not view as a problem that which someone else may view as a problem. G. C. Brewer said: "Yet, I feel unable to deal with some of the cases even in a way that is satisfactory to myself. And, in any case, I feel humbled and weak by the gravity of the situation." (*Gospel Advocate*, June 28, 1951, p. 406) However, I want to emphasize that I have no uncertainty concerning the position set forth in this book. The more I study the opposition to this position, the more reasons I see for this certainty.

That one disagrees with a person does not automatically mean that one has disfellowshipped that person. A discussion with a friend does not mean a repudiation of friendship. Our friend should not be less a friend because we place our loyalty to Christ and to truth above agreement with a friend. I no more make this issue a matter of fellowship than I do the war question. Should conscientious objectors accuse Thomas B. Warren, and others who do not agree with them, of filling the church with murderers?

By Way of Clarification

First, I emphasize that Christians ought to marry Christians and that marriage should be for life. I do not encourage the dissolution of a marriage if one partner slipped, sinned and then repented. However, I believe that Christ's legislation is for two believers—I learned this from Paul (1 Cor. 7:10-11), and that Paul's legislation is for mixed marriages. (7:12-15) Since neither one of them legislated for the world, I am not thereby given authority to pass such legislation.

Second, my position does not encourage marriages in the world to break up. These brethren teach that one can marry after they become a Christian even if they have lived with many different women but did not marry any of them. However, one marriage broken up for reasons other than fornication disqualifies them for marriage. What would they say if someone said that they are encouraging "shacking up" instead of marrying?

Third, I believe people in the world are married as surely as

were people in the age of the patriarchs and of the Mosaic Covenant. I believe sexual sins are possible for the world. They were then. However, this does not prove that the world is under Genesis 2:24 or Matthew 19:9. The fact that all people have not been held to the standard of Genesis 2:24, or of Matthew 19:9, is no reason to accuse the Bible of encouraging adultery or of filling God's covenants in different dispensations with adulterers.

Fourth, it has never been my position that the world is under civil law only. (Rom. 2:12-15)

Fifth, there are at least three categories of marriages. *First*, marriage between two Christians. *Second*, marriage between two people outside of the covenant. *Third*, marriage between a person in the covenant and a person outside of the covenant. One can summarize my book by saying: *First*, Christ in His personal ministry legislated on marriage, divorce and remarriage for two Christians. (1 Cor. 7:10-11) *Second*, Paul legislated on marriage, divorce and remarriage for the Christian married to a non-Christian. (1 Cor. 7:12-15) The two legislations differ but they do not contradict one another because they apply to two different categories. *Third*, the official *Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary of the Gospel Advocate* for 1956 said on 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 that: "He gives no command to, makes no demand of, the unbeliever, but says if the unbeliever is content to continue the union, the believer is to remain as the spouse of the unbeliever." (31-32) It should also be observed that neither Paul nor Christ legislated on marriage, divorce, and remarriage for two unbelievers. Therefore, we have no right to bind on people in the world the law of Christ, which He bound on two married people who are in His covenant. Once they obey the gospel they come under Christ's law in this matter and they are not to divorce and remarry except for fornication. However, the law of Christ is not retroactive and they do not have to break up their second marriage when they come into Christ even though they had been divorced for some reason other than fornication.

I have tried to deal with counter arguments which these brethren advance to refute my position. Some brethren who advance one counter argument may not advance another one. However, all of these have been advanced by someone. Some may temporarily cloud the situation with their argument but the clouds will disappear if one keeps in mind the truths set forth in 1 Corinthians 7:10-15.

Sometimes in dealing with a principle I have used several cases from the Bible. Some may feel that one or two were enough, but my idea is that one may strike some people with greater force than another one.

Usually I have given the source of my reference as follows: When I mention an author without citing a book, the material will be found in the author's commentary on the scripture references which I am discussing. There are other cases when an author is mentioned, or quoted, and there is a page reference—for example (412). The reference is to the author's book on that page. In some cases several authors collaborated in a book, and I have cited the author, and enough of the book title to indicate where it can be found. For example, (Deaver, *Your*, 437) refers to Roy Deaver in Thomas B. Warren, Editor, *Your Marriage Can Be Great*, page 437. I have a full bibliography at the end of the book.

The Lord willing, I plan to publish a book on "the work of the law written in their hearts" (Rom. 2:15) which will deal with whether aliens, those outside the covenant, are under or in the covenant. If not, under what law do they live? Is Romans 2:14-15 still true concerning those outside the covenant? Not being in the covenant does not mean one is without any truth (Rom. 1:18-2:15). If they have some law, some truth, this does not mean they are saved without Christ.

Several months prior to publication this manuscript, in whole or in part, was submitted to around thirty people. Perhaps because they were busy, very few gave me any criticism.

Chapter I

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

If one ignores fundamental principles involved in understanding the Bible, he will involve himself in misunderstandings. One must not assume that one passage teaches the total truth on a subject unless this passage is the only one in the Bible on this subject. A passage may seem to be universal because no limitation is given in the passage itself. However, other passages may show it is not universal. If the total truth about marriage is presented in Genesis 2:24 there would be no authorization for remarriage at the death of a spouse or for fornication. There was no sin and no death when Adam and Eve became one flesh. However, there are other passages on the subject of marriage.

All Truth Not in One Passage

One must reason correctly on the total teaching of the Bible on a subject in order to get the whole truth on that subject. David Lipe, summarizing some statements of Warren, said: "The expression 'the total evidence' refers to 'the total context'—the *total* material which demonstrates the basis upon which a claim of truth rests concerning any Biblical question. 'The total context' refers to the composite of: (1) the *specific statement* under consideration, (2) the *immediate context* of that statement, and (3) the *remote context* of that statement." (*Your*, 81; Warren, *When*, 21) The remote context consists of any teaching elsewhere in the Bible which throws light on, or bears some relationship to, or limits the passage.

As Guy N. Woods put it: "Obviously, (a) all details of any doctrine must not be required to be found in one passage; (b) we ought to take all that the Lord said before reaching any conclusion on any matter of teaching (conclusion, that is, concerning the total teaching of the Bible on that point, J.D.B.); and (c) the Bible does not have to repeat any statement in order for it to be true!" (QA, 236)

Lipe recognized that one passage of scripture may limit a statement which, if taken by itself, would be universal. Jesus showed that Deuteronomy 6:16 limited the passage which the devil had quoted. "The Devil made too broad an application of Psalms 91:11." (*Your*, 82-83) The Psalm said: "For he will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in *all thy ways*." (Psa. 91:11) The devil could have argued: What ways? One way, some ways, a few ways? No, *all thy ways*. Is not "all" a universal? Does not a universal exclude all exceptions? But Jesus showed that "all" did not include presumptuous ways wherein one tempted God. This did not contradict Psalm 91:11 but it did show that it was not universal. These brethren make the same mistake on "whosoever" that the devil made on "all." They assume because Matthew 19:9 does not limit "whosoever" that for anyone to say that 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 does limit it is to make the two contradict. (*Lipe, Your*, 457) Lipe failed to keep in mind his own statement that one passage "may modify or explain another portion of Scripture." (82-83) Why should one legislate in his own mind that the total truth on divorce and remarriage must be contained in the Four Gospels?

The failure to realize that the complete revelation can show that one is wrong in universalizing certain passages in the Bible leads to the twisting of passages in the complete revelation in order to make them fit one's uninspired universalizing of something in the incomplete revelation. If one refuses to open his mind to the *possibility* that the complete revelation can show that the "whosoever" in Matthew 19:9 is limited to the covenant people, one is *willfully blinding himself* to additional truth if additional truth is revealed.

The Incomplete and the Complete

The complete revelation of God's will to man was not revealed in Eden, to the patriarchs, in the old covenant, or in Christ's personal ministry on earth. Before His ascension, Christ said: "*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth. . . .*" (John 16:12-13) Christ was speaking to the apostles. (John 15:26-27; 17:8,12-21) By the time the last apostle died, all the truth had been delivered. (*Bales, Finality*) Does anyone dare to legislate that the Spirit could not reveal

anything on divorce and remarriage which showed that the “whosoever” of Matthew 19:9 was limited? Is it scriptural to force the complete revelation to agree with our uninspired interpretation of the incomplete revelation? He who is open to truth is open to whatever additional truth Christ revealed by the Spirit *after* His ascension.

“Proving” It Too Soon

With only the light of the incomplete revelation, some brethren have proved to their own satisfaction that Matthew 19:9 is universal legislation. They proved it *before* they got to 1 Corinthians 7:10-15. Therefore, they force 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 to fit their interpretation. The complete revelation is not allowed to unsettle their *uninspired* interpretation of the *incomplete* revelation. They have imitated the sectarian practice of “proving” things too soon. I shall give some examples.

First, the kingdom was at hand in Matthew 3:2 and 4:17. Had it arrived when Jesus said: “for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”? (Matt. 5:3) No. To argue that it was established by then is a case of “proving” it too soon. (Acts 2:34-36; Heb. 1:3,13)

Second, some camp on Matthew 3:11-12 and “prove” that the baptism of the Spirit is for all believers. Most brethren agree that the complete revelation shows that it was limited to Pentecost (Acts 1:4-5; 2:1-4,8,6,11,32,14,37), the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:45,47; 11:15-17), and Paul.

Third, “whosoever believeth” does not prove faith only even though repentance and baptism are not mentioned in John 3:16. (Gal. 3:26-27)

Fourth, some camp on “new tongues” in Mark 16:17 to prove that tongues are not human languages, but additional passages show that tongues were languages. (Mk. 16:17-18; Acts 2:4,6,8,11)

Fifth, some “prove” that all believers must have all the gifts mentioned in Mark 16:17-18, but the complete revelation shows that they were limited to the work of inspired men in the first century in revealing and confirming the faith. (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4; Jude 3; see James D. Bales, *Miracles Or Mirages?*, Austin, Texas: *Firm Foundation*.)

The failure to realize that the complete revelation can show

that one is wrong in universalizing certain passages in the Bible leads to the twisting of the complete revelation in order to make it fit one's uninspired universalizing of something in the incomplete revelation. We must open our hearts so that we shall honestly consider whether the subject of divorce and remarriage is one of the subjects on which the complete truth was *not* revealed in the personal ministry of Christ. As I said before, one who refuses to study this subject without at least admitting that possibility is *willfully blinding himself* to additional truth if additional truth is revealed in the complete revelation. Surely we do not want to be guilty of legislating for the Lord and saying that the Lord must have said in His personal ministry all that can be said on the subject of divorce and remarriage. Disciples of the Lord are in no position to dictate to the Lord and say that since *they* think that Matthew 19:9 is universal in application, the Lord cannot teach anything contrary to *their uninspired interpretation* through the inspired apostles and prophets.

When the subject of marriage is discussed "in the light of the full teaching of the Scriptures on the subject, it will be seen that there are several phases of the question to be considered. And it should also be noticed that a given passage does not always deal with every aspect of the over-all subject of the marriage relation; and if one isn't careful, he can fall into serious error, if this fact is not recognized and respected." (*Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1963, p. 193. Published by the *Gospel Advocate*. It is their official lesson commentary.)

Chapter II

WHY SOME CANNOT UNDERSTAND 1 CORINTHIANS 7:10-15

Why do some fail to understand that Paul clearly taught that Christ's legislation on divorce and remarriage is only for those in the covenant? Why do they fail to see that Christ did not legislate for all marriages—two in the church, two in the world, and a mixed marriage? They bring with them false assumptions which keep them from applying the principles of interpretation set forth in the previous chapter. *They* assume that Christ's total teaching on divorce and remarriage *must* have been delivered during His personal ministry. *Before they got to the complete revelation, which includes 1 Corinthians 7:10-15, they legislated that Matthew 19:9 must be universal.* Having closed their minds to the possibility that the complete revelation could contradict their uninspired interpretation and universalization of Matthew 19:9, they try to *force* the inspired apostle Paul to agree with them. Any interpretation which does not agree with theirs must be wrong. (*Your*, 437, 442-444)

They make the same mistake—of taking a part of the truth and making it the entire truth on Matthew 19:9—which the Roman Catholics make on Mark 10:11-12 and Luke 16:18. The Catholics point out that these last two passages make no provision for remarriage. The apostle Paul mentioned none in 1 Corinthians 7:11. These passages teach the “complete exclusion of absolute divorce . . . in Christian marriage,” and restore “the original dissolubility of marriage as it had been ordained by God in the Creation. . . .” Therefore, “the clause in Matthew *must* be explained as the mere dismissal of the unfaithful wife without the dissolution of the marriage bond.” (*CE*, V. 55, 56) There are others who harmonize this by saying that the fornication referred to an act committed before the marriage and which rendered the marriage invalid. One could say the word “wife” in Matthew 19:9 did not mean real wife but “legal wife,” just as in 1 Corinthians 7:11 Paul did not mean they were actually “unmarried” but simply separated or legally divorced. To put away such a one was not to break up an actual marriage. If you want to see the mistake

these brethren make in dealing with 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 and Matthew 19:9, make Matthew 19:9 conform to your uninspired universalization of the “whosoever” in Mark 10:11-12 and conclude there is no ground for divorce and remarriage. One is no more justified in making 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 conform to Matthew 19:9 than he is in making Mark 10:11-12 the whole truth on the subject, and making the rest of the New Testament conform to this passage.

Why not open your heart to the additional information on remarriage which Christ revealed through Paul? (1 Cor. 7:12-15)

These Brethren Recognize These Principles

These brethren recognize the principles which, if they applied them to Matthew 19:9 and 1 Corinthians 7:12-15, show that one passage does not contradict another because it sets forth additional truth. As Garland Elkins said: “Though Mark and Luke do not record the exception that does not mean that Matthew contradicts Mark and Luke. These three writers recorded different things that the Lord said on the subject, but only Matthew records the exception. This is comparable to Matthew’s, Mark’s, and Luke’s account of the Great Commission. For example, only Luke records the condition of repentance. Does that mean that Matthew and Mark were seeking to eliminate repentance? Both Matthew and Mark mention baptism. Does it follow that Luke was seeking to eliminate baptism? That is certainly not the case. Neither is the exception of Matthew 19:9 eliminated because it is not mentioned by Mark and Luke. *How many times would the Lord have to mention a thing for it to be true anyway?*” (*Your*, 530) Also as Elkins said: “Let us rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15). Let us not bind where the Lord has not bound nor loose where he has not loosed.” (*Your*, 530)

David Lipe cannot understand 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 because he refuses to apply the principle he recognizes as valid elsewhere, i.e., that one passage may limit another passage which by itself seems universal. The “all” of Psalm 91:11 is limited, not contradicted, by Deuteronomy 6:16. (Matt. 4:6-7) “In meeting the temptation Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:16. It should not be concluded that Jesus was merely arraying one scripture against another. Rather, Jesus was showing that *one* portion of Scripture (Deut. 6:16) may modify or explain *another* portion of Scripture

(Psa. 91:11). The Devil had made too broad an application of Psalm 91:11." (*Your*, 82-83) However, when Lipe gets to 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 which is a part of the complete revelation, and of the remote context of Matthew 19:9, he refuses to let it in any way modify *his* universalization of the "whosoever." He uses the very word "all" to speak of the "whosoever" of Matthew 19:9. (457) He concludes that: "From this it is clear that Matthew 19:9 is a passage of *universal application*. Thus to interpret any passage which contradicts this clear Biblical teaching is a *false* interpretation. To interpret 1 Corinthians 7:15 as providing grounds (i.e., other than fornication) which are acceptable to God for divorce and remarriage is to interpret it in a way which contradicts Matthew 19:9. Therefore, to interpret 1 Corinthians 7:15 as providing grounds (i.e., other than fornication) which are acceptable to God for divorce and remarriage is a *false* interpretation." (457)

Robertson L. Whiteside

Whiteside maintained that: "If a person did not already have his mind made up, he would have no trouble in understanding this verse." (*Reflections*, 414-415) 1 Corinthians 7:15 no more contradicts Matthew 19:9 than Matthew 19:9 contradicts Genesis 1:27,28; 2:24. "If the believer, in such cases, is not entirely free from the marriage vows, he is still under bondage." The apostles were "the last and final revelators of the will of Christ, all that went before should be understood in the light of their teaching; but when we seek to bend First Corinthians to fit Matthew 19:9, we reverse the principle of interpretation. Besides, the two passages deal with different angles of the matter." (416) "When we get so set in our opinions that we cannot accept plain declaration of Holy Writ, we should not complain at the denominations for doing the same thing." (421) Will you try to force the complete revelation to conform to your uninspired interpretation of the incomplete revelation? Did you make up your mind on Matthew 19:9 before you studied 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, 12-15? Will you refuse to permit even Paul to get you to reconsider the position?

Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

Wallace pointed to the fact that by inspiration Paul dealt with

certain cases which were “not included in the Lord’s own strictures in the *Sermon On The Mount* and in the later citations.” This was in harmony with Jesus’ promise that the Holy Spirit would reveal additional truths through the apostles. (John 16:12-13) “If the bondage here does not refer to the marriage bond, then the believer would still be in the bondage of it.” Wallace thought that it would be presupposed that the unbeliever would commit adultery, which I do not agree with, but he clearly saw that Paul’s teaching was not identical with, but went beyond, what Christ delivered in His personal ministry. (*The Sermon On The Mount*, 43, 44, 45)

Another Reason Why They Cannot Understand (1 Corinthians 7:12-15)

Some brethren cannot understand 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 because *they* have legislated that all of Christ’s law must apply to all people both within and outside of the church. However, a consideration of the following should open their eyes to the fact that some of Christ’s laws do not apply to the world. Realizing this fact, they may then open their minds to study whether Matthew 19:9 applies to the world or just to the church. (1) The law that Christ’s kingdom is not upheld by the sword is not a law for kingdoms of this world. (Rom. 13) If it were, governments could not carry the sword. (2) The church gets money by voluntary contribution (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9), but governments through such means as taxation. (Rom. 13:6-7) (3) The law of pardon to the Christian is to repent and pray, but the law of pardon to the alien involves baptism. (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 22:16) (4) The world is not commanded to assemble and to exhort believers (Heb. 10:25), to observe the Lord’s supper which is in the kingdom (Matt. 26:29; Lk. 22:30), to preach the gospel, to disfellowship the sinners in 1 Corinthians 5:9-12, to refrain from eating with such individuals (5:9,11,13), to marry a Christian as Christian women whose husbands die were told to do (1 Cor. 7:39), to bring their problems before the saints (1 Cor. 6:1,6), or to abstain from greeting and receiving into their homes those who go onward and abide not in the doctrine of Christ. (2 John 9-11)

We should carefully observe two conclusions. *First*, Christ has not given instruction to the world in the above matters. Even the

statement about the “powers that be” carrying the sword was not revealed to the Roman government but to the Christians at Rome. *Second*, the fact that the government carries the sword and the church does not use it in governing the church does not mean that Christ’s teachings contradict. How can they since they do not apply to the same group or category? 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 does not contradict 7:12-15 for they do not apply to the same group or category.

Unbearable to Them

Jesus said: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth.” (John 16:12-13) There are some brethren who cannot bear, up to this point in time, the fact that through Paul Christ revealed that Matthew 19:9 is not universal legislation, but is universal only so far as the marriages within the covenant are concerned.

I love all of these brethren, but this does not keep me from maintaining that it is time for them to bear the hithertofore “unbearable” and revise, in the light of the full revelation, their uninspired interpretation of the incomplete revelation.

Too Important to Accept Without An Express Statement?

Some have said that this question is too important to settle on the basis of reasoning and from application of principles. There must be an express statement of the Lord which says: “My law of divorce and remarriage applies to the church and not to the world.” If these brethren do not demand it in these words, they demand it in some other ways. My reply is: *First*, Paul expressly said that the Lord dealt with believers and *not* with a mixed marriage. (1 Cor. 7:10,12) How much plainer do you want it? “. . . I, *not the Lord*.”

Second, these brethren must admit that suicide is at least as important a question as divorce and remarriage. However, there is no statement in the New Testament which expressly legislates on suicide, there is no command which says, “Thou shalt not commit suicide,” and there is no penalty mentioned for suicide. Suicide was widespread in the world of Jesus’ day. There is nothing in the New Testament as clear on suicide as there is on

Paul's teaching which shows that Christ's teaching on marriage, divorce and remarriage in the personal ministry was not universal legislation for the world as well as for the church. However, I am convinced that it is clear that suicide is wrong. Murder is wrong. Loving our neighbor rules out our doing him the harm of killing him. ". . . for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, *Thou shalt not kill* . . . and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as thyself*. *Love worketh no ill* to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law." (Rom. 13:8-10) To kill is to work ill, and this is forbidden by the law of love. Furthermore, we are to love others as ourselves and *love for ourselves* forbids that we should work ill to ourselves and kill ourselves. But it is still true that there is no express statement on this subject in the New Testament. When the jailer was about to commit suicide, Paul did not tell him it was wrong. He said it was unnecessary. ". . . about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice saying, Do thyself no harm: *for we are all here*." (Acts 16:27-28) I can see why it would have been futile to have argued with a man, who was about to commit suicide and who believed suicide was the way out, that it was wrong. By the time Paul had gotten through with his argument the man would have been dead. It was not lying to tell him that he should not harm himself "*for we are all here*." They were all there. It stopped the planned action of the jailer. However, if some brethren approached this as they do Matthew 19:9, they would have to say that Paul had to give the jailer the teaching that suicide is wrong and that Luke should have recorded it here so that it would be clear that Christ views suicide as not only unnecessary in such a case but also as wrong in itself. They want Jesus to say, in the immediate context of Matthew 19:9, that "I am speaking to the church and not to the world." Since He did not say this there, they have decided that He *cannot* say it through Paul.

Chapter III

CHRIST'S PERSONAL REVELATION AND CHRIST'S LEGISLATION THROUGH PAUL

Some of 1 Corinthians deals with questions which the Corinthians had submitted to Paul. (1 Cor. 7:1) Among other things, they had asked whether two believers (Christians) could separate and if so must they remain unmarried. Also, should a believer leave an unbeliever and what situation was a believer in if an unbeliever left the believer? Paul wrote: "But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord, That the wife depart not from her husband (but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband); and that the husband leave not his wife. But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her. And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart: the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us in peace. For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" (1 Cor. 7:10-16)

It should be kept in mind that it does not take many words to convey tremendous truths. Paul did not have to write a lot of words to reveal some significant things concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage.

Questions Asked Paul

The Corinthians had asked Paul a number of questions (7:25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1), including some concerning marriage. (7:1,2,8-9) Deaver pointed out that Paul answered their question whether a believer should remain married to a believer (7:10-11), and then their question whether a believer should remain married to an unbeliever. (7:12-15); (*Your*, 447-448) Must saints break up

marriages to sinners? (Col. 1:13-14; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1) Israelites were not to marry with other nationalities (Ex. 34:14-16; Deut. 7:3; Joshua 23:12-13; Neh. 10:29-30; 13:23-30), and such marriages were broken up. (Ezra 9:1-15; 10:1-3,4,5-11,12-19,20-44; Neh. 13:23-24) Did Christians, who constitute spiritual Israel, have to break up such marriages because God did not recognize them? The issue was not whether a Christian woman had the right to go to bed with a man to whom she was not married, but whether the man with whom she had been going to bed was actually recognized by God as her husband. Paul said God recognized the marriage and the believer was not to take the initiative and break it up. (7:12-15) The unbeliever in the Jewish age made the relationship unholy (Ezra 9:1-10:4), but the believer in the gospel age makes the relationship holy or legitimate. (1 Cor. 7:14)

Although both Christ and Paul taught by the Spirit, there is a difference between what Christ had said and what the Spirit now revealed through Paul. (7:10-11,12-15) In view of Jesus' promise, we should not be surprised that the Spirit guided Paul into some truths which were not revealed during Christ's personal ministry. The different legislations do not contradict one another for they deal with different categories of marriages—two believers, and a mixed marriage. One does violence to the Scriptures if he tries to force Paul's teaching and Christ's teaching into one and the same law governing both categories. We are not twisting scripture but understanding scripture when we consider the contexts, both immediate and remote, and understand something in the incomplete revelation (the personal ministry) in the light of the complete revelation—the total truth. (John 16:12-13)

“Not I, but the Lord”

Three explanations have been given concerning the distinction between “I give charge, yea, *not I, but the Lord*” (7:10) and “*I, not the Lord.*” (7:12) *First*, Paul was uninspired when he said: “I, not the Lord.” If Paul was uninspired in the statements concerning the mixed marriages, it does not affect my argument in this book. It would mean that the Spirit inspired Paul to apply the Lord's teaching on divorce and remarriage to two believers (7:10-11), but refused to let Paul apply it to a mixed marriage. Therefore, we have no right to bind on the mixed marriage the

inspired teaching which Christ bound on the two Christians.

If "I, *not the Lord*" meant Paul was not inspired, I maintain that the Spirit would not have let him give false teaching in 7:12-15; therefore, we should accept it as being right, though not *required* of us. We could follow it or not, but it would not be wrong to follow it. If Paul was un-inspired in 7:12, we could not say he was inspired when he included in any statement "I say." (7:6,8,29)

However, Paul was inspired. He wrote as an apostle (1:1-2), delivered authoritative decisions (5:3-5), gave "this charge" (11:17) and said "the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord." (14:37) If he was not inspired in 7:12 why did he say: "And so ordain I in all the churches"? (7:17)

Second, some say that "not I, but the Lord" emphasizes Paul's inspiration but he does not mean the Lord had already legislated on this case. (1) It is still true that Paul did not apply the same law to the mixed marriage that he applied to the two Christians. (7:10-11, contrasted with 12-15) He said *different things about each case* in addition to giving *contrasting introductions*. (2) If "not I, but the Lord" simply emphasizes that Paul is inspired in this statement, it follows that "I, *not the Lord*" (7:12) emphasizes that Paul was *not inspired* in 7:12-15. However, I have shown that he was inspired in this statement.

Third, the correct explanation is that when Paul said "not I, but the Lord" he meant that the Lord had already spoken on the two Christians, and Paul applied this teaching *to those whom the Lord had in mind when He taught on marriage in His personal ministry*. "And what confirms this meaning is, that we really find this precept in our Gospels proceeding from the mouth of Jesus, as we read it here; comp. Matt. v.32, xix.9; Mark x.11; Luke xvi.18." (Godet, 332)

"But to the Rest"

"But to the rest say I, not the Lord." (7:12) What does "but" indicate? Who are the rest? "But" indicates that Paul is dealing with a different group, or saying something different, or dealing with another subject. The use of "but" in 1 Corinthians 7:6,8-9,10,12,19,25,29,32,33,34,35,36,37,39,40 justifies us in concluding that "but" in 7:12 indicates that Paul is dealing with a different group (in this case he is talking about mixed marriage) in 7:12-15

than Christ dealt with in 7:10-11.

Who Are the Rest?

Who are the rest, to whom Paul, not Christ, spoke? It is not difficult to know who "the rest" are. "But to the rest say I, not the Lord: *If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she be content to dwell with him, let him not leave her. And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband.*" (7:12-13) "The rest" are the rest of the married, and it is clear that it is the rest of Christians who are the ones involved in mixed marriages. What are some positions on "the rest" which some have taken in order to escape the clear conclusion that Christ's legislation did not deal with mixed marriages, but that Paul's did and his was different from that of the Lord?

First, some claim that Paul is applying "the rest of the principle," which Jesus set forth in 7:10-11, to mixed marriages. (1) Those who give this explanation also claim that Christ's teaching in Matthew 19:9 (1 Cor. 7:10-11) was applied by Christ to *all marriages*. "All marriages" would include mixed marriages. In such a case, Paul could not say that Christ had not applied the principle to mixed marriages. Christ would have applied all of the principle to all of the marriages and there would be none of the principle left unused by the Lord for Paul to apply to mixed marriages to which the Lord had not applied all of it already.

(2) If Paul meant he was applying "the rest of the principle," it does not change my argument. Paul would be saying that the part of the principle which applied to two believers differed from the "rest of the principle" which he applied to mixed marriages. The "rest of the principle" which Paul applied to the mixed marriage was something *different* from that part which was applied to the two Christians in 7:10-11. This makes it obvious that the "rest of the principle" differed from the teaching in 7:10-11. The part in 7:12-15 differs from the other part of the principle in 7:10-11.

(3) But the "rest" is not the rest of the principle or teaching but a group which is different from the groups he had addressed so far in the chapter. "But *I say to the unmarried and to widows*" (7:8); "but unto *the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord*" (7:10); "but *to the rest say I*" (7:12) Who are the rest? Christians in mixed marriages. (7:12-13)

The “Rest” of Your Questions?

Deaver maintained that “the rest” referred to the “rest” of their questions, and not to mixed marriages. (June 21, 1978, pp. 4-5) Answer: *First*, Deaver himself said the “rest” referred to mixed marriages. (*Your*, 445, 347)

Second, my argument is unchanged even if “rest” refers to questions. The questions concerned a different group—the mixed marriages. Paul said the Lord had not legislated on this question, and Paul said something different about this question than about the question which is implied in 7:10-11. The answer in 7:10-11 concerned two believers, but the answer in 7:12-15 concerned mixed marriages.

Third, Deaver’s identification of the “rest” with questions did not help his argument. He said in 7:12-15 Paul was dealing with three “cases” concerning which the Corinthians had asked questions. (a) Should a Christian man leave a non-Christian wife? (b) Should a Christian wife leave a non-Christian husband? (c) What if the non-Christian companion leaves the Christian? (June 21, 1978, p. 3; *Your*, 445) If he is right, nothing has really changed in the argument for the rest of the questions *concerned cases of marriages and not cases of questions*. Deaver quoted Albert Barnes, but, unfortunately for Deaver, Barnes said: “Now in regard to *the rest of the persons and cases referred to . . .*” Deaver quoted Alford but it did not help Deaver for Alford said: “*Directions for such Christians as were already married to Heathens.*” “12.) . . . *the rest, perhaps in respect of their letter of enquiry,—the only ones not yet dealt with.* At all events, the meaning is plain, being those who are involved in mixed marriages with unbelievers.” (II, 523) Alford went on to say that the Lord did not deal with mixed marriages. “Observe, (1) that there is no contradiction, in this license of breaking off such a marriage, to the command of our Lord in Matthew 5:32,—because the Apostle expressly asserts, (ver. 12), that *our Lord’s words do not apply* to such marriages as are here contemplated. They were spoken to those *within the covenant*, and as such apply immediately to the wedlock of *Christians* (ver. 10), but *not to mixed marriages.*” (II, 525)

Fourth, Deaver is determined to bind what Christ said in 7:10-11 on the mixed marriages in 7:12-15 in direct contradiction to the fact Paul said Christ did not speak to the mixed marriages.

Deaver said "the rest of the questions . . . related to the specific cases, coming under the heading of 'the married' (as mentioned in verse 10)." (p. 4) Therefore, the general law of 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 binds the mixed marriages, Deaver concludes. How people twist and turn to try to escape what Paul said! Consider: (a) The "married" of 7:10-11 are distinguished from the mixed marriages in 7:12-15. (b) Paul said Christ had not spoken on the mixed marriages. Elsewhere in his writings Deaver maintains that the general law of Matthew 19:9 was legislated by Christ to cover all marriages—two Christians, two unbelievers, and a mixed marriage. These brethren cannot possibly explain how Christ could have covered all marriages in Matthew 19:9, and then Paul could say that Christ did not cover the mixed marriages. There is a contradiction, but not between Christ and Paul. The contradiction is between their uninspired universalization of Matthew 19:9 to cover all marriages, and Paul's inspired teaching that Christ had not covered all marriages.

Did 7:10-11 cover two in the church? If so, the "rest" in 7:12-15 is in contrast with the two Christians in 7:10-11. Did 7:10-11 cover two in the world, instead of two in the church? If so, they are in contrast with the mixed marriages of 7:12-15. First Corinthians 7:10-11 could not cover all (two in the world and two in the church), for if it did it would cover one in the world married to one in the church. Notice that in Matthew 19:9 Christ did not specifically, *in that context*, say that He meant two Christians, He did not specifically say that He meant two unbelievers, He did not specifically say He meant a mixed marriage. He said "whosoever" and then through Paul showed that "the whosoever" was limited to "whosoever" was in the covenant. It is universal as far as marriages of two Christians are concerned, but did not apply to a mixed marriage or two people in the world. But Deaver insists in putting under the bondage of Matthew 19:9 *those whom Paul said the Lord did not speak about*, and of whom Paul said they were not under bondage in 7:15.

Fifth, R. L. Roberts agreed that the "rest" dealt "with the circumstances of mixed marriages, which has as yet not been considered. . . ." "So, a new problem not existing in Jesus' day is now in view, i.e., should the marriage of a believer and an unbeliever continue?" (119-120) Christ had not dealt with this problem, and this makes it obvious that Matthew 19:9 did not cover all marriages, for if it did it would have dealt with a mixed marriage.

Of course, there were no marriages in the personal ministry between two Christians, or a Christian and an unbeliever, because there were no Christians then. The church did not start until Pentecost. However, the problem of a Jew married to a non-Jew did exist in Jesus' day, and in Ezra's day they had been broken up.

Sixth, there is an antithesis or contrast between the unmarried and widows of 7:8 and the married of 7:10. There is a contrast between the married in 7:10 and the "rest" in 7:12. If 7:10 meant all the married—believers, two unbelievers, and mixed marriages—the contrast in 7:12 would be *all the unmarried*. How could 7:10-11 cover all the married, but not cover the mixed marriages of 7:12? Paul said the Lord spoke on 7:10-11 but not on 7:12-15. Furthermore, the contrast in 7:8 and 10 is between people. The contrast between 7:10-11 and 7:12 is not between people in 7:10 and questions in 7:12. "But I say to the unmarried and widows." (7:8) He spoke to people. He again spoke to people in 7:10, "But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord." Paul spoke to people, not questions, when he said in 7:12: "But to the rest say I, not the Lord: *If any brother. . .*"

"I, Not the Lord"

But "to the rest say I, not the Lord." (7:12) What did Paul mean by saying that "I" (Paul) and not "the Lord" (Christ) dealt with the mixed marriage? When these brethren are defending "I, not the Lord" against the charge that this is an uninspired statement of Paul, they all understand the verse. It is only when they legislate that Christ must have covered mixed marriages that they become confused. If they would dismiss from their minds their determination to make Matthew 19:9 cover all marriages, they would have no problem with 1 Corinthians 7:10-15. The following illustrate the fact that most brethren understand the distinctions being made in 7:10 and 7:12 even though some of them refuse to accept the inevitable conclusion which flows from the distinctions.

First, Alexander Campbell and Walter Scott agreed that Paul had reference in 1 Corinthians 7:10 to a commandment which Christ had already given and in 1 Corinthians 7:12 to a new revelation given through the apostle Paul. (*Millennial Harbinger*, 1834, pp. 71-73)

Second, J. W. McGarvey said that in 7:10 Paul referred to

something given by the Lord "by his own lips—Matthew 5:31,32; 19:3-12; Mark 10:12," and in 7:12 Paul spoke "as an inspired apostle." "Not the Lord" meant the Lord had not spoken this "with his own lips." (*Thessalonians, Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans*, p. 80)

Third, G. C. Brewer explained it as follows both in the *Gospel Advocate* and in *Contending For The Faith*. "Next, in answer to their question about the separation and divorce of married persons, Paul considered, first, *those married persons who are both Christians*. . . . To these, the apostle's command and the command of the Lord (Matt. 19:6-9; Mark 10:6-12) was not to separate. . . . In the second place, *he considers those Christians who were married to heathens*. . . . Concerning these, the apostle says he has no commandment from the Lord, meaning that Christ, while on earth, had given no precept touching this point. Only by inspiration given him as a faithful servant of God could he speak here." (pp. 97, 99-101)

Fourth, in an article published many years ago in the *Gospel Advocate*, and later printed in a book, Robertson L. Whiteside said: "Here Paul recognizes that what Jesus said on the point before his crucifixion applies to us, and then he proceeds to give additional regulations . . . an inspired revelation." (*Reflections*, p. 417)

Fifth, Foy E. Wallace, Jr. wrote that 1 Corinthians 7:10 "clearly means that he was restating the words of Christ on the subject, and passing on his orders, from the record of Matthew in chapters 5 and 19. He then adds, in verse 12, 'to the rest speak I, not the Lord,' which just as clearly means that to others involved in different situations and phases of marriage than the ones already addressed, the apostle was speaking from his own inspiration on certain points and aspects of the conjugal relation in actual cases in the Corinthian church which were not included in the Lord's own strictures in the *Sermon on the Mount* and in later citations." (*The Sermon On The Mount And The Civil State*, p. 43)

Sixth, the *Gospel Advocate Lesson Commentary*, which is the Advocate's official commentary, said: "Since Paul says this is the teaching of the Lord and the only recorded teaching of Jesus in Matthew 5:31,32; 19:3-12, and related passages, we should view these passages in the light of Paul's statement and not reach any conclusions contrary to what is said here.

"To the rest say I not the Lord. Paul does not mean to say that his teaching is not inspired, but simply that he is not repeating a lesson which Jesus taught while on earth. The expression *the rest* refers to Christians who have unbelieving spouses." (*Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1956, p. 31)

"In charging married Christians not to divorce their companions, Paul cited the teaching of Christ, not because his own word was insufficient; but because the Lord had spoken categorically on the subject. (Cf. Matt. 5:31,32; 19:3-12) It was not the apostle's aim therefore to make a distinction between an inspired and an uninspired statement; but rather to remind his readers that they had no need to apply to him for instruction on the subject they asked about, since the Lord himself had spoken on it." (*Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1963, p. 193)

"In saying, 'But to the rest say I, not the Lord,' Paul was simply making a distinction between the personal teaching of Jesus and that of his own. Jesus did speak on the question of divorce, but there is no recorded saying of his on the subject of mixed marriages. However, if any one doubts that Paul was speaking authoritatively, as an inspired apostle, let him read 1 Corinthians 14:37. . . ." (p. 194) Christ did not speak on mixed marriages. This being true it is unscriptural to bind what the Lord did say in the Gospels on a mixed marriage. When these brethren bind it on 7:15, they are affirming that Christ did speak on mixed marriages. Brethren, you cannot have it both ways. Either stay with your agreement with Paul on 7:12 or declare him uninspired in this matter because you have decided that the Lord in the Gospels spoke on all marriages.

Seventh, Guy N. Woods, who is now Associate Editor of the *Advocate*, wrote awhile back that: "He is not contrasting the Lord's authority with his own; he is distinguishing between an express declaration of the Lord while he was on earth, touching the matter; and another aspect of the subject on which Paul ruled, but on which the Lord did not directly speak. With reference to 1 Corinthians 7:12, Paul issued an inspired dictum on an aspect of marriage not dealt with by the Lord. That Paul possessed an awareness of his power and authority so to do, is clearly seen in 1 Corinthians 7:17, where he said, 'So ordain I in all the churches,' a statement certainly requiring apostolic authority and divine guidance." (*Questions and Answers*, p. 87) Christ spoke neither directly nor indirectly on mixed marriages.

Eighth, J. D. Thomas of Abilene Christian University, pointed out that Paul dealt with single Christians in 1 Corinthians 7:8-9, Christians married to Christians in 7:10-11, and “married couples, where one is a Christian and one is not” in 7:12-16. He maintains that Paul did not give the same instruction to each group. They were different groups and the context makes clear he gave different instructions. “Note that Paul gives a *different instruction* to each category.” (*Divorce and Remarriage*, p. 66) He referred to the Lord’s instructions in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 and then said: “In verses 12-15, ‘to the rest’ means instruction for everybody else under the influence of Paul’s instruction to Christians, which is obviously then limited to such Christians as were married to non-Christians. The scriptural advice to this group is *not the same* as to those wedded couples of verses 10 and 11, where both are Christians, but is necessarily different instruction, otherwise there would be no point in having this third group—he would have included them as recipients of the instruction of verses 10 and 11.” (p. 67)

This indicates what is indicated in the other quotations, that it was necessary for Paul to speak by inspiration in 7:12-15 and give additional instruction because the Lord in His personal ministry had not dealt with the category of mixed marriages.

Ninth, Roy Deaver said that in 1 Corinthians 7:12-13 Paul was dealing with the question: “Should the Christian who is married to a non-Christian leave the non-Christian? 1. Paul says that he, himself (as an inspired apostle) is giving the answer—that the Lord (in His public ministry) did not deal specifically with this matter.” (Thomas B. Warren, Editor, *Your Marriage Can Be Great*, p. 445) Christ did not deal with this matter *at all*, specifically or unspecifically. Paul said, “I, *not the Lord*.”

Deaver also said: “Paul (as an inspired apostle) gives the answer, and mentions that the Lord Himself, in His personal ministry DID NOT deal with this matter.” (*Your*, 449) Since Christ did not deal with it, Matthew 19:9 does not deal with it.

Tenth, Thomas B. Warren, who has taken the lead in pushing the other side of the question of whether aliens must dissolve marriages contracted contrary to Matthew 19:9, said in one of his lectures that in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 Paul was referring to a revelation which Christ had already made on this subject, such as in Mark 10:2-12, but in 1 Corinthians 7:12 Paul was referring to an aspect of marriage on which Christ had not spoken. I have a

tape of the lecture.

Eleventh, in a thesis written at Abilene Christian University by Avon Lee Malone on "The View of Inspiration as Reflected in Selected Passages from the Pauline Epistles," we read; "In examining the immediate context of the passage it becomes clear that Paul quotes the teaching of Jesus in verse 10. Particularly sayings of Jesus which came to be recorded in the gospels (Matt. 5:32; cf. Matt. 19:3-9) seem to be clearly in the mind of the apostle when he writes" verse ten. (72) Concerning 7:12: "It is simply a matter of 'having no command of Christ to quote, he speaks with the authority given him.' " (74)

Twelfth, Harvey Floyd, of David Lipscomb College, wrote: "His words in verse 10 ('not I, but the Lord') mean that he is quoting the Lord Jesus in his public ministry. The distinction is not between Paul's advice and the word of God, but between Paul's apostolic statement and the words of Jesus spoken during his ministry. Both are equally the word of God and equally authoritative." (Floyd, *Your*, 499)

" 'The rest' (verse 12) refers to people in marital situations not dealt with already, and it is apparent from what Paul says that the situations are those in which one of the married persons is a Christian and the other is a pagan." (Floyd, *Your*, 498)

Thirteenth, Raymond C. Kelcy of Oklahoma Christian College, rightly said: "Paul cannot appeal to a direct statement from the Lord, that is, to something Jesus had said during his personal ministry. So, he prefaces this section with the words, *But to the rest say I, not the Lord*. This does not mean that Paul is merely giving his personal opinion; he is speaking with apostolic authority, guided by the Holy Spirit. What he says is just as authoritative as what Jesus had personally spoken." (1 Corinthians, 31) This being the case, it is unscriptural for us to appeal "to something Jesus had said during his personal ministry" and maintain that it was spoken to a mixed marriage. On the other hand, it is scriptural for us to appeal to what Jesus spoke during His personal ministry and affirm that it was spoken to believers, i.e., to members of the covenant. Brethren who differ with me always appeal to what Jesus had spoken in His personal ministry and affirm that Jesus spoke it also to the mixed marriage and to the world. *Their argument is with the apostle Paul, not with me*. They have to contradict Paul in order to refute me; not because I am who I am but because I have accepted what Paul said and

they have not. Regardless of how long and involved their arguments are, they always *assert* or *imply* that what Jesus had said in His personal ministry covered all marriages, and therefore it is not scriptural to distinguish between what Jesus said in His personal ministry and what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15. But Paul made the distinction and I accept it.

Fourteenth, Roy H. Lanier, Sr. recognizes that the married in 7:10-11 are two Christians, and the "rest" in 7:12-15 are mixed marriages. (*Your*, 487) "Next, we have in 1 Corinthians 7:10,11 an inspired commentary on the teaching of Jesus in these passages in the Gospels which have been cited." (*Your*, 494) "But it is not true that Paul's teaching to Christians covers all the ground covered in the Gospel passages." (495) He does not mention divorce and remarriage for fornication. (7:10-11)

The apostle Paul made clear in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 where he did not get this law. It did not come through his apostolic authority. "... not I," that is not Paul. He made clear where he did get it. "... the Lord." He made just as clear where he got the revelation in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 "... not the Lord." This is where he did not get it. Obviously those who believe in the inspiration of the Bible believe that he got it from the Lord through the Spirit. But it was "not the Lord" in the sense that the command in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 was "the Lord." Where did Paul get 1 Corinthians 7:12? "I," Paul, "not the Lord." This shows where he got it as well as where he did not get it, just as 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 shows where he did not get it and where he did get it.

In contradiction to this, these brethren claim that there is no difference in the way in which Paul got 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 and the way he got 7:12-15. They maintain that in both cases the source is what the Lord taught in His personal ministry.

When brethren concentrate on what is said in 7:10 and 7:12, without the pre-determination to make 7:12-15 fit their interpretation of the incomplete revelation (the Gospels), they see clearly what Paul is saying. Darkness comes when they blind themselves with their uninspired interpretation of Matthew 19:9. Why do they refuse to accept the additional truth that the Spirit revealed on marriage and divorce and remarriage through the apostle Paul? (John 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 7:12-15)

Separating Without Remarrying?

Some argue that Matthew 19:9 covers all marriages but that Christ had not dealt with the issue of a Christian leaving a non-Christian, and Paul now dealt with this. Answer: *First*, Christ had not *specifically* talked about the separation of *two Christians* without remarrying. He had covered it in that He had forbidden divorce and remarriage, except for fornication, but He had not forbidden separation without remarriage. Neither Matthew 19:9 nor 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 command separation, though both tolerate it. But Paul said Christ did not speak about mixed marriages.

Second, these brethren agree that Paul is referring to such passages as Matthew 19:9 in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11. When they argue that Christ's teaching in the personal ministry covered *all* marriages, they make it impossible for them to argue that Christ had not spoken on separation of a believer and an unbeliever. Paul said Christ had not spoken on the mixed marriages. Paul did, and his legislation for mixed marriages differed from that of Christ for two Christians.

An Unrecorded Statement?

Deaver said the Corinthians asked Paul: "Is it all right for Christians who are married to Christian companions to continue in marriage?" (*Notes*, 14; *Your*, 447) It seems to me that it was more like: "Can a Christian leave a Christian and if so what is the Christian's status?" Paul said not to leave, but if they do they must remain unmarried or be reconciled. Deaver said when Paul said "not I, but the Lord" he was referring to an *unrecorded* statement of Christ. (*Notes*, Chart #10; *Your*, 450; *Notes*, 15; *Your*, 448) He maintained Matthew 19:9 is not discussed either in 7:10-11 or 7:12, but would apply if either party in either case fornicated. (*Notes*, 16; *Your*, 448-450) It is true that not everything Jesus *did* is recorded (John 20:30-31; 21:25), and Acts records a statement not found in the Gospels. (Acts 20:35) However, is Deaver right in arguing *that no recorded statement in the Gospels* deals with whether Christians should remain married? The answer is so clearly "No" that one wonders why Deaver ever took such a position.

First, though Matthew 19:9 does deal with fornication and remarriage, and 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 does not deal with for-

nication, this does not mean, as he assumes (*Your*, 448), that 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 does not refer to Matthew 19. It is crystal clear that the primary emphasis in Matthew 19:9 is not divorce and remarriage but the binding nature of the marriage bond. Matthew 19:9 clearly answers the question Deaver said the Corinthians asked Paul.

Second, Deaver contradicts himself. He maintains that the *written statements* in the Gospels concerning divorce and remarriage are universal legislation for two Christians, two in the world, and a mixed marriage. (*Your*, 447-448) The recorded statements of the Lord answer the question asked Paul. Why should Deaver fly to an unrecorded statement unless he is trying to escape the revelation made through Paul that Christ's teaching on this subject was for two Christians and not for even a mixed marriage? (a) Matthew 5:31-32 clearly proves that marriage is lawful and that one should remain married because the marriage bond is binding. (b) Matthew 19:9 proves the same thing. (1) Cleave, not separate. Cleave certainly does not mean separate. (19:5) (2) "One flesh" ought not to be separated. (19:4-5) (3) The two are one. (19:6) (4) God joined them together. (19:6) Therefore, marriage is lawful. (5) "Let not man put asunder." (19:6) Therefore, stay together and do not separate. If you separate you must remain unmarried, for only fornication breaks the bond. (19:9) Therefore, do not put her away but if you do you are still married and this would necessitate being reconciled or remaining unmarried. (6) So strict is the bond, that the disciples thought it was "not expedient to marry" (19:10); but they did not say it was unlawful to marry or remain married. (19:10-11) Jesus permits celibacy (19:12), but He did not say the married should withdraw from marriage. (7) Not only do both Matthew 19:9 and 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 show that marriage is right, but both allow for separation without remarriage. First Corinthians 7:10-11 does not command, but forbids separation. However, it tolerates it. Matthew 19:9 does not mention separation as being adultery, but putting away one's wife *and* remarrying. (Matt. 19:9) If one separated from her, he was still in the marriage bond. Matthew 19:9 does not forbid separation without remarriage. Both passages show the tightness of the marriage bond. It is lawful and not unspiritual or impure.

Third, Deaver argued that "*Choridzo*" (departing) is used in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, and "*aphiami*" (leave) is used in 7:12-13,

but that *apoluo* (putting away) is used for divorce in Matthew 19:9. Therefore, 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 does not contemplate divorce but Matthew 19:9 does. First Corinthians 7:10-15 cannot refer to Matthew 19. (*Your*, 449) Answer: (a) Both the words in 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 were used for divorce. (b) *Choridzo* (put asunder) is used in Matthew 19:6 for divorce (19:3,7,8,9) (c) Divorce and remarriage are considered in 7:10-11 as is clearly indicated by the fact Paul said they must not remarry someone else. (7:11)

Fourth, what good does it do Deaver to claim there is an unwritten law which was addressed only to believers in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11? Paul shows that the teaching of Christ to which he here appealed was for two Christians, but Deaver does not believe there is any law of Christ which does not apply equally, with reference to marriage, to both believers, unbelievers and mixed marriages. That all of Christ's laws are binding on all people is a fundamental article of faith with Deaver and Warren. Therefore, there could be no recorded or *unrecorded* statement of Christ which legislated for two Christians and not for a mixed marriage. If they are right, Paul was wrong in saying that "I, *not the Lord*," spoke to the mixed marriage. (7:12)

Fifth, if 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 refers to an unrecorded statement of Christ it does not help Deaver's case or hurt mine. It is still clear that Paul said that *the Lord had not taught on mixed marriages*. (1 Cor. 7:12) This means that *neither* a recorded nor an unrecorded statement of Christ on marriage was legislation for mixed marriages. Paul did not say whether he was referring to a recorded or an unrecorded statement in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, but he did definitely state that there is no statement of the Lord (recorded or unrecorded) governing mixed marriages. Matthew 19:9 is a statement of Christ on marriage, and Paul knew it, but Paul said, "I, *not the Lord*" legislated on mixed marriages. These brethren contradict Paul and emphatically claim that Christ did speak on mixed marriages in the Gospels. These brethren agree that the Lord taught the statements in the Gospels on marriage, but they refuse to agree with Paul that the Lord did not have mixed marriages in mind in these statements.

Sixth, anyone who is not blinded by an uninspired interpretation which he is determined to uphold, knows that Christ's teaching in Matthew 5:31-32 and 19:4-9 clearly answers the question Deaver said the Corinthians asked Paul: "Is it all

right for Christians who are married to Christians to continue in marriage?" (*Your*, 447) Will Deaver deny it? He cannot successfully deny it, so why search for an unrecorded passage when recorded passages answer the question?

Seventh, Deaver is the only person that I know of who has taken the position that Paul referred to an unrecorded statement of Christ. Lanier said 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 was "an inspired commentary on the teaching of Jesus in these passages in the Gospels." "It is true that what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 7:10 was said to wives and husbands who are both Christians, so the passages in the Gospel teach Christian husbands and wives that they may live apart or be reconciled. But it is not true that Paul's teaching to Christians covers all the ground covered in the Gospel passages." (*Your*, 494-495)

Christ Did Not Deal with All Marriages

If there is anything these brethren insist on, it is that Christ's teaching in Matthew 5:31-32 and 19:9 is *legislation for all marriages*. This means it is legislation for two Christians, two unbelievers, and a believer and an unbeliever. It is universal legislation covering all marriages. (*Your*, 443, 447) However, Deaver on 1 Corinthians 7:12 said "the Lord (in His public ministry) did not deal specifically with this matter" (*Your*, 445), "in His personal ministry, *did not* deal specifically with this case (or question)." (*Your*, 447) Answer: *First*, this concession destroys Deaver's entire case for he is admitting that neither a recorded nor an unrecorded statement of Christ was legislation for a mixed marriage. However, Deaver contradicted himself in that he said Matthew 19:9 is "a passage of universal application." (447-448)

Second, if Christ's teaching in the Gospel covered all marriages, why did Paul use the contrasting introduction ("I, not the Lord") and say something different to the mixed marriage than Christ said to the two believers?

Third, the passages in the Gospels no more specifically say "two believers" than they specifically say "two unbelievers" or specifically say "a mixed marriage." It mentioned as specifically one type of marriage as it did another for the simple reason that the Gospels do not specifically (*in so many words*) mention any particular category of marriages. The decisive reason that we

know that Christ had reference to the marriage of two believers, and not to others, is because the Spirit revealed this through Paul. (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15)

Fourth, brethren, the issue is simple: *Either Christ did or did not deal with mixed marriages in His teaching in His personal ministry.* These brethren admit that He did not deal with mixed marriages for Paul clearly said He did not. Why do they refuse to let this settle it? Why do they contradict themselves and Paul and adamantly affirm that Christ legislated in His personal ministry for all marriages?

Same Teaching Applied?

These brethren, so far, refuse to give up their uninspired universalization of Matthew 19:9, therefore they make other arguments such as that Paul applied the same teaching to mixed marriages that Christ applied to two Christians. Answer: *First*, this argument concedes that Christ did not apply His teaching to mixed marriages, therefore that He did not have in mind all marriages in His statements in His personal ministry. But Deaver contradicts this argument by saying “the significance of ‘whosoever’ is ‘all married persons.’ ” (443) He contradicts Paul who said that he, *not the Lord*, dealt with mixed marriages.

Second, Paul did not apply the same teaching to the mixed marriage that was applied to the two Christians in 7:10-11. He did say for the believer not to depart, but he said if the unbeliever departs the believer is not in bondage. However, of the two believers, he said remain unmarried or be reconciled. (7:11,15)

Since Paul did not say the same thing to the mixed marriage that Christ said to the two believers, we have no right to make what Paul said to the mixed marriage conform to what Christ said to the two believers. Brethren, God did not inspire you to legislate contrary to what He legislated through Paul.

This Is What Is New?

It has been asserted that what is new in 7:12-15 is that the unbeliever is sanctified, the children holy, and one is not under bondage to give up faith in Christ in order to stay with the unbeliever. Answer: *First*, if Matthew 19 is universal, covering all marriages, all the above things were already revealed for all marriages of which Christ spoke were lawful, all children holy, all

unbelievers who are spouses are sanctified; so 7:12-15 said nothing new.

Second, it had been clearly taught in the Gospels that Christ is Lord and we must be faithful to Him. (Lk. 6:46) We must not deny Him. (Matt. 10:32-33)

Why Is Fornication Not Mentioned?

Some argue that 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 does not refer to Christ's teaching in the Gospels because fornication is not mentioned. Answer: *First*, if the fact that fornication is not mentioned in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 proves Paul does not refer to Matthew 19:9, the failure of Christ to mention fornication in Mark 10:2-12 and Luke 16:18 proves that Matthew 19:9 does not cover the marriages covered in Mark and Luke.

Second, the lack of reference to fornication is as much of a problem for them as for me; if it is a problem. First Corinthians 7:2 mentioned fornication being avoided through marriage but said nothing about what to do if fornication took place after marriage. In considering the remarriage of two believers, Paul repudiated it and said remain unmarried or be reconciled. (7:11) Why did he not tell them what to do if one committed fornication? In considering remarriage in 7:39 and Romans 7:2-4 Paul mentioned death but not fornication. In fact, in no place but the Gospels is fornication mentioned as furnishing a ground for divorce and remarriage. Since none of these brethren use this argument to prove that Matthew 19:9 is not applicable to believers today, why should they use it to prove that Paul is not referring in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 to the marriage law in Matthew 19?

Third, Deaver makes it clear *why* Paul did not mention fornication when he said Paul was answering in 7:10-11 the question whether Christians should remain married to Christians and in 7:12 whether Christians should remain married to unbelievers. *The answers did not mention fornication because the questions did not deal with fornication. The Firm Foundation* commentary on 1 Corinthians said: "Paul's failure to mention the exception was likely due to the fact that it did not apply in the case propounded by the letter from Corinth." (102) Paul was dealing with the binding nature of the marriage bond, and not with whether fornication furnished ground for divorce. If he was

dealing with fornication, he misapplied what Christ said for Paul said to the separated to remain unmarried or be reconciled. He said Christ forbade remarriage, but if he was dealing with fornication, he could not have said this; for Christ authorized divorce and remarriage because of fornication. (Matt. 19:9)

Fourth, Paul dealt in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 not with fornication, but with whether the Christian should dwell with the unbeliever, and what was the believer's situation if the unbeliever left.

Fifth, Paul did not deal with fornication as a ground for divorce and remarriage in dealing with the mixed marriage because: (a) Fornication was not the issue raised. (b) Christ's law in Matthew 19:9, which mentioned fornication, was not a law which Christ bound on a mixed marriage. If it had been, Paul could not have said, "I, not the Lord." The Lord spoke to the marriage of two believers. (7:10-11) Paul dealt with the legitimacy of the marriage bond and not with the specific issue of fornication in either 7:10-11 or 7:12-15.

How to Harmonize Matthew 19:9 with 1 Corinthians 7:12-15?

How do I harmonize my position on 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 with Matthew 19:9? Answer: *First*, how can one harmonize divorce for any reason with Mark 10:11-12 and Luke 16:18? How does one harmonize it with the fact that Paul never mentioned fornication as a ground for divorce? How long is a woman bound? "For so long time as her husband liveth." (1 Cor. 7:39; Rom. 7:2-4) No New Testament writer except Matthew mentions fornication as a ground for divorce and remarriage. The harmony is easy; some passages state the general marriage law for Christians and some state the exception.

Second, we harmonize John 3:16 with Acts 2:38 by pointing out that the full truth on a subject is not necessarily presented in one passage. The full truth on every subject was not taught during Christ's personal ministry. (John 16:12-13)

Third, one harmonizes Genesis 2:24 with Matthew 19:9 by recognizing that they are two different laws given in different periods of God's dealings with man.

Fourth, I accept the Spirit's harmony of Matthew 19:9 with 1 Corinthians 7:12-15. Christ's legislation had reference to two

people in the covenant who are married, but not with mixed marriages. Paul legislated on a different category of marriages, i.e., the mixed marriages. Neither legislated on marriages in the world. Matthew 19:9 is no more legislation for mixed marriages than it was for marriages under the law of Moses. As Charles John Ellicott said, "the apostle has carefully reminded his readers that the Lord's command does not apply to the case of a marriage between a believer and a heathen. In such cases we have no command from Him." (II, 309) Paul legislated on such marriages. Since these brethren will not accept the distinction made by Paul in 7:10-11 and 7:12-15, obviously they will not accept my explanation of the harmony, for my explanation is based on what Paul said. He not only said, "I, *not the Lord*," but he also said something different in his instructions to the Christian in the mixed marriage than the Lord said to the Christian in a marriage to a Christian.

All Marriages Dealt with in 1 Corinthians 7:10

Deaver insists that "the married" in 7:10 must refer to all marriages, including believers to unbelievers and unbelievers to unbelievers. He asked "What wife is not to depart from her husband? Answer: ANY wife, EVERY wife, ALL wives." (June 21, 1978, pp. 8-9) Answer: *First*, Deaver contradicts himself for he also maintained that in 7:10-11 Paul was answering a question about two married Christians. (*Notes*, 11; *Your*, 444-449) But if Paul is talking about every wife and every husband in 7:10, Christ automatically included the mixed marriages. However, Paul said the Lord did not speak to the mixed marriages. (7:12)

Second, Deaver maintains that "the Matthew 19:9 situation IS NOT the matter considered in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11." (*Your*, 450) Deaver now contradicts himself and says that the law applied by Christ and Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 is the law that "has always been God's marriage law." (June 21, 1978, pp. 8-9) Surely Deaver believes that "God's marriage law" for His people is found in the Gospels. Does not Matthew 19:9 sum up God's marriage law for the Christian? Keep in mind that in Matthew 19:9 the main thrust is not divorce and remarriage but the strict marriage law of Christ in contrast with the loose marriage law of Moses.

Third, how can the same law be applied in 7:10-11 and in 7:12-15 when 7:11 says remain unmarried or be reconciled, and 7:15

says the believer is not under bondage?

Fourth, there was no need to distinguish between cases of marriage if the same law applied to all cases of marriage.

Fifth, Deaver said the law found in 7:10-11 "is clearly applicable" to 7:12-13. If it is, why did Paul say Christ had not spoken about the marriages in 7:12-13?

Sixth, Deaver said one is upon "mighty dangerous ground" in changing the law in 7:10 "from a universal to a particular." He says one cannot change "all" marriages of 7:10 to "some" marriages and maintain that 7:10-11 does not cover 7:12-15. (June 21, 1978, p. 8) "The married" of 7:10-11 is limited by Christ and Paul to two Christians. Paul himself said that this did not include the "rest," i.e., the mixed marriages. Deaver is the one who is on dangerous ground for claiming that Christ spoke to all marriages in 7:10-11, when Paul said, "I, not the *Lord*" spoke to some of the marriages, i.e., the mixed.

Seventh, Deaver said "the wife" in 7:10 is any, every, and all wives. Try his argument on "a wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." (1 Cor. 7:39) WHAT wife is bound so long as her husband liveth? Answer: ANY wife, EVERY wife, ALL wives. (a) Every wife would include a wife who had put away her husband for fornication, therefore even such a wife cannot remarry unless her husband dies. (b) It would mean an unbelieving wife must marry a Christian if her husband died. (c) It would mean that a woman who became a wife for the first time, whether she was a believer or an unbeliever, must marry a Christian.

If the devil had been using Deaver's "any, every, and all" argument, he could have said on Psalm 91:11: "What ways? Any way, Every way, ALL thy ways." However, Christ showed that the "all" was limited and did not include presumptuous ways. (Deut. 6:16; Matt. 4:6-7) The context of 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 in contrast with 7:12 shows that 7:10 did not refer to all marriages.

In spite of all the conflicting explanations which some brethren have made of 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 and 7:12-15 it is clear that Christ's legislation in His personal ministry was for Christians married to Christians and did not cover all marriages. It is clear that Paul legislated for a Christian married to a non-Christian, although he did not legislate what the non-Christian was to do. It is also clear that neither Christ in His personal ministry nor Paul

legislated for two people in the world on the subject of marriage. We can cite the Scripture where Christ legislated for two Christians, and where Paul legislated for a mixed marriage, but no man can cite the Scripture where the New Testament legislated for the marriage of two unbelievers in the world. The New Testament legislation for God's people is no more legislation for people outside the covenant than Moses' regulations were legislations for people outside the covenant in his day.

Chapter IV

CHRIST'S TEACHING IN THE GOSPELS IS COVENANT LEGISLATION

If Jesus' teaching on divorce and remarriage is legislation for the church and the aliens, it covers all marriages. It covers two in the world as definitely as it covers two people in the covenant, and it covers a mixed marriage just as expressly and as definitely as it covers any other marriage. Moses' legislation on divorce and remarriage was legislation for those *in* the old covenant. It is my conviction that Christ's legislation on this subject is for marriages between Christians, and not for aliens, or for a mixed marriage.

Christ's Legislation for the Covenant People

Why do I maintain that Christ's legislation in His personal ministry on divorce and remarriage is for Christians married to Christians and not to other marriages? *First*, the context of the discussion concerns those in the covenant. (a) Christ's teaching is contrasted with Moses' teaching in Matthew 5:31-32 and (b) in Matthew 19:8-9. "It is incredible that anyone could read these passages and fail to see that what Jesus taught was different from Moses' teaching." (Elkins, *Your*, 529)

Second, "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed, no one maketh it void, or addeth thereto." (Gal. 3:15) We have no right to declare that people are in or under the covenant who have not been baptized into Christ. (Gal. 3:26-27) This would be adding people to the covenant unscripturally. There are things which are bound on people after they come into the covenant which are not bound on them by Christ before they enter the covenant. (Matt. 28:20) What right do we have to bind where the Lord did not bind, and thereby add to the covenant?

Third, Jesus indicated that this teaching applied to those in, not out of, the kingdom, when He said in answer to the response of the disciples, about not marrying, that some could receive this teaching "for the *kingdom of heaven's sake*. He that is able to

receive it, let him receive it.” (19:10-12) He had no reference to what people outside the kingdom would do or not do.

Fourth, the decisive and sufficient argument is found in 1 Corinthians 7:10-15. Paul said the teaching about the married in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 was given by Christ, and not by Paul. Christ’s teaching covered all the “married” of these verses, but who are they? Paul distinguished them from the rest of the married, and the rest of the married were mixed marriages. Therefore, we must conclude that the “married” for whom Christ had already legislated were the marriages of Christians to Christians. However, if Christ had legislated for all marriages, in the covenant and out of it, He had already legislated on mixed marriages. Paul could not have made the distinction which he made. But Paul said: (a) The Lord had legislation on one category of marriages, but not on another. (b) Paul said different things to the mixed marriage than Christ said to the two Christians. (c) If a believer deserted a believer they were both still bound in the marriage so they had to remain unmarried or be reconciled. (7:11) However, if the unbeliever deserted the believer, the believer was not under bondage. (7:15) Neither one of them legislated on marriages in the world.

Deaver said that “the Lord (in His public ministry) did not deal specifically with this matter” discussed in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15. (Notes, 12)

Foy E. Wallace, Jr. pointed out that in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 Paul referred to what the Lord had already taught in Matthew 5 and 19, and that in harmony with John 16:12-13 the Spirit revealed through Paul (7:12-15) “on this point that which the Lord himself had not personally declared, a thing not included in the teaching of Christ to the apostles while he was with them.” (Sermon, 43) “Not under bondage” means that the marriage bond is broken, and that the believer is free to remarry. (45) The *Firm Foundation* commentary on 1 Corinthians said that “Paul was dealing with mixed marriages, which were not in the purview of Jesus’ teaching at all.” The deserted believer in 7:15 was free to remarry. (104-105)

Fifth, divorce and remarriage was widespread among the Jews and the Gentiles, but there is no command for, or example of, any of them being required to break up these families, which were the second marriages, just because they had been divorced for some reason other than Matthew 19:9. The silence of the Scriptures on

this matter *is not the basis of my argument*, but it does harmonize perfectly with the truths taught in 1 Corinthians 7:10-15. The law of Christ was not made retroactive on those who had been divorced and remarried under a lower law than Matthew 19:9.

Moses' law on divorce and remarriage was given to the covenant people (Ex. 20:1; Deut. 5:2-3), for it was a part of the old covenant, and not to the non-covenant people. Why should it be surprising that Christ's legislation is for married people in His covenant, not outside of it?

But Christ Said, "Whosoever"

Christ said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife" (Matt. 19:9), and there is no case not covered by "whosoever." Answer: *First*, unless "whosoever" is confined to those in the covenant, Paul was wrong when he said Christ did not speak on mixed marriages. (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12)

Second, unless one unscripturally makes the law of Christ on this matter retroactive on Jews, who had been divorced and remarried according to the law of Deuteronomy 24:1-4, when they obeyed the gospel in the first century, one must exclude their marriages (contracted while they were under the law) from the "whosoever." J. D. Thomas agrees the law of Christ was not retroactive on them. (*Firm Foundation*, 3-28-78, p. 199)

Third, a passage by itself may seem to be universal, but may be limited by other passages. Is universal salvation taught in John 12:32? Do "all" in the world know the Lord, or is Hebrews 8:11 speaking of all in the covenant? Were all those in Judaea, and around the Jordan, baptized by John? (Matt. 3:5-6,7-8; Lk. 7:30) Do we receive "*all things whatsoever*" for which we pray? (Mk. 11:24) Was the devil right in universalizing "*all thy ways*" in Psalm 91:11, or was Jesus right in showing that it did not include ways wherein one tempted God? (Matt. 4:6-7; Deut. 6:16) Are the five "alls" all universal or do other passages limit 1 Corinthians 9:19-23?

Fourth, all of these brethren agree that some "whosoever" are limited. (a) "Whosoever" in Mark 10:11-12 makes no exception even for fornication. (b) The "whosoever" of Matthew 5:31 was clearly "whosoever" in the old covenant. (Deut. 24:1-4; 5:2-3; Ex. 20:1) Why cannot "every one" (Matt. 5:32), and

“whosoever” (Matt. 19:9) be limited to the new covenant people? (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15) (c) “*Whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery*” (Matt. 5:32) is limited by all those brethren who say she should return to her first husband if she is unjustly put away. They exclude the first husband from “whosoever.” (d) Does “whosoever” mean that anyone who does not doubt can cast mountains into the sea? (Mk. 11:23-24)

Fifth, Romans 7:2-3 makes *no* provision for anyone to marry while there is a living spouse. Yet, brethren agree that this passage is limited by other passages.

Sixth, these brethren argue that all Christ’s laws on remarriage apply to all people in and out of the covenant. Guy N. Woods said that most commentators agree that to marry only in the Lord means to marry a Christian. (1 Cor. 7:39; QA, 91-95) Woods also states that the first clause of 1 Corinthians 7:39 states “the general law of marriage.” (92) It is the same law stated in Romans 7:2-3. Furthermore, Paul did not say “*a believing wife*” in 1 Corinthians 7:39. Therefore, these brethren must maintain that even *unbelieving* widows are bound by the law of Christ to marry believers. Some Christians must marry out of the Lord in order for some unbelievers to marry in the Lord and obey 1 Corinthians 7:39; if these brethren are right.

Seventh, these brethren argue that unless “whosoever” and “except” include all marriages, “except” in John 3:5 does not mean everyone must be born of water and the spirit to enter the kingdom. If there was any passage, such as 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,12-15 which limits Matthew 19:9, which limited John 3:5, I would accept the limitation. There is no such passage. However, there are passages which show that a “whosoever” can be limited, and 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,12-15 shows that the “whosoever” is “whosoever” in the covenant married to someone in the covenant, and that the “except” deals with these marriages and not with marriages outside the covenant.

Various Objections

First, Matthew 19:9 is universal for Christ restored the original marriage law. (Matt. 19:8; Gen. 2:24; *Your*, 493) (a) The original marriage law made no provision for divorce for fornication or remarriage because of the death of a spouse. When it was given there was no sin or death. (b) Lanier himself said 1 Corinthians

7:10-11 was “an inspired commentary on the teaching of Jesus in these passages in the Gospels which have been cited.” (*Your*, 494) This shuts one up to the conclusion that Matthew 19:9 is legislation for those in the covenant, and not for mixed marriages on which Paul said Christ had not spoken. (1 Cor. 7:12-15)

Second, “If Matthew 5:31,32; 19:9; Luke 16:18 do not apply to alien sinners, where is the law of marriage for them?” (*Your*, 494) Answer: (a) Because Matthew 19:9 did not bind the old covenant did not mean they had no law of marriage. Because it did not bind Abraham, Jacob, or David, did not mean there was no marriage law for them. Because the law of Moses did not bind the Gentiles did not mean there was no marriage law for them. Because Christ’s legislation on divorce and remarriage does not bind the world, does not mean that no one in the world is married. The people outside the covenant today are in the same situation with reference to marriage that they were when the law of Moses was in force. Marriage existed, for man can discern the need for it even if he does not have inspired prophets to teach him. The Gentiles did. However, marriage among the non-covenant people was not bound by all the regulations that bound the covenant people. Where was a Gentile told not to marry a non-Jew? or to give a writing of divorcement? (Deut. 24:1-4) These brethren want to give detailed legislation on divorce and marriage to the people outside the covenant. They have declared the necessity of doing what Christ did not do—He legislated for those in the covenant (1 Cor. 7:10-11), and what Paul did not do—he legislated for the Christian in a mixed marriage, but not for the unbeliever in the same marriage; nor did he legislate for two unbelievers. Why do these brethren feel compelled to legislate where neither Paul nor Christ legislated? Why cannot they leave the world where Moses left it, for he did not legislate for them; and where Christ left it—for He did not legislate for marriages in the world. They are left to whatever could be discerned from the work of the law written on the heart (Rom. 2:14-15), and they certainly were not held to a higher law than were the Jews—for the Jews had received by revelation more truth than the Gentiles could discern by nature. (Rom. 2:14) More is required of those who have received more, and this is true of Christians. (Lk. 12:48)

Third, there were other things, such as the need to believe, which were said to covenant related people but we teach that these are not restricted to people in the covenant. (*Your*, 493-494)

Answer: (a) The world must obey the gospel in order to come into Christ, but this does not prove that people outside of Christ are bound by everything Christ binds on those who are in Him. (Matt. 28:20) (b) Just as there were truths in the work of the law on the hearts of the Gentiles which condemned certain sins, which sins were also found condemned in the law of Moses, does not mean the Gentiles were under the law of Moses and bound by all of its regulations. (Rom. 1:18-2:15) The same is true concerning people outside the covenant of Christ. (c) Paul showed that Christ's regulation on divorce and remarriage was for the marriage of believers. (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15) I accept the limitation revealed by the Spirit through Paul. I wish these brethren would also accept it.

Fourth, by what hermeneutical principle do I argue that aliens must obey the gospel, but are not bound by Matthew 19:9? (Deaver, *Notes*, Chart #11) Answer: (a) The best known of all hermeneutical principles which is that one must find out to whom God is speaking. Paul said, concerning marriage, that Christ spoke to two believers. (1 Cor. 7:10-11) What right do I have to bind Matthew 19:9 on those to whom it was not spoken? (b) The hermeneutical principle that the incomplete revelation must be viewed in the light of the complete revelation. One passage must be interpreted in the light of other passages on the subject. (c) Alien sinners have the gospel preached to them in order that they may be saved from their sins, and when they have obeyed the gospel then they are bound by what Jesus taught converts to do. (Matt. 28:20) (d) What right does one have to ignore 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 which Lanier said was an inspired commentary on the passages in the Gospels? (*Your*, 494)

Fifth, 1 Corinthians 7:12 does not cover a marriage of a Christian to a devout denominationalist who believes the Bible, or of people today who know about God but have not obeyed Him. It referred only to pagans. (Lanier, *GA*, August 18, 1949, p. 518; J. D. Thomas, *DR*, 77) Answer: (a) These brethren get up another category of marriage, in addition to two believers and a mixed marriage (1 Cor. 7:12), and I guess they should call it: marriage of a Christian and a denominationalist. Christ legislated for two believers, Paul for a mixed marriage, and *these brethren* have taken it on themselves to legislate for the Christian-denominational marriage. I am sure they are not guided by the Holy Spirit who guided Paul. (b) Why do these

brethren, in effect, put these denominationalists *outside* the covenant with reference to *salvation* but *inside* the covenant with reference to *marriage*? A person is either in the covenant or out of it. As Thomas B. Warren said: "Get this straight: all men are in the world or in the church—there is no middle ground. One remains in the world until he is baptized into Christ." (*W-F*, 67)

Why? Why? Why?

Why do these brethren do the following? *First*, make up their minds on Matthew 19:9 *before* they get to the complete revelation (1 Cor. 7:10-15) and then *force* the complete revelation to fit their *uninspired* interpretation of the incomplete?

Second, why do they convict Paul of error? Paul said Christ had not spoken on mixed marriages (1 Cor. 7:12), and these brethren insist that Christ had spoken on *all* marriages.

Third, by contrasting introductions (not I, but the Lord; I, not the Lord), by dealing with different categories (the married of 7:10 contrasted with the mixed marriages of 7:12), and by saying different things (7:11 contrasted with 7:15), Paul made clear that he was saying something different in 7:12-15 than in 7:10-11. However, these brethren end up by saying that Paul said the same thing in both cases, i.e., remain together, or if you separate remain unmarried or be reconciled; or if the deserter (this is implied they say in 7:15) commits adultery you are free to remarry, for adultery would free the believer deserted by the believer as well as the believer deserted by the unbeliever. R. L. Roberts made 7:12-15 say the same thing as 7:10-11 (132-133), so did Lanier (*MDR*, 16), and so did J. D. Thomas (*DR*, 76-77) although he had already argued that Christ said something different in 7:10-11 than Paul said in 7:12-15. (67-69, 75) These brethren cannot make any argument against the position, which I believe is scriptural, without assuming (contrary to what Paul said) that Christ had spoken on the mixed marriages. Watch how they reason: Paul and Christ did say something different, but it cannot really be different for 1 Corinthians 7:15 (not under bondage) must conform to Matthew 19:9. These brethren cannot possibly refute my position, which Paul taught me, without contradicting Paul's statement that Christ had not spoken on mixed marriages. Regardless of what twisting they have to resort to, these brethren are determined that Christ spoke on mixed marriages,

and therefore what Christ said in Matthew 19:9 forbids the person who is not under bondage (1 Cor. 7:15) from remarrying on the ground of desertion by the unbeliever.

Legal Action Is Not Discussed

It is argued that divorce is not meant because *chorizo* (depart) “is not a technical term which means you go to the court house and terminate your marriage and are then free to remarry.” (Harvey Floyd quoted by David Lipe, *Your*, 455) Answer: *First*, the New Testament nowhere discusses legal action as being involved in a divorce. All legal action is conformity to the laws of the land, and it differs in various lands. The New Testament speaks of divorce, in the sense of ending a marriage, but not in the sense of legal action. R. L. Roberts wrote that “as Lenski points out, ‘neither Jesus nor Paul discusses what we term “divorce,” namely legal court action; both speak about what destroys a marriage.’” (Roberts, 117)

Second, the law in Athens, and the same thing prevailed in Corinth, “allowed a man to divorce his wife without ceremony, simply by his act of sending her out of his house. . . .” If the husband did not agree to a divorce, the wife had to give her reasons before the archon, i.e., rulers. “. . . if both parties agreed upon a divorce no further proceedings were required: mutual consent was sufficient to dissolve a marriage.” In Rome “either party might declare his or her consent to dissolve the connection. No judicial decree and no interference of any public authority was necessary to dissolve the marriage.” If just one party renounced the marriage, it was customary for that party “to send a distinct notice or declaration of intention to the other party.” “Not only the wife herself, but also her father, if she was under his power, might dissolve the marriage.” (Peck, 529-530)

Divorce and Remarriage Under Discussion?

It is argued that 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 cannot refer to Matthew 19:9, which speaks of fornication, putting away, and remarriage, for 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 has nothing to do with divorce and remarriage but of a Christian departing from a Christian. (Deaver, *Notes*, 16) Answer: *First*, the overwhelming majority of commentators and of brethren who comment on the distinction

between 7:10 and 7:12 state that 7:10-11 refers to Christ's revelation in the Gospels.

Second, Matthew 19:4-9 deals not just with divorce and remarriage, but with Christ's marriage law *and* the exception which justifies putting away and remarrying. In marriage the two are to cleave to one another; departing is not cleaving so the believer is told not to depart. (Matt.19:5; 1 Cor. 7:10-11) Because God has not put them asunder, they are to remain unmarried or be reconciled if one does depart. (Matt. 19:6; 1 Cor. 7:11) Because the question Paul was answering in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 did not concern fornication is obviously the reason Paul did not mention fornication.

Third, Deaver himself recognized that the question Paul was answering in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 was: Should two Christians remain married? (*Notes*, 14; *Your*, 447) It is clear as crystal that Matthew 19:9 does teach that Christians should remain married, for it says do not break up the marriage. It is so permanent that it is to be broken up only on the ground of fornication.

Fourth, remarriage is under consideration in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, otherwise Paul would not have expressly forbidden it: Paul said remain unmarried or be reconciled. Why forbid remarriage if this question would not be raised at all in connection with 1 Corinthians 7:10?

Fifth, do these brethren argue that Romans 7:2-4 has nothing to do with Matthew 19:9 because Romans 7:2-4 does not mention fornication? Has Matthew 19:9 no relationship to Romans 7:2-4 because Matthew 19:9 does not mention that death breaks the marriage bond?

Sixth, divorce (*chorizo*, depart or put asunder, Matthew 19:6; 1 Corinthians 7:11,15) and remarriage (7:11, remain unmarried or be reconciled versus not in bondage, 7:15) are under consideration in Matthew 19:4-9 and 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,12-15.

Misleading to Use the Word "Divorce"?

Harvey Floyd argued that depart (*chorizo*) is not a technical term for divorce, that the word divorce in our language implies the right to remarry, but that "depart" in 7:11 does not mean the right to remarry for Paul said remain unmarried or be reconciled; therefore it does not mean the irreparable termination of marriage. (*Your*, 501) Answer: *First*, the marriage of 7:11 is in

practice irreparably terminated if the partner is never reconciled.

Second, a divorce does not irreparably terminate a marriage for some divorced people remarry one another, and some of these brethren maintain that if the divorce was not for fornication, they should remarry the first mates.

Third, all divorce does not terminate a marriage, for Jesus showed that if one divorced for reasons other than fornication they were not free to remarry even though they were divorced. Why, because the marriage bond was still intact in spite of this divorce. Neither one was to remarry for they were already married.

Fourth, we know that "depart" did not justify remarriage in 7:11 because Paul expressly said that the Christian departing from a Christian was to remain unmarried or be reconciled. Why did Paul say this if there was no danger of anyone thinking that the departure gave the right to remarry? If divorce was not involved, why did Paul say to remain unmarried?

Fifth, although they are different words, depart (*chorizo*, 7:10) and leave (*aphiemi*, 7:11) must "mean the same thing in this context." (Lanier, *Your*, 490) The same basic word (*chorizo*) is used in Matthew 19:6, "let not man put asunder." It meant to put away, or to cause to withdraw from. This "put asunder" is equal to divorce for Jesus is answering a question on divorce. (19:3) Another word is used when Jesus said: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery." (Matt. 19:9) Under the law of Moses "a bill of divorcement" was given and she was "put away." (19:7)

Sixth, the lexicons teach that *chorizo* (depart, put away) was used of divorce and is "often in marriage contracts in the papyrus" (Arndt-Gingrich, 898), "the word has almost become a technical term in connection with divorce, as in 1 Corinthians 7:10,11,15." (Moulton-Milligan, 696; *DR*, 74) "a. to leave a husband or wife: of divorce. 1 Corinthians 7:11,15." (Thayer, 694, See also Abbott-Smith, 71; Westcott & Hort, 1953, p. 211) "The woman in the case of verse 11 had obtained a divorce according to Greek law, which was easy to get, but Paul refused to recognize the validity of the divorce. The fact that the woman had obtained a divorce is indicated by his command for the woman to remain 'unmarried.' " (Guy Duty, 93)

Seventh, R. L. Roberts, Jr. of Abilene Christian University agreed that: "There is little doubt that the word used by Paul in

1 Corinthians 7 refers to the separation of divorce. It is not just separation in 'bed and board,' but of the dissolution of the marriage bond." (119)

Eighth, J. D. Thomas, in speaking of 1 Corinthians 7:15 (depart, not under bondage) agreed with Roberts and the lexicons, and said it meant not just separation in "bed and board" but the dissolution of the marital bond. He wrote: "Now, if *chorizo* in our context does mean a real, complete divorce, originated and carried out by the unbeliever, and if the brother or sister is 'in such cases not under bondage,' it would seem that they are totally freed from that marriage and can scripturally enter another (except to whatever degree any other passages of scripture might have a bearing)." (*DR*, 75) He thought marriage was permitted in 7:15 because he said it presupposed adultery on the part of the deserting unbeliever. Otherwise, he thought re-marriage by the unbeliever would contradict Matthew 19:9. However, earlier he had recognized that Christ had legislated on the marriage of two believers, but not on the marriage of a believer to an unbeliever. He said Paul said something different about the mixed marriage, and did not lay down the same demand Christ laid down for the two Christians who are married to one another. (67-68, 76-77) Once a person recognizes that Christ did not legislate on the mixed marriage, he is contradicting this truth when he says, in effect, Christ did legislate on the mixed marriage and forbade the deserted believer in 7:15 from re-marrying unless the deserting unbeliever committed adultery.

Ninth, Paul again specifically mentioned remarriage in this chapter in connection with a different situation, i.e., when the husband died. (1 Cor. 7:39)

Tenth, carefully consider the difference in the two categories of marriage mentioned in 7:10-15. (a) Paul said that Christ had already taught on the marriage of two Christians, and if they separated or were divorced they were to remain unmarried. (1 Cor. 7:11) This is in harmony with Matthew 19:9 because the separation in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 was not for fornication. (b) Paul said Christ had not legislated on the mixed marriage, Paul legislated on it and he did not tell the deserted believer to remain unmarried or be reconciled to the deserting unbeliever. He said you were not under bondage in such a case. (7:15) Paul said the deserted believer was not under bondage; why should we put this

believer under the marriage bondage to the deserter?

All Christ's Law for All the World

There are those who insist that all Christ's laws must be bound on all people both inside and outside the church. Therefore, they know that Paul could not teach, contrary to their position, that the world is not bound by Christ's teaching on divorce and remarriage. However, they must admit that there are some teachings of Christ which are not bound on the world. This should be clear from the fact that Jesus did not say: Teach the world to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded (Matt. 28:20) and then preach the gospel of salvation to them. (Matt. 28:19) People in the world were taught to accept Christ the Savior and then they had bound on them those things which Christ said to teach to converts. (Matt. 28:20) What are some of Christ's teachings which they must admit are not bound on people outside of Christ's covenant?

First, there are laws of Christ which would contradict one another if they were binding on the same group of people. (a) Christ's kingdom is not of this world and is not upheld by the sword. (John 18:36) The civil governments of this world carry the sword. (Rom. 13) He told the church the powers that be are God's servant in this matter, but He did not make a revelation to the civil governments and tell them that. Paul wrote no letter to Caesar in Rome. Those who want to can call it a double standard, but the way Christ governs His kingdom is not the way that He says the kingdoms of the world are governed. If we bind on the world Christ's way of ruling His kingdom on earth, we would have to take the sword from the world.

(b) The church is financed by voluntary contributions (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9), but governments raise money by taxation. (Rom. 13:6-7) This is a dual standard, but these two different standards do not contradict one another for one governs the church and another civil government. I wish the powers that be had to depend on voluntary contributions which are given not of necessity but cheerfully as one purposed in his heart!

(c) The law of pardon to the alien sinner involves faith, repentance, confession, and baptism into Christ. (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27) The law of pardon to the Christian who sins is to repent and pray. (Acts 8:22) If this were the law of pardon to

aliens they would not have to be baptized. If Christians were under the law of pardon for aliens Christians would have to be baptized when they sin. These two different laws do not contradict one another for they govern different classes of human beings.

Second, there are laws which are clearly addressed to Christians only and not to the world. The world is not commanded to (a) assemble (Heb. 10:28), (b) to observe the Lord's supper which is in the kingdom (Matt. 26:29; Lk. 22:30)—how could an *unbeliever* observe the Lord's supper?, (c) to preach the gospel, (d) to disfellowship the disorderly and not to eat with them (1 Cor. 6:9-12), (e) to speak the same things and be of the same mind (1 Cor. 1:10)—I do not want to see the sinful world united in various things against the church, (f) to marry "only in the Lord" which, Guy N. Woods says, most scholars interpret to mean to marry a Christian (QA, 91-96), (g) to bring their problems before the church, the saints (1 Cor. 6:1,4,5-7), or (h) to remain unmarried or be reconciled if he, the unbeliever, deserts a Christian. This was said to a Christian deserting a Christian. (1 Cor. 7:11)

Third, as I have shown, Paul made it clear that Christ legislated for two believers, but not for mixed marriages. (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12) Paul legislated for the Christian in the mixed marriage, but neither Christ in His personal ministry nor Paul legislated for the world. At times the *Gospel Advocate* has recognized these truths. In commenting on 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, their *Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary* for January 22, 1956 said: "But when did the Lord say that there should be no separation? His teaching on this point is found in his conversation with the Pharisees on divorce. (Matt. 19:3-12) . . . Paul did not mention the one exception because fornication was not under consideration as a cause for divorce." "Since Paul says this is the teaching of the Lord and the only recorded teaching of Jesus is Matthew 5:31,32; 19:3-12, and related passages, we should view these passages in the light of Paul's statement and not reach any conclusions contrary to what is said here."

"*To the rest say I, not the Lord.*" Paul does not mean to say that his teaching is not inspired, but simply that he is not repeating a lesson which Jesus taught while on earth. The expression *the rest* refers to Christians who have unbelieving spouses. This is obvious from the following phrase of this verse and the first phrase in verse thirteen." (31)

“He binds the believer with the duty of maintaining the unity of the home. He gives no command to, makes no demand of, the unbeliever, but says if the unbeliever is content to continue the union, the believer is to remain as the spouse of the unbeliever.” (31-32)

These quotations recognized that Christ spoke, in the passages in the Gospels, to the marriage of believers; that He did not speak to the “rest” who were the mixed marriages, but that Paul spoke to them; and that Paul did not issue any command to the unbeliever in the mixed marriage. Christ’s command which Paul cited in 7:10-11, was not to unbelievers, not even to an unbeliever in a mixed marriage. If Christ’s command covered unbelievers in the world (we know it covered two believers in the church), His command would have covered all marriages (in the church and the world) and therefore would have covered a mixed marriage. In which case, Paul could not have said that Christ did not speak to, or command concerning, the mixed marriage. But Paul expressly stated that *the Lord had not spoken on mixed marriages* and that he, Paul, legislated on these. It is clear that Christ did not issue commands on this subject to the unbelievers, otherwise He would have spoken (in so doing) on the mixed marriage. It is clear that the *Gospel Advocate* official writer of their *Annual Lesson Commentary*, recognized that Paul issued no command on this subject to the unbeliever. I ask: By what right do brethren today issue commands on this subject to the unbelievers and their marriages? Are they guided by the Spirit in doing this?

It is true that the *Annual Lesson Commentary* said that the believer deserted by the unbeliever was bound by the Lord in Matthew 19:9 so that desertion by the unbeliever did not furnish grounds for remarriage, since Matthew 19:9 mentioned only one ground. However, once one recognizes that Christ in the Gospels did not speak to, did not issue commandment to, the marriage of unbelievers or to a mixed marriage, one cannot scripturally bind Matthew 19:9 on the deserted believer in 1 Corinthians 7:15. Christ did not, Paul did not, and I have no right to do so. If I do it, I contradict Paul and am saying that Christ did speak to the mixed marriage.

The fact that Matthew 19:9 does not cover 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 does not contradict Matthew 19:9, but is based on the fact that Paul said Christ spoke to the marriage of two believers. To force Matthew 19:9 to cover 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 would con-

tradict Paul's statement of, I, *not the Lord*. Why do you say the Lord spoke to the mixed marriage, when Paul said He did not?

One does not have to prove that no law of Christ applies to the world to prove that this law of Christ (Matt. 19:9; 1 Cor. 7:10) applies neither to a mixed marriage nor to the world. One cannot refute the explanation of 7:10 (not I, but the Lord) and of 7:12 (I, *not the Lord*) by asserting that all Christ's laws are for everyone in the church and in the world. What would you say if someone insists that all Christ's laws apply to all the world, therefore, we must "put away," "have no company with," "not to keep company" and "with such a one no, not to eat" (1 Cor. 5:9,11,13) the covetous, fornicators, etc. of this world, i.e., those who are not members of the church? Would you not say that this law of Christ regulating our conduct with reference to believers who do such things does not apply to our relationship to those outside of the church? If it were a universal law, covering our relationship to those outside of the church as well as in it, what would follow? (1) "For then must ye needs go out of the world." (5:10) Shall we bid you good-bye as you leave? (2) We would contradict Paul who said about these sinners outside the church (and he did not deny that they had sinned): "*For what have I to do with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within. But them that are without God judgeth.*" (1 Cor. 5:12-13) The only thing I am using these passages in 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 to prove is that everyone must grant that at least some laws of Christ do not govern everyone. The world was not told to withdraw from, not eat with, and disfellowship such worldly people. The church was told to do this. Of course, one must prove, not just assert, that someone from whom they say we must withdraw because of adultery is actually an adulterer.

Obligated but Not Qualified?

Some have argued that the world is obligated to observe the Lord's supper, but is not yet qualified. Answer: *First*, cite one scripture where any unbeliever is commanded to observe the Lord's supper. In the very nature of the case an unbeliever *cannot* observe the supper. How could an unbeliever discern the Lord's body?

Second, how can anyone be obligated to do that which he is not qualified to do? Is the Federal Government obligated to gather

money by voluntary contributions, instead of by taxation, but not yet qualified? Are sinners in the world not yet qualified for Christians not to eat with them? Are mixed marriages bound by Christ's legislation in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 but not yet qualified? Are two believers bound by Paul's legislation, for the mixed marriage (1 Cor. 7:12-15), but not yet qualified? Although individuals may cease to be unbelievers, the category of unbelievers can never qualify for the Lord's supper, etc. Warren did not cite a scripture when he asserted that all unbelievers are obligated to obey all Christ's laws but are not yet qualified. (*Your*, 364)

The reasons unbelievers, and anyone else outside of the covenant, are not qualified to partake of the Lord's supper is that it is a regulation for those in the covenant and these people are not in the covenant. They are not qualified because they are not in the covenant. Those outside the covenant must accept the terms of the covenant to be saved from sin, and once in the covenant they are to be bound by those things which Jesus said to bind on converts. (Matt. 28:20) Matthew 19:9 is one of the things bound on converts, since it is legislation for those in the covenant. Obligations to observe things which are in the covenant for covenant people are only for covenant people. Qualification is directly tied in with membership in the covenant in so far as these things are concerned.

Christ's Law Not Retroactive

Since Christ's law on marriage, divorce and remarriage is legislation for marriages in the covenant we are not to bind it on mixed marriages and marriages in the world. Christ's law is no more legislation for these marriages than it was legislation for marriages under the old covenant. Therefore, when a Jew, who under the law had divorced and remarried for a cause other than fornication, obeyed the gospel on Pentecost or thereafter, he was not required to break up his second marriage. When a Gentile, who was in a similar marriage (while under Rom. 1:18-2:15) obeyed the gospel, the law of Christ was not made retroactive and the Gentile required to break up his or her marriage. Since Christ's law of divorce and remarriage does not apply to marriages in the world, those in the world whose marriages do not conform to Matthew 19:9 are not required to break up their marriages.

J. D. Thomas raised the question whether Matthew 19:9 would “void all the Jewish second-marriages (Mosaic concession) of the early Christian converts that did not have fornication as the grounds for their previous divorces, and thus they would all have had to put away their mates immediately upon becoming Christians. Such a conclusion is not valid, however, for when God once recognized a particular marriage relation in one dispensation as approved, he would not change this simply because of a change in covenants. It was not a retroactive matter. If any marriage was legitimate in God’s sight before the couple became Christians it would still be so afterward. What we are discussing is *adulterous* marital unions. They were adulterous before the people were baptized, and they are still adulterous in our opinion, after baptism. Baptism, or obedience to the gospel and entrance to God’s family through Christ, does not change a sinful act of any kind into a blessed one any more than it obviously does not change a blessed act into a sinful one.” (Thomas, *FF*, March 28, 1978, p. 199)

First, I agree that baptism does not change a sinful *act* into a blessed one.

Second, the real issue is whether marriages in the world today are adulterous marriages, any more than those were under the law, because they do not measure up to the high standard of Matthew 19:9. Thomas grants that Christ’s law was not retroactive on the Jews who obeyed the gospel, after having been divorced and remarried for various reasons under the law of Moses. They did not have to break up their marriages when they came into Christ. He cannot *scripturally* claim that the Gentile had been under a higher law on marriage and divorce than the Jew was under. Therefore, he must concede that the law of Christ would not be retroactive on Gentile marriages which were contracted before the day of Pentecost. *Thus*, he has in the first century people from the Jewish background and the Gentile background who had been married more than once, for reasons other than Matthew 19:9, who were not required to break up their marriages. He does not believe that this filled the church with adulterers; nor do I.

As Don Campbell pointed out: “Those to whom the Law was given were not reckoned sinners for having previously committed acts which became illegal under the law. For example, the Law of Moses forbade foreign wives, but Moses had married one. God

upheld him in his choice (Deut. 7:1-5; Num. 12). If one is disposed to argue that the Law did not specify that the Jews could not marry Ethiopian (or Cushite) peoples . . . it is observed that the seven prohibited nations listed in Deuteronomy Seven do not include the Egyptians nor the Moabites, nations from which Ezra commanded that wives be put away (Ezra 9:1-4).” (37)

Abraham could not have married Sarah, his half sister, if he had lived while the law of Moses was in force. (Gen. 20:20; Lev. 18:9)

Chapter V

NOT UNDER BONDAGE IN SUCH CASES

The Lord had not spoken (“I, *not the Lord*) on mixed marriages. Paul legislated on these and said that the believer is to dwell with the unbeliever if the unbeliever is content to dwell with the believer. However, if the unbeliever depart, the believer is not under bondage in such cases. (1 Cor. 7:12-15) This contrasts drastically with the legislation of the Lord for two believers, for the deserted believer in this case was to remain unmarried or be reconciled. (7:11) The believer is commanded not to depart, but if the unbeliever desires to leave Paul said let him go. “In verse 15 we find a terseness and severity of terms which, viewed from the standpoint of the separation envisioned, are indicative of decisiveness and finality—‘let him (or her) depart,’ that is, ‘let him (or her) be gone.’ ” (Murray, 74) “. . . the two verbs are durative: ‘If he keeps himself separate, let him keep himself separate.’ ” (Lenski, 294) The deserted believer is not under bondage. “The perfect tense states more than the present used in our versions. The perfect reaches back to the day when the unbelieving spouse entered upon the destination and states that from that moment onward the believing spouse has not been held bound.” (294-295) There was no way the believer could legally, or otherwise, prevent the departure of the unbeliever. The believer accepts the fact of the departure which was not the believer’s fault and for which the believer does not bear a load of guilt.

The Believer’s Condition

If the unbeliever deserts, what is the believer’s condition? “. . . the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases.” (7:15) Instead of saying the believer was to remain unmarried or be reconciled, Paul said the believer was not under bondage. The only bondage this believer had ever been in to this unbeliever was the bondage of marriage. The legitimacy of the bond was the subject under consideration. Corinthian Christians wanted to know whether they should remain married to an unbeliever. Paul said,

Yes. The only reason the believer was to dwell with the unbeliever was because they were married and the marriage was legitimate in God's sight. The believer was not living with an unbeliever to whom the believer was not married. To dwell with the unbeliever was to remain married to the unbeliever. This was the only bondage the believer was in to the unbeliever. Who can imagine that any believer is in bondage to any believer or any unbeliever so that they must "dwell" with them even though they are not married? The bondage from which the believer was freed if the unbeliever departed is the very bondage the believer is in if the unbeliever does not depart.

However, some brethren refuse to listen to Paul when he said that Christ had not spoken on mixed marriages. They have decided that Christ spoke on all marriages in Matthew 19:9. To save their uninspired interpretation of Matthew 19:9, and to avoid the conclusion that "bondage" here refers to the marriage bondage and the believer is free from it, they refuse to let Paul say anything different from what Jesus said. First, Paul said Christ had not spoken on mixed marriages. (7:12) They say Christ had spoken on all marriages. They know it, and Paul should have known it! Since he did not know it, they must correct Paul.

Second, Paul said something different about mixed marriages than Christ said about the marriage of two Christians. (7:10-11,12-15) Paul must not be allowed to do this for it would wreck their traditional interpretation of Matthew 19:9 which says it must cover all marriages. Therefore, what Paul really meant in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 was: (a) Do not depart. (b) If the unbeliever departs, remain unmarried or be reconciled. You are still in bondage to the unbeliever even in such cases.

Preliminary Observations

Before considering ways in which some explain "bondage" in their effort to make Paul say what they have decided he must say, in order to harmonize with their uninspired universalization of Matthew 19:9 so that it covers all marriages, observe the following: First, whatever "not under bondage" means, we know that we cannot bind Matthew 19:9 on mixed marriages. (a) Paul said Christ did not speak on mixed marriages. (1 Cor. 7:12) What right have you to force Christ to speak on mixed marriages?

Christ legislated that the believer deserted by the believer was bound, i.e., remain unmarried or be reconciled. (7:11) However, Paul did not say the believer deserted by the unbeliever was to remain unmarried or be reconciled. What spirit moves you to legislate where Paul (the Spirit inspired Paul but you are not inspired) did not legislate, that this deserted believer was to remain unmarried or be reconciled? You do not have the legislative authority to put this deserted believer in bondage in any way to the unbeliever.

Second, the context of a word, and not just the lexicons, has the final say on the meaning of a word in a given passage. The context, not the lexicons, has the final word on "psallo."

Third, neither Christ nor Paul legislated on the marriage of two unbelievers. Paul did not even legislate *for* the unbeliever in the mixed marriage. Where did you get the right to legislate and bind two unbelievers by Matthew 19:9? Paul did not bind a mixed marriage by it, and Christ did not either. We have the Spirit's word for this through Paul.

What are some explanations some make of "bondage" in their effort to keep the believers in 7:15 bound in marriage to the unbelievers who deserted?

"Bondage" Too Strong a Word for Marriage?

These brethren argue that "bondage" means slavery and it is too strong a word to refer to the marriage bond. (Floyd, *SS*, 37-38; Lanier, *MDR*, 13)

Answer: *First*, how is the word used? "Bondage" (*doulos*, 7:15) means "a slave," one who is bound by another, and "implies obedience to the will of another." (Kittel, *II*, 261, 273-274) Christian slaves were to "obey in all things" their masters (Col. 3:22), although this was limited by whether they were called on to disobey God. (Acts 5:29) *A master could break the bondage by freeing the slave.* We are Christ's slaves, for He purchased us. (Acts 20:28) He broke our bondage to sin. However, it is possible for us to desert Christ and no longer be His slaves. Marriage is such a slavery that spouses do not have power over their own bodies. (1 Cor. 7:3-5) The wife is to submit to the husband in everything as unto the Lord. (Eph. 5:22,24) Consider various contexts in which "bondage" is used.

(1) Israel's enslavement in Egypt. (Acts 7:6)

(2) Paul's voluntary enslavement to all men in order to win some for Christ. (1 Cor. 9:19) This shows that "bondage" is not too strong a term to express the relationship of a believer with an unbeliever. Since Paul went into "bondage" to win for Christ those with whom he had no personal ties, it would also be right for a Christian wife to be a slave *in this sense* in order to win her non-Christian husband. This shatters the argument of Floyd, which argument says that "bondage" is too strong a term to describe the relationship which a Christian has to any human being. He says the deserted believer was never in bondage to the unbeliever.

(3) It is used of "bondage" "under the rudiments of the world" (Gal. 4:3), enslaved to sinful practices (Titus 2:3; 2 Pet. 2:19), to men (Col. 3:22; 1 Cor. 7:21-23 compare *doulon* in Romans 6:18,19), to righteousness (Rom. 6:18), and to God. (Rom. 6:22) All these slaveries can be broken.

(4) "Bondage" or slavery is not too strong a word to describe the marriage bond. God has not made any earthly bond stronger. (a) It takes precedence over the relationship to parents, for one is to leave them "and cleave to his wife." (Matt. 19:5) (b) The slave did not become one flesh with the master, but wife and husband become one flesh. (Matt. 19:5-6) Becoming one flesh with a harlot is condemned and one is not to continue in it (1 Cor. 6:15-16), but one is supposed to be one flesh with one's spouse. (c) God joins them in marriage. (Matt. 19:6) Heaven's binding is stronger than earth's, God's binding is stronger than man's. (d) The spouses do not have the right or power over their own bodies. The spouse is not to be defrauded of the spouse's due. (1 Cor. 7:3-5) In God's sight, human slavery confers no such privilege, due, or power. Sex in marriage is sanctioned by God, but it was not right for masters to rape or seduce slaves. If the deserted believer is not free, the unbeliever can come back at any time and claim "the body." (e) Marriage is such a strong slavery that man is not supposed to break up what God joined. (Matt. 19:6) *Man forged the slavery bond and man can put it asunder*, and do it for any reason that man desires; such as for money, whim, personal regard for the slave. However, God has not made it possible for a *Christian* to leave the marriage bond in such a wide variety of ways. It is so strong that the Christian is not to leave the non-Christian who is content to dwell. (7:12)

In the light of these facts about marriage, how can anyone

maintain that “bondage,” or slavery, is too strong a word to use for the marriage bond? Lanier is wrong when he argues that it is too strong because “this bond takes precedence over all other bonds.” (Lanier, *MDR*, 15) (a) How can *doulos* be stronger than *deo* (bound) when we know that no binding can be stronger than what heaven bound (*deo*) on earth through the apostles? (Matt. 16:19) This *deo* takes precedence over all other bindings and bondages. (b) If *doulos* means that it takes precedence over all other bindings, it would mean that Paul’s bondage to man in 1 Corinthians 9:19 was stronger than the marriage bond, and was equal to Paul’s bondage to God.

Second, how is *deo* (bound) used? (1) Marriage. (Rom 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:27,39) But God bound the marriage bond (Matt. 19:6), and what binding can be stronger than what heaven binds? (Matt. 16:19) God who bound the marriage bond can declare the condition or conditions on which it is unbound.

(2) *Deo* includes binding done by man which is just as strong as the bondage (*doulos*) of slavery which man bound. (a) The strong man was bound so the will of another prevailed and his house was robbed. (12:29) (b) Herod bound John the Baptist so tight that he could not escape (Matt. 14:3), and was killed. (14:10-12) (c) Men bound sticks in bundles and burned them. (Matt. 13:30) (d) An animal was bound. He did not loose himself, but was loosed by others. (Matt. 21:2) (e) The man without the wedding-garment was bound so tight he could not control what was done to him, and he was cast into outer darkness. (Matt. 22:13) (f) Christians were physically bound by the will and power of others and were taken to Jerusalem without their wills being consulted. (Acts 9:2,14,21) (g) Peter was bound with chains between soldiers (Acts 12:6), and could not loose himself. (12:7) These literal bindings were enslavements which were just as strong as the slavery expressed by “bondage” (*doulos*).

(3) Satan bound a woman so tightly she could not lift herself up. Christ healed her. (Lk. 13:11-13,16)

(4) *Deo* can refer to a binding which God makes. Can any binding be stronger than that which God bound on earth through the apostles? (Matt. 16:19) It takes precedence over all other bindings. Was not God’s binding of Satan more powerful than any binding of a slave by a human master? (Rev. 20:2) God divinely bound, or joined together (Matt. 19:6) the spouses in the marriage bond. (1 Cor. 7:27,39) Is this a weaker binding than

bondage (*doulos*)? Surely not. How can there be a stronger binding? Slavery was not as strong as this binding. Man could make it possible to get out of slavery on more grounds than God has laid down for the severing of the marriage bond by *Christians*.

There is no scriptural ground on which to maintain that “bondage” in 1 Corinthians 7:15 is too strong a word for the marriage bond.

Douloo and Deo Synonyms?

Thayer said most scholars derive *douloo* (bondage) from *deo* (bound) (157-158), but Lanier argued that some words can be derived from the same word but not be synonyms. (*MDR*, 14-15) Answer: *First*, this is true, but on the other hand the fact two words are derived from the same word does not mean they cannot be synonyms. Whether they can be used to refer to the same thing must be determined by one or two things: (a) What these words mean. Does their developed meaning show they cannot be synonyms? (b) The context. Neither one of these points keep “bondage” from referring to marriage.

Second, words do not have to be synonymous in order to refer to the same things. Those who differ with me must agree that *douloo* and *deo* both refer to some kind of bondage. Not bound and not in bondage can refer to the same thing, i.e., to a state of freedom. What kind of freedom, in what sense one is free, must be determined by the context. Paul contrasted, in several places in 1 Corinthians 7, bondage and bound with freedom.

(1) The believer is not free to refuse to dwell with the unbeliever, but is bound to do so because they are married. However, if the unbeliever departs the believer is not in bondage. Furthermore, since Paul said Christ did not deal with mixed marriages, one has no authority to bind Matthew 19:9 on this deserted believer. (7:15)

(2) Some bondservants could become free. (7:21)

(3) The slave who obeys the gospel “is the Lord’s freedman.” (7:22)

(4) The free person who obeys the gospel is the Lord’s bondservant. (7:22)

(5) The free should not become slaves—do not become bound. (7:23)

(6) If bound (*deo*) to a wife do not seek to be loosed—or free. (7:27)

(7) If loosed do not seek a wife, do not seek to be bound. (7:27)

(8) Free from care (7:32) versus not free from care. (7:30, 33-35)

(9) Bound but free if the mate dies. (7:39)

These words do not all have to be synonyms in order to refer to a state of bondage in contrast with a state of freedom. “Unmarried” and “loosed” are not synonyms but they can both refer to being single: the “unmarried” can marry (7:8-9), and the “loosed” can marry. (7:27-28) Lanier said “chambering” was “one time used by Paul” to refer to sexual intercourse. (Rom. 13:13; *MDR*, 14-15) This grants that a word is not disqualified to represent a particular thing just because it is used only once! Fornication, adultery, being “joined to a harlot” (1 Cor. 5:6,13-16), “due” (7:3), and “be together again” (7:3,5) refer to the same physical act—sexual intercourse. Of course, adultery, fornication, and being joined to a harlot are wrong.

Why Used Only Once?

It is argued that the word “bound” (*deo*) is used three times for marriage (Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:27,39), but if “bondage” refers to marriage it is strange that it is used only one time. Paul knew the word “bound” and could have used it if he meant marriage. (Lanier, *MDR*, 13-14) Answer: *First*, the context proves that “bondage” refers to marriage. (a) Marriage is the subject under consideration. (b) The very bondage the believer is in if the unbeliever does not depart is the one the believer is not in if the unbeliever departs; for it is only *in such cases* the believer is not under bondage. This bondage is the marriage bond.

Second, how many times does a word have to be used in order for it to refer to marriage? *Deo* (bound) is used only three times. This is but two more times than *doulos* is used. *Douloo*, according to one count, is used only seven times in the New Testament. However, *deo* is used forty-four times, and only three of these times is it used for marriage. As one brother pointed out: “Actually 1 out of 7 is a better percentage than 3 out of 44 (14.3% to 6.8%).” *Huperetes* is used only one time to describe God’s people as servants or slaves. Usually *doulos* or *diakonis* are used. Does this mean that *huperetes* cannot describe God’s people and their relationship to God?

Third, one brother suggested that *deo* was used more often for a prison bond and *douloo* for a slave bond. "The context of 7:1-8 shows that the husband's body belongs to the wife and the wife's body to the husband, thus bringing to mind a slave-slave relationship in which each one's body belongs to the other. 7:15 says this slave bond no longer exists if the unbeliever departs." If the believer is still married to the unbeliever such a slave relationship does exist for the believer's body still belongs to the unbeliever.

Fourth, "The fact Paul uses a different word in 7:39 (*deo*) is no more significant than Jesus' use of two different words in Matthew 19:5-6 (*sudzeugnumi*—ox bond—in verse 6 and *kollao*—glue bond in verse 5)—both of which refer to the marriage bond here but are used elsewhere for other bonds."

Fifth, why is "joined together" used only once for marriage? (Matt. 19:6) But what does this prove against it referring to marriage? 2 Corinthians 6:14 does not refer to marriage as such, otherwise the believer would have to leave the unbeliever, but Paul said not to do it. (1 Cor. 7:12)

Sixth, "dwell" "is literally 'to house with him (her)' and means to continue the marriage relationship." (Lenski, 219; 1 Cor. 7:12-13) Deaver and others agree that Paul is answering the question in 1 Cor. 7:12 whether the Christian is to remain *married* to the unbeliever. (*Your*, 447-448)

Seventh, the *Gospel Advocate's* official commentary maintains that in 1 Cor. 7:1 "the word *touch* is used in the sense of marry." (*Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1956, p. 30)

Why Is Bondage Used?

One does not have to know why Paul used "bondage" in 7:15 and "bound" in 1 Corinthians 7:27,39 in order to know that both refer to the marriage bond. One does not have to know why Paul used "depart" and "leave" in 7:10-11 and just the word "depart" in 7:15 in order to know that both words refer to the same thing—separation. What these brethren must explain, and which they cannot even though it is essential to their case, is why Paul made contrasting introductions, and said "I, *not the Lord*" if the Lord had spoken on all marriages, including mixed marriages (1 Cor. 7:10,12); and why he said *different things* in talking about the *two categories* of the marriages which are considered here

(Christians married to Christians and Christians married to non-Christians) and yet supposedly said the same thing to both of them, i.e., do not leave, but if one leaves you must remain unmarried or be reconciled.

Some have explained why Paul used "bondage" in one case and "bound" in two other cases in the same chapter (7:15,27,39), in the following ways: *First*, "bondage" and "bound" are synonyms.

Second, Jennings thought "bondage" was a word which "has in it the sense of being bound as a bondservant to one who is *above* in the social scale." "The other, '*deo*,' is to be tied to something or someone on the same level, as in Rom. 7:2, where the reference is clearly to the marriage relation. Thus the two words apply to different aspects of the same thing; the former (*douloo*) considers it *Godward*, as ever above; the other manward, as on the same level. Applying this distinction it would mean that it is in the sight of God that the abandonment has broken completely the marriage-bond; and as when bound the deserted partner could not remarry guiltlessly, being free, he or she could." (24-25)

Third, Marvin R. Vincent said of "bondage": "A strong word, indicating that Christianity has not made marriage a state of slavery to believers. Compare *dedetai is bound*, verse 39, a milder word. The meaning clearly is that wilful desertion on the part of the unbelieving husband or wife sets the other party free. Such cases are not comprehended in Christ's words." (*III*, 219) Whether it is a milder word or not, it does not mean it is a weaker binding. (Matt. 16:19) Vincent believes both refer to the marriage bond, and rightly observed that Christ did not legislate on the mixed marriage.

Fourth, the *Expositor's Greek Testament* did not think that it was clear remarriage was allowed, but said "bondage" "implies that for the repudiated party to continue bound to the repudiator would be slavery." When this commentary said "in such circumstances is not kept in bondage," it clearly implies that if the unbeliever did not depart the believer was in *bondage*. The only bondage the believer would be kept in, when it was not such a case, was the marriage *bond*.

Fifth, if "bondage" is a much stronger word than "bound," it could mean that for the deserted believer to still be married to the deserter would be the most abject type of bondage. The deserted

believer in 7:15 is not under such slavery that he or she is bound to the unbeliever.

However, why Paul used this word instead is irrelevant insofar as proving it refers to the marriage bond is concerned.

The Marriage Bond Is Under Consideration

The marriage bond is the bond which is discussed in 1 Corinthians 7:1-15. Consider “husband and wife” (7:2); “let them marry” (7:9); “married . . . wife . . . husband . . . let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband . . . husband . . . wife” (7:10-11), and “wife . . . husband . . . husband . . . wife . . . wife . . . children” (7:12-14). The sexual relationship in 7:2-6,9 and the dwelling in 7:12 are justified only on the basis of the marriage bond. The reason the Christian should not leave a Christian, and should remain unmarried if he or she does leave, is the marriage bond. The Christian stays with the unbeliever because of the marriage bond. In this context, to be free from “bondage” is to be free from the only bond mentioned—marriage. Those from 7:2-14 are bound, but certain ones are free in 7:15. Being “bound unto a wife” (7:27) is the marriage bond, and being loosed is being unmarried. (7:27) The fact that “bondage” is used in 7:15 and “bound” in 7:27,39 does not change the fact that it is the marriage bond which is under consideration.

Paul Would Have Used Another Word?

It is argued that if Paul had meant to say this deserted believer was free from the marriage bondage, he would have said this believer is free to marry, instead of saying: “not under bondage in such cases.” (R. L. Roberts, 127) Answer: *First*, by what direct pipeline to the mind of Paul does such a one claim to know that Paul would have said it in some other way? Why did not Paul say in 7:12 to the believer “remain married” instead of “dwell”? Did this indicate they were not married, but Paul wanted them to live with the unbeliever?

Second, if Paul had applied Christ’s law of 7:10-11 to the mixed marriage, if he had not wanted this deserted believer in 7:15 to remarry, he would have made it plain as he did in 7:11, i.e., remain unmarried or be reconciled. He gave no legislation which

said this, and uninspired brethren today do not have the right to give this legislation.

Third, Paul was discussing the marriage bond (dwelling did not refer to shacking up with an unbeliever) and he said if the unbeliever left, the believer was not under bondage.

Fourth, I can think of good reasons why Paul did not instruct the deserted in 7:15 to get married. (a) There is no duty which says that a Christian must remarry. (b) Due to the current conditions in Corinth, and what was coming, Paul advised against marriage at that particular time. Paul wished that all were "even as I myself." (7:7) "I think therefore that this is good by reason of the distress that is upon us, namely, that it is good for a man to be as he is. Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But shouldest thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Yet such shall have tribulation in the flesh: and I would spare you. But this I say, brethren, the time is short, that henceforth both those that have wives may be as though they had none; and those that weep, as though they wept not. . . ." (7:26-30)

He did not counsel the deserted Christian in 7:15 to remarry but he left this believer free from the marriage bond. He mentioned remarriage in 7:11 to forbid it, but not in 7:15 for 7:12-15 was under a different law than 7:10-11.

Confusing and Misleading?

It would have been confusing and misleading for Paul to have used a different word ("bondage") for marriage in 7:15 than he used in 7:27,39. (Lanier, *Your*, 491) Answer: *First*, Paul did not confuse anyone. He clearly said Christ had spoken on the two believers in 7:10-11 but had not spoken on the mixed marriage in 7:12-15. He said the believer must dwell with the unbeliever if the unbeliever was content to dwell, but was not under bondage if the unbeliever left. The very bondage this believer is under if the unbeliever does not leave is the one he or she is not under if the unbeliever left. These brethren confuse themselves and others because they refuse to accept Paul's statement that the Lord did not legislate on the mixed marriage. They won't let Paul straighten out their confusion.

Second, it would have been very confusing for Paul to have

spoken of bondage in this connection if he did not mean the marriage bond.

Third, it would have been very confusing if Paul, after saying that Christ said the believer in 7:11 must remain unmarried or be reconciled, to say that the believer in 7:15 was not under bondage if the believer was still in the marriage bond. If Paul meant for the believer in 7:15 to remain unmarried he could have said it as clearly as it is said in 7:11. Paul did not tell the believer in 7:15 to remain unmarried, and these brethren have no authority to legislate where Paul did not.

Fourth, in this very chapter Paul used different words for the same thing. Shall we accuse him of being misleading and confusing for using different words in "so short a compass"? (1) "Him" referred just to the husband in 7:12, but "him" is used in 7:15 for male or female. "Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let *him* depart: the *brother* or *sister* is not under bondage in such cases." (7:15) Paul was not suggesting that a "brother" was married to a "him."

(2) Paul used two different words in the same sentence to refer to separation. "That the wife *depart* (*choristhenai*) not from her husband . . . the husband *leave* (*aphienai*) not his wife." (7:10-11) Leave can mean to send away, or to separate as in Matthew 19:6, "put asunder," but normally it means "leave." Lenski said there is "no material difference." (See also Shanner, 60-61.) Some think *aphienai*, leave, referred to the action of the husband in sending away his wife since he owned the house. She could depart but not send away her husband in such a case. (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, July 1866, pp. 394-395; Roberts, 117-118) However, some women owned the houses. In Judaism the husband usually did the sending away (Harrell, 127) but there were cases when the wife did the sending. (Mk. 10:11-12) "Leave" is used of both the man and the woman in 7:12-13 and "depart" of the unbeliever in 7:15 to refer to either an unbelieving wife or unbelieving husband.

(3) Paul used unmarried (*agamos*) of one never married (7:8) and of the woman who deserted her husband in 7:11, i.e., remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. She was unmarried in one sense but she was still married for the man was still her husband. The unmarried person in 7:8-9 was not married but the unmarried person in 7:11 was in reality married.

(4) Husbands and wives refers to the married state in 7:2, 10-11. Though they were bound Paul did not use the word

“bound” or “bondage.”

(5) “Dwell” means to inhabit a place or house, or for something to dwell in one. (Rom. 7:18; 8:9,11; 1 Cor. 3:16) Paul used it to refer to dwelling together in the marriage bond. Deaver said the question Paul was answering in 1 Corinthians 7:12 was whether the believer should continue married to the unbeliever. (*Your*, 447-448) Paul was speaking of dwelling together in the marriage bond in 7:12.

(6) “Calling” and “called” can include marriage (7:12,20,24); “bound” can mean marriage (7:27); “loosed” can mean unmarried; in one sense a person can have a wife and be as though they had none (7:29); “one flesh” can refer to the married state (Matt. 19:5) or to being joined to a harlot (1 Cor. 6:16). *Was it misleading and confusing for Paul to use this in 6:16 and then speak of marriage a few verses later in 7:1-12?* “Joined together” is used with reference to the marriage bond. (Matt. 19:6) As far as I know it is the only time it is clearly used in the New Testament of the marriage bond.

(7) “Take a wife” and “take a woman” both refer to marriage. (Lev. 21:7)

(8) The sexual relationship is called uncovering her nakedness (Lev. 18:6-18), and the very next verse says “lie.” (18:20)

(9) “Touch” can refer to being married. (1 Cor. 7:1)

The use of “bondage” and “bound” in 1 Cor. 7:15,27 does not mean that both cannot refer to the marriage bond. The confusion has come because these brethren have tried to force Paul’s legislation to agree with their own uninspired universalization of the “whosoever” of Matthew 19:9.

Chapter VI

HOW THEY EXPLAIN “NOT UNDER BONDAGE”

Some camp on Matthew 19:9, decide this is universal legislation for all marriages, and then refuse to accept the fact that Paul said that “I, *not the Lord*,” legislated on mixed marriages. Stubbornly clinging to their uninspired universalization of Matthew 19:9 they insist that Christ did legislate for mixed marriages. Therefore, they conclude that in essence the same thing is said in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 which is said in 7:10-11. Since they bind on mixed marriages Matthew 19:9, “not under bondage” must not be permitted to refer to the marriage bond. How do they explain “not under bondage”? They are agreed that it cannot refer to the marriage bond, but they are not agreed as to what it does refer.

Freedom From the Bondage to Evangelize

Some think Paul gave three reasons why the believer should remain with the unbeliever. (1) It is a marriage. (7:12-14) (2) God has called us in peace, therefore the spouse should dwell in peace with the unbeliever. (7:15) (3) The believer may win the unbeliever. (7:16) The believer should do all these things, but it does not follow that Paul gave the last two as reasons why the believer should not depart. Furthermore, none of these reasons prove that the believer who is deserted by the unbeliever is under the marriage bond *in such a case*. (7:15)

After saying if the unbeliever departs, let him go, Paul said: “For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?” (7:16) Is Paul saying that if the unbeliever does not depart the Christian is under bondage to evangelize, to convert, the unbelieving spouse but is released from this bondage if the unbeliever departs? Is Paul saying you are obligated to preach to the unbeliever if he stays but not obligated if he leaves? How could one be obligated to preach to someone who departed? How shall we answer the argument that it means “not under bondage” to evangelize?

First, commentators are divided on 7:16, which they agree is a difficult verse, on whether it means that the believer should oppose the separation because the believer may convert the unbeliever, or whether it means that since the believer does not know that the unbeliever could be converted, the believer should not feel guilty about the unbeliever's lost condition—thinking that if they had not “let” the unbeliever go, they could have saved him. R. L. Roberts, of Abilene Christian University, gives the exegetical arguments pro and con. He concluded that since it was given by Paul after he had already argued that divorce is to be accepted if the unbeliever desires to separate, Paul does not give in this verse (7:16) an argument against separation, but a reason why they should accept separation without a feeling of guilt. (128-131)

Second, Harvey Floyd, and those who agree with his interpretation of “not under bondage,” cannot use the argument that it means “not under bondage” to evangelize. Floyd believes that “not under bondage” means the believer was *never* under bondage to the unbeliever.

Third, although it is true that Christians ought to try to win people (compare 1 Peter 3:1-2), Paul is not discussing *evangelization* of unbelievers, but *marriage* to unbelievers. The issue is whether a believer should remain in the marriage bond with the unbeliever. The believer is to dwell in the married state with the unbeliever if the unbeliever is willing. (7:12-13) Nothing is said about whether the unbeliever was willing to be evangelized. The marriage bond is the bondage the believer is in, and it is the bond from which the believer is released if the unbeliever departs. (7:15) The binding nature of the bond, not evangelization, is under consideration.

Fourth, Floyd thought that most of verse 15 was a parenthesis, and that after saying the marriage relationship was valid Paul said that marriage is to be preserved in peace (last part of verse 15), and that it is possible to save the unbeliever. (7:16) It is true that Paul does not mention peace and salvation to give Christians reasons for taking the initiative in departing, or getting a divorce, but it does not follow that the references to peace and salvation are given as reasons to stay in the marriage bond. Paul has already told the Christian not to leave and regardless of the Christian's desire for peace in the marriage relationship and for the salvation of the unbeliever, the unbeliever would not be per-

sueded by these if he wanted to leave. Floyd has assumed, but he has not proved, that verse 15 is a parenthesis.

Fifth, if Paul refers to peace and salvation in order to encourage the believer to remain with the unbeliever, it does not affect my argument at all. Regardless of how many reasons Paul gave the believer for continuing in the marriage *if* the unbeliever was content to dwell with the believer, the question is what does Paul say *is the condition of the believer if the unbeliever departs?* The believer's condition in such a case is one of freedom, he or she is not under bondage. "Yet, if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart." (7:15) The believer in such a case is not under bondage.

Sixth, all references to dwell, to peace, and to salvation do not change the fundamental fact that Paul said Christ did not legislate for mixed marriages. (7:10,12)

Seventh, Paul does not express in verse 16 confidence that the unbeliever will be saved. "For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" The explanation which best fits the context is that the deserted believer is not to be in a stew and have his peace destroyed with self-reproaches that he might have been able to save the unbeliever if the unbeliever had not left.

Paul said the believer deserted by the believer was under bondage (7:11, remain unmarried or be reconciled), but the deserted believer in 7:15 was not under bondage.

Not Bound to Obey?

Does Paul mean the believer is not bound to obey the unbeliever if the unbeliever leaves? Answer: *First*, how could one obey the deserter?

Second, is the believing *husband* bound to obey the unbelieving wife if she does not depart?

Third, Paul is discussing the legitimacy of the marriage bond, and the condition of the believer if the unbeliever deserted, and not whether one should obey the wife or the husband as the case might be.

At Liberty to Let the Unbeliever Go?

Does "not under bondage" mean the believer is free to let the unbeliever go, instead of being under bondage to maintain the

marriage at all cost? Answer: *First*, Paul did not say the unbeliever gave the believer an ultimatum which said: "You have the choice of my continuing the marriage if you will do this or that (such as give up your faith) or of my dissolving the marriage if you will not do this or that." Nothing is said about the unbeliever giving the believer any choice at all. Nothing is said about why the unbeliever wanted to leave. "Greek and Roman laws offered great facilities for divorce, especially for the husband. Roman law allowed the husband full disposal of the wife for almost any reason." (Roberts, 127) Paul says nothing about the unbeliever needing the believer's permission to depart. He did not say: if they ask permission give them permission. Paul said if they depart, let them depart. The unbeliever was always free to go.

Second, as indicated above, there was nothing that a believer could do to force the unbeliever to stay. Physically or legally the believer could not prevent the departure.

Third, surely Paul is not saying that since it is impossible for you to live with the unbeliever because he departs, I give you the privilege of letting him go and living alone. Paul is not saying if you are deserted you do not have to be un-deserted.

Fourth, Paul showed that Jesus did not force a believer to live with a believer, or for the believer to require the believer to stay. Why would one imagine that Paul would require a believer to do a "more impossible" thing, i.e., force the unbeliever to continue to dwell.

Fifth, Paul had already twice said that the believer's dwelling with the unbeliever was contingent on the unbeliever's willingness to dwell with the believer; if "pleased to dwell." (7:12,13) Paul certainly did not say in verse 15 that if the unbeliever departs, you are free to let him go.

Sixth, the believer was free to let the believer depart. (7:11) How can a very different statement ("not under bondage," 7:15) be saying in effect the same thing? Paul said nothing to the deserted believer in 7:15 about remaining unmarried or being reconciled. In fact, he said the opposite, i.e., you are not under bondage.

Seventh, if "not under bondage" means the believer was free to permit the unbeliever to leave, what is the meaning of "in such cases"? Surely Paul is not saying the unbeliever is free to give permission to the unbeliever if he leaves, but if the unbeliever

does not leave you are not free to give him permission to leave. The bondage they are not under if the unbeliever leaves is the one they are under if the unbeliever does not leave. Does anyone think Paul is saying they are not under obligation to prevent the unbeliever's leaving if they leave, but are under obligation to prevent their leaving if they do not leave? Does such an interpretation make any sense?

Eighth, if in 7:15 Paul "has much more in mind than the separation from bed and board of verse 11, what is this 'plus'? Apparently the only direction from which we can derive any additional liberty for the deserted partner is that of liberty from the marital bond itself." (Murray, 74) If it be said the "plus" is the right of permanent separation, my reply is: (a) Paul did not say the separation in 7:11 could not be permanent. (b) If an unbeliever permanently left, no one had to give the believer the so-called right of permanent separation. It took place regardless of what the believer did or thought.

Free to Give Them Permission to Depart?

It is argued that "let him depart" proves that the believer had the power to prevent the departure. Those who make this argument assume that the unbeliever desires to depart because of the believer's faith, and gives the believer the option of choosing between Christ and the unbeliever. In such a case, the believer is free to give them permission to go. Answer: *First*, does anyone think it took a revelation for the believer to know they were permitted to do this rather than renounce Christ?

Second, what right has one to assume that the only reason an unbeliever would break up a marriage was because of the faith of the spouse?

Third, if the only reason an unbeliever would break up a marriage was because the spouse was a believer, why did unbelievers divorce unbelievers in that day? Did Jews divorce Jews, according to Deuteronomy 24:1-4, because of a difference of faith?

Fourth, if one's faith was the reason the unbeliever left, why would a believer leave a believer? (7:11)

Fifth, was the unbeliever so anxious to preserve the marriage that he gave the believer an option, but the believer did not give the believer any kind of option? Nothing is said about options in

either 7:11 or 7:15.

Sixth, why did not Paul tell the believer in 7:10-11 that Christ gave the believer the right to give the believer permission to leave? Why did he not say they were not under bondage to refuse permission?

Seventh, did the unbeliever who stayed (7:12-13) stay because of the believer's faith? Paul did not say why the unbeliever dwelt or why he left.

Eighth, if the unbeliever in 7:15 left because of the believer's faith, what was the situation of the believer if any unbeliever departed for some other reason, or just disappeared without giving a reason? Since Christ did not speak to the mixed marriage, this deserted believer would have no legislation from Christ on the subject. If Paul legislated only on the believer who was deserted by an unbeliever because of the believer's faith, believers deserted for any other reason would have no legislation from Paul either. Does not this leave them free to legislate for themselves in such a case? You cannot bind them by 7:11 or 7:15. But they were not confronted with the choice of giving up their mate or their faith, so "not under bondage" could not mean that they are not under bondage to give up their faith.

Ninth, Paul is discussing whether the Christian should give up the marriage bond to the unbeliever (7:12-13), and not whether they should give up the faith for the unbeliever. He was discussing whether they should take the initiative to leave the unbelievers, and not whether they should forsake Christ.

Tenth, Christ had not legislated on mixed marriages, but Christ had already legislated on whether a believer is to deny His Lordship (Lk. 6:46) or put any human relationship above the relationship to Him. (Matt. 10:34-37; Lk. 14:26)

Eleventh, the bondage one is under if the unbeliever does not leave is the bondage one is not under if the unbeliever leaves. If we are not under bondage to give up the faith if they depart, are we under bondage to give it up if they do not depart?

Twelfth, Paul did not say anything about "if the unbeliever asks permission." He said, "If the unbelieving departeth, let him depart." He did not say, "if he demands you to give up the faith, let him go." Furthermore, Christ has already taught on this for all believers.

Thirteenth, in some cases the word "let" may indicate that one gives permission, but in other cases it may mean that one simply

acquiesces or resigns himself to the situation. It may be to say that if such and such is true, let such and such take place. "For if a woman is not veiled, let her also be shorn: but if it is a shame to a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled." (1 Cor. 11:6)

A. T. Robertson said that permission may mean "a concession or condition." "It is an easy step from permission to concession." (*Grammar*, 948) He cited John 2:19: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." He did not grant permission, but if they did it, He will be raised and their efforts frustrated.

G. B. Winer said: "The imperative mood regularly expresses a summons or command, sometimes however merely a permission a consent or acquiescence." (*Treatise*, 390) "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath." (Eph. 4:26) ". . . if ye are angry, do not sin, do not fall into sin. . . ." (391) This was not a command to be angry; or even permission.

"He that is unrighteous, *let* him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, *let* him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still." (Rev. 22:11) This was not giving someone permission to be unrighteous, so that if permission was refused the person could not be unrighteous. If given a choice, a Christian would always choose that someone be righteous. Winer said: "In Revelation 22:11 the whole is a challenge: let every man, by continuing in the course which he has followed hitherto, ripen against the approaching judgment of Christ: the fate of all is as if already determined." (391) I think it is an abandoning of the evil people to their own ways, not a challenge. If this is what they want, let them have it and continue in it.

Blass and Debrunner said: "The imperative in the New Testament keeps for the most part within the same limits as in classical usage. As in the latter it is by no means confined to commands, but also expresses a request or a concession . . . the imperative can simply be the equivalent of a concessive clause: John 2:19. . . ." (*A Greek Grammar*, 195)

Ernest De Witt Burton wrote that "the imperative mood is also used to express consent, or merely to propose an hypothesis." (*Syntax*, 80) ". . . if need so requireth, let him do what he will; he sinneth not; let them marry." (1 Cor. 7:36) In speaking of "concessive sentences," Burton cited: "If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received,

let him be anathema.” (Gal. 1:9) If a Christian has a choice, he would not give permission to anyone to be anathema. This is not a case where one gave him permission to be anathema, and he would not have been anathema if he had not been given permission to be, but it followed from the nature of the case.

Burton said that “a concessive clause is commonly introduced by *ei (eav) kai* or *kai ei (eav)*. But a clause introduced by *ei* or *eav* alone may also be thought concessive, though the concessive element is not emphasized in the form.” (113) “If” is “ei” in Greek.

Paul introduced 1 Corinthians 7:15 with “*Yet if the unbelieving departeth.*” Burton said, “concessive in the New Testament generally introduces a supposition conceived of as actually fulfilled or likely to be fulfilled.” (113) This is what happened here. It is something “conceived of as actually fulfilled,” or at least in the process of being fulfilled. “If” what? “*Yet if the unbelieving departeth.*” This was not something just desired or contemplated. It is something in the process of fulfillment. What do you do? “Let him depart.” How could this be permission, which if the believer had denied the unbeliever, the unbeliever would not have been in the process of departing? The unbelieving was departing—permission or no permission. You do not give him permission, you simply acquiesce or concede and accept his action. Of course, you would have to accept it even if you did not want to accept it. What is your condition when he departeth? “The brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases.”

I think that in 1 Corinthians a close parallel to the “let” in 1 Corinthians 7:15 is the “let” in 1 Corinthians 14:37. “But if any man is ignorant, *let him be ignorant.*” (1 Cor. 14:38) This man has not asked permission to be ignorant and is waiting on your decision. This is not giving him permission to be ignorant, so that if one refuses permission the individual must be learned. It is simply acquiescing to his condition or situation. You have done what you could do. There is no need to concern yourself further over the matter. Abandon him to his own course of conduct in which he is persisting. Leave him alone, “let him be ignorant.” This is not a command to be ignorant nor a commendation or approval of it. It is simply letting things take their course, acquiescing in a course of events over which you really have no control. But no Christian, if he has the choice, would choose to give permission to people to be ignorant, or to be unrighteous. (Rev. 22:11)

There is no reason to conclude that the believer in 1 Corinthians 7:15 is in a position to give or to deny permission to the unbeliever. Paul did not say: "If the unbeliever asks permission, give him permission." He said, "Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart." It is no more than, "If he goes, let him go."

Fourteenth, what good does it do these brethren to prove that "bondage" does not mean the marriage bond? The reason they avoid such a meaning is that they are convinced that Christ did speak on mixed marriages, and that the deserted believer in 7:15 must be bound by Matthew 19:9. All efforts to explain "bondage" so as to harmonize with their uninspired universalization of Matthew 19 are a waste of time and energy. Paul clearly said Christ did not legislate on mixed marriages, and Paul is just as clear in saying that Christ did legislate on the marriage of two Christians. They have no right to extend this law of Christ in 7:11 to bind the believer in 7:15. Why are they determined to place under bondage those whom neither Christ nor Paul placed under bondage? Regardless of how they explain bondage, Christ did not legislate on those in 7:15.

Not Under Bondage to Live with the Departed?

There are some who argue that the believer thought that Paul meant they had to live with the unbeliever regardless of what he did, therefore if he left, the believer needed to be assured that he or she did not have to live with the departed. Answer: *First*, Paul had not given an unqualified statement that they had to live with the unbeliever regardless of what he did. Paul said: "and she is content to dwell, let him not leave her . . . he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband." (7:12-13) This says live with them in the marriage union if they are content, but it does not say you must live with them if they are not content. The believer was not to take the initiative and depart.

Second, the only bondage the believer was under to the unbeliever is the marriage bond. No one was under bondage to dwell as husband or wife, as the case might be, with an unbeliever on any other ground.

Third, it would be absurd for Paul to tell a believer that they did not have to live with one who was either in the process of divorcing, or deserting them or had already actually deserted them. Just how does one go about dwelling with a deserter? Jail

him, and then move into the same cell? Would this be equal to dwelling in the marriage bond?

Never under Bondage

Harvey Floyd and some others argue that “is not under bondage” is a perfect tense and means that the Christian has never been under the bondage contemplated in Paul’s statement. (Floyd, SS, January, 1975, p. 37; Warren, *Charts*, 218)

What shall we say to this argument? *First*, several brethren in discussing this overlook Paul’s qualifying statement which limits the freedom to “in such cases.” (Deaver, *Your*, 451-452; Lanier, *Your*, 470-472; Floyd, SS) If it is not such a case, they are under bondage. *The very bondage one is not under if the unbeliever departs is the one the believer is under if the unbeliever does not depart.* And the only bondage the believer is under in respect to the unbeliever is the marriage bond. Paul would not have said to dwell with the unbeliever if the believer had not been married to the unbeliever. Lanier quoted Grosheide’s statement that: “The members of the church of Christ are not subject to an unbeliever.” Lanier interpreted this to mean that the Christian is not under bondage, and has never been under bondage, to the extent that the believer must give up Christ to hold on to the unbeliever. Lanier did not discuss the fact that Paul said “in such cases.” Furthermore, he failed to realize the significance of Grosheide’s comment. “*In such cases, namely when the unbeliever departs.*” (Lanier, *Your*, 471-472) Why do these brethren, so far as I have read after them, ignore the significance of “in such cases”?

Second, Paul is discussing marriage (7:8-9), divorce and remarriage although he said that the Lord had forbidden it to two Christians (7:10-11), and divorce from the unbeliever wherein the unbeliever took the initiative and departed. This deserted Christian is not under the marriage bond, so is unmarried and it is right for the unmarried to marry. (7:8-9,28)

Third, R. L. Roberts, of Abilene Christian University, who does not believe the deserted believer in 7:15 is free to remarry, said: “*Dedoulotai* is the perfect passive indicative form of *douloo*, to enslave, and with the negative means literally ‘does not remain a slave.’ This is the perfect of existing condition indicating that the party ‘has been enslaved.’ ” (Roberts, 126) Has been enslaved to

whom? To the unbeliever and enslaved by the marriage bond. In speaking of *chorizo* (depart) Roberts said: "There is little doubt that the word as used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7 refers to the separation of divorce. It is not just separation in 'bed and board,' but of the dissolution of the marriage bond." (119) This is the very bond the believer in 7:11 is not free from but the believer in 7:15 is free from. However, if the deserted believer in 7:15 cannot remarry, this believer is still in the only bondage which tied the believer to the unbeliever.

Fourth, Floyd and Lanier both argue that "bondage" is too strong a term to indicate the believer's marriage relationship to the unbeliever. "When Paul said the believer is not under bondage he meant the believer is not enslaved to the unbeliever; he does not have the same relationship to the unbeliever that he has to God. Jesus bought the believer with his blood so that the believer belongs to the Lord in a way that he does not belong to the unbeliever. This is what Paul meant when he said the believer is Christ's bondservant; 'ye were bought with a price; become not bondservants of men' (vers. 22,23)." (Lanier, *Your*, 470; Floyd, *SS*, 37) It is obvious that Christ had already revealed in His personal ministry that we are not to have any attachment to any person on earth which transcends and breaks our attachment to Him. (Matt. 10:34-37; Lk. 14:26) However, Paul said Christ had not spoken on the mixed marriage, therefore had not spoken on the bondage in that marriage.

I have shown in the discussion of "bondage" and "bound" that "bondage" is not too strong a word to refer to the marriage bond. Furthermore, in their very discussion of the word "bondage" both Lanier and Floyd showed that it is used in the New Testament of a Christian's relationship to a human being. They both quoted: "Ye were bought with a price; become not bondservants of men." (1 Cor. 7:23; Lanier, *Your*, 470; Floyd, *SS*, 37) However, they overlooked the fact that those who were converted "being a bondservant" were to "abide with God" in the calling wherein they were called. (7:21,22,24) Some of the very Corinthian Christians to whom Paul wrote were bondservants of men! Therefore, the word "bondage" is not too strong to express one's relationship to a human being, a bondage such as the marriage bond. Furthermore, both Lanier and Floyd referred to the fact that Paul voluntarily became a servant, enslaved himself, went into bondage, to all men that he might win some. (1 Cor. 9:19-23; Lanier,

Your, 470; Floyd, SS, 37) These passages forever shatter their argument that "bondage" in 7:15 is too strong a word to indicate a Christian's relationship to another human being, such as the marriage bond. If "bondage" means one's supreme allegiance, the Christian slave could have his supreme allegiance to his master instead of to Christ, and Paul had his supreme allegiance to Jews and Gentiles rather than to Christ. (1 Cor. 9:19-23) Paul said a Christian should not voluntarily become a slave of men, but if they were already a slave to abide in this position, "care not for it." (1 Cor. 7:20-22,24) The word "bondage" in itself does not have to mean one's supreme allegiance. One can be a slave to Christ and a slave to men at the same time (1 Cor. 7:20-24), even though Christ is the one to whom we have supreme allegiance for we cannot have two supreme allegiances. (Matt. 6:24) Paul and certain others were the Corinthians' "servants for Jesus' sake." (1 Cor. 9:19-23; 2 Cor. 4:5) Christians who were slaves were to "be obedient" "as unto Christ" (Eph. 6:5-7), and "obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh." (Col. 3:22) Israel had been a slave in Egypt. (Acts 7:6) However, our supreme allegiance is always to God and Christ.

These brethren are wrong in arguing that the *Christian* has never been under "bondage" to any human being in the sense "bondage" is used in the New Testament. (1 Cor. 7:20-24; 9:19; Col. 3:22; Eph. 6:5-7) Marriage is a bondage which gives the spouse the right to the partner's body. (1 Cor. 7:4) Can any other earthly bondage be as strong as the marriage bondage? The deserted believer in 1 Corinthians 7:15 is free from the marriage bondage, therefore free to remarry.

Fifth, Warren said the "perfect tense indicates a completed action with an abiding result." (*Charts*, 218) If the Christian was never under bondage, there was no completed action, in fact no action at all, in the past which had an abiding result (freedom from bondage). But there was a completed action in the past with an abiding result which did free them. This action was the departure of the unbeliever. (7:15) As Lenski said, the believer was free from the time the unbeliever entered on his course of action. (Thomas, *DR*, 73)

Not Bound to Give up Christ

It is claimed that by "not under bondage" (1 Cor. 7:15), Paul meant that the Christian was not under such bondage to the un-

believer that the Christian had to give up faith in Christ in order to preserve the marriage. (Lanier , *MDR*, 15; *Your*, 492; Floyd, *SS*, 37; compare another author, *Your*, 470) Answer: *First*, I have already demonstrated that “bondage” does not refer by itself to one’s supreme allegiance.

Second, Christ had not spoken on mixed marriages. However, Christ had spoken in His personal ministry on the fact that His teaching would divide families and one was not worthy of Him if one loved his family more than he loved Christ. (Matt. 10:34-37) The husband or wife was not specifically mentioned but obviously they were included in Jesus’ statement. Furthermore, Christ had already spoken on the fact that our supreme loyalty is to be to Him. (Matt. 28:18; Lk. 6:36; 14:26) One has to accept the Lordship of Jesus in coming into Christ. (Acts 2:36; Rom. 10:9-10) In addition to this, Christ had already made plain that He will not confess us before the Father if we deny Him before men. (Matt. 10:32-33; John 12:42-43) This would include denying Him to please a wife or husband. Christ had spoken on all these things, but Christ had not spoken on what a Christian was to do in a mixed marriage. (1 Cor. 7:12-15) Therefore, by “bondage” Paul could not have meant that the Lord now revealed through him, what He had not revealed in the personal ministry, that a believer was not to give up Christ, not to deny Christ, because such a denial was demanded by the unbeliever. Christ had already legislated that no believer should give Him up for anyone or anything. This was not a new revelation given through Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:15.

Third, the believer is not under bondage “*in such cases.*” (7:15) The believer is under bondage if it is not such a case, for this expression qualifies when the believer is not under bondage. Therefore, if “bondage” means not under “bondage” to give up Christ if the unbeliever leaves, it means that one is under bondage to give up Christ if the unbeliever does not leave!

Fourth, I would have to have strong evidence to prove that Paul even discussed the question whether Christ bound the marriage bond so tight that a Christian might be under obligation to give up Christ for the spouse. Do you think the Corinthians thought that perhaps this was what Christ permitted them to do, and therefore asked Paul was it right, was it scriptural, was it sanctioned by Christ, for a believer to give up Christ in order to remain with the unbeliever? Floyd himself said:

“It cannot even for a moment be considered as an alternative.”
(SS, 37)

Fifth, there is no proof that the deserter confronted the believer with the alternative of giving up Christ or giving up the marriage. To assume this is to assume that the only reason an unbeliever broke up a marriage was because of the faith of the spouse. Pagans dissolved marriages for many different reasons.

Does the Unbeliever Leave Because the Spouse Is a Believer?

Since these brethren have no scriptural evidence to refute the fact that Paul, *not the Lord*, spoke on the mixed marriages, they resort to a lot of unprovable assumptions, or to assumptions which if true do not change the fact that Christ legislated for two Christians and Paul legislated on the mixed marriage. One such explanation is that: “The pagan wishes to depart because he is an unbeliever and his partner is a Christian.” (Floyd, SS, 37) Answer: *First*, Paul addresses no word to the unbeliever.

Second, Paul gave no reason *why* the unbeliever left. Paul spoke of the fact of it, not the reason for it. He mentioned the unbeliever leaving, because he had already said the believer was not to leave, and he now instructed the believer about his situation if the unbeliever left. Pagans dissolved marriages for a wide variety of reasons. R. L. Roberts mentioned the fact that in Corinth husbands dismissed wives, wives deserted husbands, and that divorces took place in an “easy and frivolous way.” (114-115) Roman law and custom not only granted to each party the right to take the initiative in divorce, but marriage between slaves had no legal standing and permanence in so far as law was concerned and there were slaves in the church in Corinth (7:21), a marriage between a slave and a freedman (one who had been a slave) “had a low legal standing,” and the permanency “of marriage unions was exceedingly uncertain.” (Lenski, 287-288) Jews also divorced for the slightest of reasons. (287; “every cause,” Matt. 19:3-8) *If differences in faith were the only grounds on which unbelievers dissolved marriages, why would unbelievers leave unbelievers on so many different grounds? If unbelievers dissolved marriages for various reasons, what right has one to assume that the reason an unbeliever left a believer was because of the difference in faith? Were all marriages in the pagan world permanent except*

where a difference of faith arose? Did Jews divorce only those who were of a different faith? Paul did not say why the unbeliever was not content to dwell and why, therefore, he left. Paul did not, so why should these brethren legislate that it must be because of the believer's faith? It is true Paul mentioned the *unbeliever*, but not to tell why he left. He had already said the believer was not to depart (7:12-13), but it was also important for him to inform the believer of the believer's status if the unbeliever took the initiative and departed. He did inform the believer, i.e., the believer was not under bondage in such a case.

Third, if the only reason an unbeliever would leave a believer was because of the believer's faith, would not the only reason an unbeliever be content to dwell with the believer be because of the believer's faith? Does this mean that unbelievers would not stay with unbelievers because unbelievers were not believers! Were there no permanent unions between believers and unbelievers? Were there no unbelievers who left for some reasons other than the difference in faith? If so, why make an argument on the assumption that the unbeliever left because the spouse was a believer?

Fourth, if the reason an unbeliever left a believer was because of the difference in faith, *can anyone explain why a believer left a believer in 7:11?* If the unbeliever departed because of his unbelief, did the believer leave the believer because of his faith? If one believer had been willing to become an unbeliever would the believer have left anyhow? (7:11) Is it not absurd to argue that the only reason an unbeliever would leave would be because of the difference in faith? Once one recognizes this absurdity, they cannot argue that the believer in 7:15 was given the alternative of "renounce the faith or renounce the marriage." The believer deserted by the believer was still under bondage (7:11), but the believer in 7:15 was not under bondage.

Fifth, if the believer is not under bondage to give up faith in Christ in order to keep the unbeliever, but is free to let the unbeliever go, is not the believer bound to give up the faith for the unbeliever if the unbeliever does not depart? It is only if the unbeliever departs, only *in such cases*, that the believer is not under bondage. The bondage from which the believer is free in such cases is the very one the believer is not free from when it is not such a case.

Sixth, the issues in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 are not whether they

must choose between leaving Christ and leaving the mate, but whether you are to leave the mate and what your situation is if your unbelieving mate leaves you.

Since it is contrary to the fact to assume the only reason an unbeliever would dissolve a marriage was because of a difference in faith, no one has any ground for assuming that the bondage Paul referred to in 1 Corinthians 7:15 was a bondage to a human being which, if it existed, entailed renunciation of Christ. Therefore, Paul must have had in mind some other type of bondage. He must have had in mind a bondage one is not in regardless of why the unbeliever left. It is a bondage one is not in if the unbeliever leaves, but is in if the unbeliever does not leave; and it is unrelated to why the unbeliever left. They type of bondage of which Paul spoke was not changed regardless of whether the unbeliever left because the spouse burnt the toast or the house, or because the unbeliever saw a prettier face, or had tired of the responsibilities of marriage, or wanted to become a celibate, etc. The argument of these brethren on the type of bondage collapses, and we are left with the conclusion that the only bondage the believer had been in with relationship to the unbeliever was the marriage bondage. This bond was the only reason the believer dwelt with the unbeliever in the first place.

Only Ground for Separation?

“Separation is tolerated only if the unbeliever forces a choice between the marriage and Christian faith.” (Floyd, *SS*, 38) *First*, this is Floyd’s legislation, not Paul’s. I recognize the authority of Paul.

Second, Floyd’s position teaches that if the unbeliever leaves for any other reason the Christian must live with the unbeliever. “Separation is tolerated only if the unbeliever forces a choice between the marriage and Christian faith,” therefore the Christian must dwell with the unbeliever even if the Christian cannot find him, or finds him and the unbeliever will not dwell with the Christian. Will someone inform us how the deserted Christian can force the deserter to live with the Christian? If the unbeliever disappears, does the believer dwell with the unbeliever by also disappearing?

Third, Floyd’s position contradicts the fact that Christ tolerated a believer separating from a believer. (7:11) It would be

possible for the believer to bring more pressures on the believer, to “make” the believer remain, than a believer could put on an unbeliever.

Not Blameworthy?

Does “bondage” mean that the believer is not blameworthy if the unbeliever leaves? Answer: *First*, Paul already made the believer’s dwelling with the unbeliever contingent on whether the unbeliever was content to dwell. (7:12-13)

Second, Paul said the believer in 7:15 was “not under bondage in such cases.” He did not say, was “not blameworthy in such cases.” If we rewrite the Bible, as such explanations do, we can make anything mean whatever we want it to mean.

Context Silent about Remarriage?

Roberts said, “the verse is silent concerning remarriage.” Answer: *First*, the context discusses marriage (7:2,8-9), divorce and remarriage which is forbidden in 7:10-11, the validity of the marriage bond to the unbeliever (7:12-13), the situation of the believer deserted by the unbeliever (7:15), and remarriage after death. (7:39) The surviving partner is free.

Second, the only bondage discussed in 7:12-15 was the marriage bondage, and this is the bondage the believer is under if the unbeliever is content to dwell with him. Divorce and remarriage are considered in 7:11 but remarriage is forbidden. In 7:15 the believer is left free, i.e., not under bondage. “Before the divorce they were in bondage—to the marriage. After the divorce they were not in bondage—to the marriage. If, after the divorce, they were still in bondage, what were they in bondage to?” (*Duty*, 100)

Third, all the arguments which try to prove that the deserted believer in 7:15 is under bondage to the marriage are based on the false assumption that Christ’s legislation during His personal ministry (1 Cor. 7:10-11; Matt. 19:9) bound mixed marriages also. Paul denied it, and said, “I, *not the Lord*.”

Historical Context against Remarriage?

The historical context allows for “only a minimum of change” in 7:15, because it is “good” to be unmarried (7:8), the married might be apart for a season (7:5), it is best to remain unmarried

(7:35) due to “the distress” (7:26) and “the shortened time.” (7:29) (Roberts, 128) Answer: *First*, Roberts quoted Grosheide that marriage is *more* than a “good” — “i.e., commendable, to be pursued under certain circumstances only.” (114)

Second, in spite of the distress Paul authorized marriage (7:1-7,8,27-28) and remarriage. (7:39)

Third, Paul said desertion by the unbeliever so changed the believer’s situation that the believer was free, and since free this left the believer with the right to remarry if the believer so desired.

Not Be Left to Mere Implication

“If the matter of contracting a new marriage had been the subject of inquiry, we believe that Paul would have made a full response and not have left the matter to be decided on mere implication.” (Roberts, 128) Answer: *First*, the first issue was not whether one married to an unbeliever could remarry, but whether one was actually married to an unbeliever. Paul showed such a marriage is valid. However, he just as clearly said if the unbeliever departed the believer was “not under bondage.” Such a believer is free from bondage, and if free can remarry. (7:8,28,39) The marriage bondage was the only reason the believer was ever to dwell with the unbeliever. (7:12-13)

Second, Paul expressly said the Lord said the believer deserted by the believer was not free (7:11), and he just as clearly said that the Lord’s legislation did not cover mixed marriages. (7:12) Therefore, no one should interpret 7:15 so as to make it fit 7:11 and Matthew 19:9.

Third, there is nothing wrong with a clear implication. However, it is more than an implication for if one is not in bondage one is free. The Bible leaves the question of suicide to an implication from the law of love which forbids one to kill others or one’s self for this is to work harm. (Rom. 13:8-10)

Separation Only?

Godet thought that 1 Corinthians 7:15 authorized separation, but from the passage one could not tell whether remarriage was sanctioned. Answer: *First*, Paul said the believer was to dwell with the unbeliever, if the unbeliever was content. (7:12-13) One was under bondage to this unbeliever only because of the

marriage bond. One could not be under bondage to make it impossible for the unbeliever to leave. The only bondage involved, the marriage, was abolished if the unbeliever deserted. (7:15)

Second, Godet himself said: "In any case, in application to our present circumstances, it must not be forgotten that separation between a Christian and a heathen spouse is not subject to the same conditions as separation between two Christian spouses. For the latter, the rule had been given, and that by the Lord himself, verses 10,11." (350) This being the case, the difference brought out in 7:15 is the dissolution of the marriage bond with freedom to remarry. *There is no other difference between the two deserted ones.* No one has the right to bind Christ's law (7:10-11 and Matt. 19:9) on the case for which Paul, not Christ, legislated. (7:12)

The Believer Is in Bondage

If these brethren are right, the believer in 1 Corinthians 7:15 is still in bondage; in fact, even a greater bondage than when the unbeliever dwelt with her.

First, she is bound to but not free to live with the departed mate.

Second, she is in bondage to burn, for she cannot marry, and there is no indication that the deserter will ever be reconciled. (7:9)

Third, her body is in bondage to the unbeliever who can come back and claim his due at any time. (7:3-4) She cannot defraud him if he returns. (7:5)

Fourth, she has the extra bondage of providing for herself and her children.

Fifth, if it be replied that the believer deserted by the believer is in such bondage, the sufficient reply is: Christ said this believer was in bondage, although the possibility of reconciliation is mentioned. (7:11) However, Paul said the believer in 7:15 is not under bondage. We have no right to bind this deserted believer. But these brethren declare this believer is still bound in a slavery which surpasses ordinary slavery.

Not Bound by 1 Corinthians 7:11

Steve C. Singleton considered the three alternatives concerning the word "bondage." "(1) *deo* and *doulou* are synonymous. Therefore Paul says in verse 15 the opposite of what he says in

verse 39 and Romans 7:2. If two are 'bound' in the one case, then they are as surely 'not bound' in the other. (2) *Deo* and *doulou* are not synonymous. Therefore, the choice of the two different words is significant to the meaning of the passage. Since Paul uses a different word when he says, 'not bound,' he does not mean the exact opposite of the 'bound' in verse 30. So, *ou dedoulotai* must mean something different than a complete dissolution of the marriage. (3) *Deo* and *doulou* are not synonymous. However, the significance of *doulou* still indicates that the believer is free to remarry." (*Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible*, pp. 33-34)

He takes the third position, and then compares 7:10-11 with 7:12-15 and shows wherein they are parallel and wherein they are different. What Paul tells each to do, if the partner leaves, differs. To the two believers Paul says for them to remain unmarried or be reconciled, but of the believer deserted by the unbeliever, Paul said the believer was not in bondage in such a case. ". . . the prohibition of verse 11 is replaced by the permission of verse 15. This second difference is all the more significant because of the parallelism of the verses.

"This appears to be the 'bondage' of verse 15; the prohibition of remarriage which Paul enjoins to the Christian couples in verse 11. Paul says, 'When two Christians divorce, the Lord's own command requires (brings them under bondage) them to remain single or be reconciled. But when an unbeliever divorces a believer because of antagonism to the faith, I as an apostle do NOT require (bring under bondage) this of the believer in such a case. I will not enslave you by prohibiting remarriage in such cases.' " (36) As I have pointed out elsewhere, Paul does not limit the reason the unbeliever departs to one reason, i.e., antagonism to the faith. He did not say why the unbeliever departed.

If the same instruction applies to both, "Paul could have made this whole issue moot by lumping all marriages together in verses 10-11. If he had felt it necessary to avoid confusion, he could have said in verse 11, 'And this is binding even in marriages in which only one is a believer.' But Paul groups the mixed marriages in a separate class. He distinguished the classes in four different ways: (1) Different paragraphs: verses 10-11; verses 12-16. (I would say different categories of marriage. J.D.B.) (2) Different authority. . . . (3) Different requirements if divorce occurs: 'remain unmarried or be reconciled' (in contrast with, J.D.B.) 'not under bondage.' (4) Additional distinction: 'in such cases.' "

(36-37) Paul made it clear that he was dealing with different classes when he said "the rest." (7:12)

This position comes out at the same conclusion, i.e., you are free to remarry. Why did Christ and Paul say that in 7:11 they were to remain unmarried or be reconciled? For the simple reason they were still married in God's sight. The deserted believer in 7:15 is free from the requirement of 7:11 because this believer is free from the marriage bond which had bound him to the unbeliever.

In Such Cases

When are the believers "not under bondage"? "In such cases." (7:15) The word "cases" is not in the original, but is implied for "in such" is plural. "In such cases" means such a case, or thing, the one alluded to, such like, this kind or sort, etc. (1 Cor. 5:1; 7:15; 7:38; 11:16; 15:48; 16:16,18; 2 Cor. 2:6-7; 12:2,3,5) The believer deserted by the unbeliever is not under bondage in such cases. (7:15) It is obvious that *when it is not such a case, the believer is in bondage and must dwell in the marriage bond with the unbeliever.* (7:12-13) When it is such a case the believer is free from the marriage bondage. This is in striking contrast with 7:10-11 where that believer is left in the marriage bond. Charles Hodge said of 7:15: "But the one part of the verse should be allowed to explain the other. An obligation which is said to exist in one case, Paul denies exists in another. If the unbelieving is willing to remain, the believer is bound by the marriage contract; but if she be unwilling, he is not bound." (119)

If someone argues that Paul did not say the believer was bound by the marriage bond if the unbeliever did not depart, I ask: What else bound the believer to the unbeliever? Why was the believer to dwell with the unbeliever? Because they had an arrangement to shack up together? No, but because they were married. Paul said the marriage to the unbeliever was valid, it was binding, and "dwell" unavoidably involves the marriage bond unless one maintains that Paul was instructing them to dwell in adultery. Paul did not sanction sexual intercourse outside of marriage. ". . . because of fornications, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband." (7:2) There is no bondage which binds a believer to dwell with an unbeliever to whom the believer is not married. "Not under bondage in such cases" refers to a bondage which previously existed

and the only one that did exist was the marriage bond which included the right of sexual intercourse. (7:3-5) “. . . the abandoned one was at liberty from what had up to this time bound her. And what could that possibly be in such a case, but that marriage bond by which she had been bound to the deserting partner.” (Jennings, 23)

The Reverse Not True?

Paul said if a brother or sister is deserted by the unbelieving spouse, the believer is not under bondage in such cases but this does not mean either is under bondage if not deserted. Answer: *First*, why did Paul add “in such cases”? However, this would have been implied even if not expressly stated for if the unbeliever departs the believer is not under bondage. The situation when the believer is not under bondage is the one where the unbeliever departed. The fact that you are not under bondage, if they leave, necessarily implies you are if they do not leave. *What bondage are they free from if the unbeliever leaves?* Surely Paul is not saying you are not under bondage if they stay and not under bondage if they leave. There was a bondage from which the believer was not free if the unbeliever did not desert, i.e., the marriage bondage which included the bondage of the body. (1 Cor. 7:4)

Second, if the unbeliever left it would be obvious to the believer that this departure did not enslave the Christian to live with the departed.

Third, it has been suggested that Paul assures the believer that such a desertion has not put you under bondage or made a slave of you. What slavery could the act of departure bring the believer under concerning which Paul assured them that departure did not bring this slavery? Was Paul saying you were not under bondage to support yourself because the departed must pay alimony? Was he assuring them that desertion did not bind them to live with the deserter? How could it? Departure could not *bring them under bondage* to the unbeliever. They were under bondage previous to the departure due to the fact the believer was married to the unbeliever. The Christian was bound to dwell with the unbeliever if the unbeliever was content to dwell. (7:12)

Fourth, did Paul say you are not under bondage to have marital relations with the deserter? He does not have the right to your body. Obviously the believer cannot have such relations with the

departed. However, if the believer is not freed from the marriage bond by the desertion, the unbeliever still has this power over the believer's body. (7:4) The unbeliever had this power before departure, or divorce, and he has this power afterward if the marriage bond is still binding. The power lasts as long as the marriage lasts. Therefore, the unbeliever could come back at any time and the believer would have to be reconciled to the unbeliever. The right is abolished only if the marriage bond has actually been destroyed and the two are no longer married.

Fifth, the perfect tense does have its place in this passage. As Lenski observed, it reaches back and says that at the moment the unbeliever entered the state of "departeth" the believer was no longer in bondage. From that time on the state of bondage did not exist, *but before that time bondage did exist.*

This Kind of Matter?

Godet argued that "in such cases" "might signify, in such circumstances (the refusal of the heathen spouse). But the plural leads more naturally to the sense, *in such things, in this kind of matters.* The apostle is no doubt thinking of the transient element in earthly relations in general, when compared with the eternal interests which alone can bind the believer absolutely. He has probably already in view the other analogous relations with which he proceeds to deal in this connection with verse 17." (349) Answer: *First*, if this is the meaning it still includes the marriage bond and this believer is free from it.

Second, Godet recognized that Christ's law did not bind those for whom Paul legislated. (7:10-11,12-15)

Third, however, I think Godet is wrong. (a) Paul is discussing the marriage bond, and not a wide variety of matters in the immediate context. (7:10-15) (b) The believer deserted by the unbeliever is still in bondage. (7:11) (c) The marriage bond is the closest tie of a human being which God has bound. (d) Paul is not contrasting earthly human bonds with heavenly bonds. In fact, God joined the believer and unbeliever together. If Paul were discussing transient earthly bonds with heavenly ones, and saying we are not bound in the earthly bonds, no marriage would be binding. Furthermore, the believer in 7:11 who was deserted would be free. Paul discussed the "bondservant" in 7:21-24, and this is transient in the sense it is confined to this earth, but he did not say the believer was free from this slavery. (e) Paul was not

just talking about one case of desertion, but if a brother or sister was deserted by an unbeliever. (7:15) In all such cases of desertion the believers are free. These are sufficient to explain the use of the plural "cases."

Not Under Bondage to Keep the Peace?

"Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart: the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us in peace. For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" (1 Cor. 7:15-16) Some argued that "bondage" does not refer to the marriage bond but to the bondage of the believer to keep the peace if the unbeliever is content to dwell with the believer. If the unbeliever leaves, the believer is no longer under bondage to keep peace with the unbeliever. Answer: *First*, the only reason the believer had the right or obligation to dwell peacefully with the unbeliever was that they were married.

Second, even if "bondage" referred to a bondage to keep the peace, it is still true that Christ's law (Matt. 19:9; 1 Cor. 7:10-11) does not bind the mixed marriage. (7:12-15) Therefore, one has no right to appeal to 7:10-11 to prohibit the believer's remarriage.

Third, this explanation means that Paul in essence said the same thing in 7:12-15 which is said in 7:10-11 (a) Do not break up the marriage. (b) Keep peace in the marriage. (c) If either the believer in 7:11 or the unbeliever in 7:15 leaves, the deserted is not under bondage to keep the peace. (d) Remain unmarried or be reconciled. (7:11) How can "not under bondage" mean remain unmarried or be reconciled? (e) If either deserter commits fornication, the deserted is free.

Fourth, this argument assumes that if the unbeliever leaves *the Christian is free from the peace in which God has called us*. Lenski contradicted this assumption and said: "The perfect tense 'has called' points to the enduring state of the Christian as people who are now living under God's gracious and effective gospel call, a call that is connected with 'peace,' which is not merely the opposite of strife but includes the idea of well-being. The implication is that a deserting spouse shall not destroy this 'peace.'" Are not Christians to remain in the peace in which God has called them regardless of what the unbeliever does?

Fifth, if the deserted believer is not under bondage to keep the

peace, this means that the believer is free to disturb the peace by a "fight" if he so desires. In other words, the believer is like the Gentiles: The believer will keep the peace if the unbeliever will do likewise and dwell with the believer. (Compare Matthew 5:46-47) However, if the unbeliever will not keep the peace the believer is not under bondage to keep the peace with the unbeliever. The believer is now free to "fight"!

Sixth, although a Christian should be peaceful in marriage, the peace in which God has called the Christian is not peace in marriage. (a) If it were, the unmarried Christian is not called in peace. (b) If it were, the unbeliever has the power to destroy the peace in which God called Christians. (c) If peace in marriage is the peace in which God has called us, who called two unbelievers who live in peace in marriage? (d) The believer can live in peace with the unbeliever even though God has not called the unbeliever in peace. (e) If it is domestic peace of which Paul speaks, it would be ridiculous for Paul to say that if the unbeliever departs, you are released from the duty of keeping domestic peace in the home. How could this be done, since there is no home left? (f) Is not the believer to conduct himself in a peaceful manner even if the unbeliever leaves? (g) Is the abandoned believer no longer in the peace in which God has called us?

Seventh, Paul was not discussing a peaceful domestic scene, but whether the marriage to an unbeliever was valid.

Eighth, there are unbelievers who do not depart but keep the household disturbed. How would it be possible for the believer to be under bondage to keep the peace in such a situation? It is not always within your power to keep peace. (Rom. 12:18)

Ninth, the slave (7:21-24) was called in peace even though in the midst of bondage. Christians are called in peace whether married, unmarried, or deserted.

Tenth, although I do not accept the idea of a parenthesis, those who think most of verse 15 is in a parentheses cannot relate "in peace" to "bondage." Dummelow thought it ended just before the reference to peace. He concluded it meant: "But God desires that the married should live in peace together, and this may result in the conversion of the heathen." Moffatt makes the following a parenthesis: "Should the unbelieving partner be determined to separate, however, separation let it be; in such cases the Christian brother or sister is not tied to marriage." He then translated as follows: "It is to a life of peace that God has

called you. O wife, how do you know you may not save your husband? O husband, how do you know you may not save your wife?" Moffatt thought that Paul gave three reasons for continuing the marriage: (a) It was valid. (b) Christians are called to peace, and not to separating and breaking marriage ties. (c) It may be they can save the unbelieving mate. He thought "peace is opposed to a break-off, not to domestic friction." (84-85) Floyd also thought that most of verse 15 was in a parenthesis, and that: "The peace to which God has called us is opposed to the casting away of the partner, the violent action of destroying the marriage." (*Your*, 502, 499) If this is a parenthesis, "peace" is not related to the question of bondage in any way, and "not under bondage" cannot mean the believer is no longer under bondage to keep the peace.

Eleventh, Floyd (*Your*, 500), Warren (*Charts*, 218), and Lanier (*Your*, 470-471) assert that 7:15 means the Christian never was under bondage. No one who accepts this position can say that "not under bondage" means one is not under bondage to keep the peace. For this indicates you are under bondage to keep the peace if the unbeliever does not depart.

What Does "God Hath Called Us in Peace" Mean?

Whatever "but God hath called us in peace" means it does not affect my argument on 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 for it is still certain that Christ spoke on the marriage of two Christians and not on mixed marriages, nor marriages in the world. Therefore, one has no right to bind these marriages by the restriction of Matthew 19:9. However, let us deal with the meaning of being called in peace.

Vincent said that "in peace" does not refer to the peace to which God calls us but "the sphere or element in the divine calling." Meyers thought it "is not to what God has called us . . . but in what ethical form God's call has taken place. He has so called us, namely, to the Messiah's kingdom that He therewith caused peace to be proclaimed to us in respect of our relation to others." Robertson and Plummer said: " 'It is in an atmosphere of peace that God has called you.' This is ambiguous. With what is the 'peace' opposed? If to *bondage*, which seems natural, then the meaning will be that to feel bound to remain with a heathen partner, who objects to your remaining, would violate the peace in which you were called to be a Christian.

“If ‘peace’ is opposed to *separation*, then the meaning will be that you ought to do your utmost to avoid divorce. The former is probably right.” It is obvious one could not be in bondage to remain with an unbeliever who departs. There is certainly a contrast somewhere, for Paul introduces the statement with “*but God hath called us in peace.*” If peace is contrasted with bondage, were they in the opposite of peace when in the marriage bondage? If peace is contrasted with not being in bondage, is not the believer still called in peace even though the unbeliever leaves? *Christians were called in peace whether the unbeliever stayed or departed.* The fact that God called us in peace is not dependent on the action or lack of action of the unbeliever. It does not even depend on whether we are married.

What does being called in peace have to do with Paul’s discussion? Commentators differ, but some may not be as widely divergent as they seem to be at first glance.

First, Archibald T. Robertson in his *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, said: “Is not under bondage . . . Perfect passive indicative of *douloo*, to enslave, has been enslaved, does not remain a slave. The believing husband or wife is not at liberty to separate, unless the disbeliever or pagan insists on it. Willful desertion of the unbeliever sets the other free, a case not contemplated in Christ’s words in Matthew 5:32; 19:9. Luther argues that the Christian partner, thus released, may marry again. But that is by no means clear, unless the unbeliever marries first.” Robertson is wrong in binding Matthew 19:9 on 1 Corinthians 7:15. He contradicts himself, and Paul, when after saying Christ had not dealt with such a case, he claims that the deserted believer is in bondage unless the deserter commits fornication.

Robertson then comments on “called us in peace. . . . Perfect active indicative of *kaleo*, permanent call in the sphere or atmosphere of peace. He does not desire enslavement in the marriage relation between the believer and the unbeliever.” Robertson is right in viewing this as a permanent call. The fact we have been called in peace means that this fact manifests itself whether the unbeliever decides to remain or to depart.

In commenting on verse 16, Robertson said: “But what does Paul mean? Is he giving an argument *against* the believer accepting divorce or in *favor* of doing so? The syntax allows either interpretation with *ei* (*if*) after *oidas*. Is the idea in *ei* (*if*) *hope* of

saving the other or *fear* of not saving and hence peril in continuing the slavery of such a bondage? The latter idea probably suits the context best and is adopted by most commentators. And yet one hesitates to interpret Paul as *advocating* divorce unless strongly insisted on by the unbeliever. There is no problem at all unless the unbeliever makes it." (128-129) It is clear Robertson recognizes that the believer is enslaved, or in bondage, in the bond of marriage if the unbeliever desires to continue the marriage. However, it should also be clear that Paul is not *advocating* divorce, for he said the believer was not to depart. However, there is a vast difference between advocating separation and saying that the believer should accept without disturbance the separation initiated by the unbeliever.

Second, Alford thought it meant one should let the unbeliever depart rather than endanger the peace of the household and of the spirit "which is part of the calling of a Christian." (II, 525) But the household is dissolved by the unbeliever.

Third, Bloomfield thought "but God hath called us in peace" limited the liberty of the believer to let the unbeliever go, "lest it should run into license." Therefore, it meant the believer was to be peaceful and not furnish the unbeliever any cause for departing. However, the statement about letting him depart is made concerning the time when the unbeliever departs, and not speaking of some time prior to this. Furthermore, Paul had already limited the Christian's action by saying dwell with the unbeliever (7:12), and by saying the Christian was not under bondage *only* in such a case. (7:15)

Fourth, Hodge thought that since God called us in peace, "the gospel was not designed to break up families, therefore the separation should be avoided if possible." (119)

Fifth, Jamieson thought the believer was to let the unbeliever go rather than by preventing it enter a state "of continual discord." However, there would be no way for the believer to keep the unbeliever from leaving.

Sixth, Morris thought that: "But God hath called us to peace probably refers to the whole of the treatment of mixed marriages, and not simply to the last clause. Paul's point is that the believer is called by God into a state where peace in the widest sense is his concern. In this whole matter of mixed marriages the line should be followed which conduces to peace. In some cases it will mean living with the heathen partner, in some cases it will mean ac-

cepting the heathen partner's decision that the marriage is at an end. But the underlying concern for peace is the same in both cases." (111)

Seventh, Kelcy thought it meant one should accept in peace the unbeliever's decision to depart, instead of trying to maintain a union "with an unbeliever who objects to such" and which would result in "the very opposite of peace." Paul argued that the possibility of converting the unbeliever "is too uncertain and that the certain strain is not justified by such uncertain results." (*Corinthians*, 32-33; Goudge, 5-7) Of course, if the unbeliever departs, there is nothing the believer can do to maintain the union.

Eighth, "The Christian is obligated to maintain peace with the unbelieving spouse even if this means allowing the unbeliever to depart without argument." (Lanier, *Your*, 489)

Ninth, "*But God hath called us in peace*" certainly indicates a contrast. However, this does not mean that to accept the unbeliever's departure is contrary to the peace in which we are called. We are called in peace regardless of whether the unbeliever dwells or departs. The peaceful nature of our calling depends on the fact that God called us, and not on what the unbeliever does.

All Christians are called in peace, although they may be in such diverse situations as being circumcised or uncircumcised (7:18), "bondservants" (7:21), "free" (7:22), single, married, widowed, etc. Although they continued to abide in the callings wherein they were called (7:20,24), they were all called in peace. (7:15)

The *unbeliever has not been called in peace*, and the unbeliever who departs is not characterized by dwelling, much less by a peaceful dwelling, with the believer. He departs and breaks up the marriage. *But*, in contrast with the unpeaceful attitude and action of the unbeliever, the Christian is called in peace. Therefore, his actions are characterized by the nature of his calling. He follows the peaceful course, in so far as it depends on him, in dwelling with the unbeliever if the unbeliever is willing. Furthermore, he will not create a fight and disturb the peace over the unbeliever's leaving. In addition to this the believer will try to keep the departure of the unbeliever from disturbing his inward peace and will not fret himself, therefore, by worrying whether he could have converted the unbeliever if he had not departed. He does not know he could have won the unbeliever.

(7:16) I believe the peace in which we are called includes all the things just mentioned, but I doubt that these are the basic contrasts introduced by “but.”

The contrast is not between two scriptural states of the deserted believer—one in peace and one not in peace, or one in peace and the other in bondage. The contrast is between *us* and *them*. In verse 15 Paul is talking about the unbeliever who departs from a believer. “But God hath called us (margin, some manuscripts have *you*) in peace.” As much as it is within our power (Rom. 12:18) we are to *keep peace with others*. If the unbeliever is content to dwell with the believer, the believer does not depart. Content means “ ‘Agrees in being content.’ The compound verb (Rom. 1:32) indicates mutual consent, implying that more than one person is satisfied (Acts 22:20); often with a dative of the thing in which agreement is found (Lk. 11:48; Acts 8:1; 2 Mac. 11:24).” (Robertson and Plummer) If the unbeliever is discontented and departs, our relationship to peace is not changed. We are still the ones who are called in peace. The unbeliever has not been called in peace and his actions show it. He is not acting out of character, so to speak, with those who are not called in peace when he breaks up the marriage. However, his departure does not change our relationship and obligation to the peace in which we are called. We continue to operate in this sphere of peace in accepting either decision (to dwell or to depart) of the unbeliever. But the source of the separation is not in us.

There is no way the believer can force the unbeliever to dwell with him. However, three things should be recognized by the deserted believer. (a) The believer is not under bondage. (7:15) (b) The believer is to accept the departure in harmony with the sphere of peace in which Christians are called. (c) The Christian must not torture, or fret himself with a sense of guilt or reproach because the believer does not know that the unbeliever could have been converted if he had not departed. (7:16)

How Knowest Thou?

“For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?” (7:16) The meaning given to this by commentators is tied in with their interpretation of the meaning of “peace” in 7:15. Plummer and Robertson wrote: “As in verse 15, the case of the heathen husband desiring to divorce his Christian

wife is uppermost, although the other case is also considered. And this verse is as ambiguous as the concluding part of verse 15. Either, 'Do not contend against the divorce on the ground that, if you remain, you may convert your heathen partner; for how do you know that you will do that?' Or (going back to . . . 13,14, and treating 15 as a rare exception to the almost universal rule), 'Avoid divorce, for it is possible—you never know—that you will convert your heathen partner.' " To this, my reply is: *First*, with the attitude of the pagans toward marriage, how does one know that it was a rare thing for an unbeliever to depart? *Second*, unless one disconnects verse 15 from verse 16, verse 16 cannot be a reason Paul gives to the believer as to why they should prevent the departure of an unbeliever who has already departed. Paul said if he departs, let him go. *Third*, Robertson and Plummer thought that the first interpretation "is probably right."

J. Massie thought that the "certainty of disturbance with an unwilling consort must not be set aside for the sake of the problematical chance of converting that consort." The argument that part of verse 15 is a parenthesis, and the reference to conversion is an argument by Paul for staying with the unbeliever, cuts the reference to being called in peace from its relationship to verse 15 of which it is a part. (180-181) Paul had already said the believer was to accept the separation, if separation is what the unbeliever wants, so why cannot Paul remind the believers we are called in peace and that they ought not to torture themselves with the idea they could have converted the spouse if the spouse had not left. Paul headed off such worry by saying they could not know that this could have been accomplished.

Paul introduced verse 16 with the word "for." Ellicott said that Paul "declares that the remote contingency of the unbeliever's conversion is too vague a matter for which to risk the peace which is so essential an element in the Christian life." Lenski said: "This explanation (*gar*) is directed against the one point that might be urged by a deserted Christian's conscience against peacefully accepting such desertion, namely the thought of thus losing all opportunity of saving the unbelieving spouse." Paul asked them "How knowest thou?" that this could be done? "The wife and the husband will have to answer: 'I have no way of knowing.' And Paul's implied reply is: 'Then dismiss the matter.'" (296-297) R. L. Roberts concluded with Stanley that Paul's statements in verses 15 and 16 are not designed "to urge a union,

but to tolerate a separation.” (131) I would put it this way: Peacefully to accept the decision and departure of the unbeliever without self-accusation because the unbeliever had not been converted. Deaver said: “The believer does not know that he (or she) will be able to save the unbelieving companion.” (*Your*, 445)

In 7:12-15 Paul stated both alternatives and what they should do in either case. *First*, the marriage is accepted by God and they should remain in it if the unbeliever is content to dwell in the union. *Second*, on the other hand if the unbeliever departs they are: (a) not under bondage, (b) their acceptance of the departure without a “fight” or inward tumult are in harmony with the sphere of peace into which they had been called, (c) they should not condemn themselves. They had no way of knowing that they could have converted the spouse if the spouse had not left.

Actual Desertions

It is essential to remember that Paul’s instructions cover not just those cases where an unbelieving spouse desired to depart but also those who actually did depart. His instructions cover the believer’s condition not just during the process of desertion but in the time when the desertion or divorce has actually taken place.

What They All Overlook

All explanations which maintain that the marriage bond is not included in the expression “not under bondage” are based on the effort of men to make 1 Corinthians 7:15 fit Matthew 19:9. If “not under bondage” means that the deserted Christian is free to marry, divorce and remarriage for some reason other than fornication is clearly authorized by Paul. However, these brethren decided before they got to 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 that Matthew 19:9 was, and is, universal legislation covering all marriages—two Christians, two unbelievers, and a mixed marriage. Therefore, they are obligated to explain “not under bondage” in some way other than referring to the marriage bond. If it refers to the marriage bond, their universalization of Matthew 19:9 is forever shattered.

However, it is impossible to do away with Paul’s statement that the Lord had spoken on 7:10-11, but not on 7:12-15. Paul legislated on this, for he said “I, *not the Lord*,” and he gave

legislation which differed from that in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11. These brethren forget that regardless of their explanation of “not under bondage,” it is still crystal clear that Paul, not Christ, spoke on mixed marriages. It is still clear that Christ’s legislation in His personal ministry does not bind mixed marriages. Therefore, it is futile to try to bind the believer in 7:15 with the legislation of 7:10-11. One must repudiate Paul’s statements in 7:10-11 and 7:12 if he binds 7:15 by 7:11. Whatever may be the meaning of “not under bondage” this deserted Christian is not bound to the unbeliever until the unbeliever commits fornication. He is free when deserted. Being bound to remain unmarried or be reconciled (7:11) is in direct contrast to not being “under bondage” when deserted by an unbeliever.

Furthermore, no one has the authority to apply Matthew 19:9 (1 Cor. 7:10-11) or 7:12-15 to two unbelievers and their divorce and remarriage. Neither Christ nor Paul did, and we do not have the authority to legislate for those in the world for whom Christ and Paul did not legislate.

Unjust If Unbeliever Can Break up the Marriage?

Would it not be unjust if the unbeliever has the power to break up the believer’s marriage? Answer: *First*, the unbeliever can leave, and can remain away the rest of the believer’s life. Would it not be unjust for the unbeliever to be able to do this for this, in fact if not in theory, ends all married life for the believer? Yet the one who raised this question recognized that the unbeliever can leave permanently.

Second, would it not be more unjust if the unbeliever can leave, never to return, and the believer still be bound in the marriage bond and condemned to live a celibate life?

Third, would it not be more unjust if the unbeliever could leave any time he wanted to, but could come back any time he wanted to, and claim the believer’s body in the marriage relationship? (1 Cor. 7:3-5)

Fourth, if one is going to reject a position because it is not strictly just, he should reject the statement of Paul that when one believer deserts another believer that both believers must remain unmarried or be reconciled. (1 Cor. 7:11) What is just about forcing the deserted believer to remain unmarried? The believer who deserts is guilty of fraud against the deserted

believer. "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency." (7:5) It is unjust for the defrauder (the one who does the deserting) to defraud and to expose the deserted believer to Satan's temptations. However, none of these brethren are going to reject the clear statement of Paul ("remain unmarried, or else be reconciled," 7:11) just because it is unjust. Why place the believer, deserted by the unbeliever, under bondage in 7:15, when Paul said this believer was not under bondage, just because you think it would be unjust for the unbeliever to have the power to break up the marriage and the believer not have a similar power to desert the unbeliever and break up the marriage. If one is going to argue on the basis of strict justice one would have to argue that the only just thing is for the believer to be free from the marriage bond in 1 Corinthians 7:15. And this is exactly what Paul says, i.e., the believer is free.

Fifth, why did Christ hold the two believers to a higher law in 7:11 than he did the mixed marriage in 7:15? Even if I have no idea of why, it does not change the fact that 7:11 and 7:15 differ in their instructions. In 7:11 neither is free and in 7:15 the marriage bond is broken. The answer is that the marriage of the two believers is under a higher law (Matt. 19:9) than is the marriage of the believer and the unbeliever. If one does not think it is just for Christ to hold two believers to a higher standard than a mixed marriage, if they do not think it is right for Christ to require more of those who are in His covenant than those who are out of it (Lk. 12:48), they can discuss the matter with Christ and not with me for this is Christ's teaching. I am not the author of this teaching. I accept it for I am in Christ's covenant. I advise others to accept His teaching even though they do not see the justice of it in every instance. These brethren agree with me that we should accept what the Bible teaches and not just that part which measures up to our concept of justice. The issue is: What does the Bible teach? The issue is not: Am I at liberty to twist a passage of scripture in order to make it fit my concept of what is just? No Christian will affirm that it is right for him to force a passage to conform to his idea of justice. It surely is not scriptural for one to insist that we need the divine revelation in order to arrive at the full truth, and then to reject something in the divine revelation because it does not harmonize with our unin-

spired view of justice.

Matthew 19:9: Did not Jesus Say Not to Divorce and Remarry?

Jesus said not to divorce and remarry except for fornication, therefore 1 Corinthians 7:15 cannot mean one is loosed from the marriage bond. Answer: *First*, the word which Jesus used for divorce was *choridzo*: "let not man *put asunder*." (Matt. 19:6) Paul said in 7:10-11 that Jesus said one believer was not to *choridzo* (depart) another believer. However in 7:11 a divorce had taken place for the believer was now "unmarried" (*agamos*) and was to remain unmarried or be reconciled. Since this divorce had not been for fornication, although they were divorced Christ held them to the marriage bond. They were to remain unmarried or be reconciled. (7:11) In striking contrast with this, if the unbeliever *choridzos* (departs) the believer, the believer is free, is not under bondage. The divorce freed the believer from the marriage bond.

The word *choridzo* used both by Paul and by Jesus (Matt. 19:6; 1 Cor. 7:10,15) prove that, contrary to Deaver and Warren, divorce and remarriage are under consideration in 7:10-15 although they are not the only things under consideration.

Second, the people in the world who divorce and remarry for some reason other than adultery do not commit adultery in so doing for the simple reason that the law of divorce and remarriage of Matthew 19:9 does not apply to them. This can be illustrated as follows: (a) The Jew under the old law did not violate Matthew 19:9, and was not committing adultery in remarrying, because he was not under Matthew 19:9. (b) The unbelieving woman who does not marry a Christian does not violate 1 Corinthians 7:39 because 1 Corinthians 7:39 does not cover unbelievers. Matthew 19:9 on divorce and remarriage does not cover unbelievers or mixed marriages. Two unbelievers are under as low a law on divorce and remarriage as people were under before Moses legislated Deuteronomy 24:1-4 for the old covenant and before Christ legislated Matthew 19:9 for the new covenant. Since Moses did not legislate for the non-covenant people, they were left with divorce and remarriage for any cause. However, they did not have the restrictions about giving a writing of divorcement or not returning to the first husband, which Moses bound on Israel. Non-covenant people do not have a higher law than Moses gave to Israel. (Lk. 12:48)

Chapter VII

ADULTERY PRESUMED

Brother J. D. Thomas thought that probably the strongest argument of those who claim that “the *voluntary* departure of an alien spouse” does not justify the remarriage of the Christian, is that *deo* refers to the marriage bond (1 Cor. 7:27,39; Rom. 7:2), but that *douloo* (bondage) in 7:15 refers to some other type of bondage. They also argue that departure (*chorizo*) does not mean divorce but only separation from “bed and board” while the marriage bond continues in force. They also say that if 7:15 refers to the marriage bond it would mean there was some reason for divorce and remarriage other than fornication. This would contradict what Jesus said. (*DR*, 60-63)

Concerning *deo* and *douloo*, which “is the fulcrum of the best argument in our judgment” for the position the deserted believer in 7:15 cannot remarry (68), Thomas said: *First*, that Paul dealt with three categories in discussing marriage. (a) Singles. (7:8-9) (b) Christians married to Christians. (7:10-11) (c) Mixed marriages. (7:12-16) “Note that Paul gives a different instruction to each category.” (66) The interpretation of 7:15 which says the deserted believer cannot marry, that the deserted is still in the marriage bond, “would make the obligation on the Christian spouse deserted by the unbeliever to be EXACTLY THE SAME obligation as that of the Christian spouses of verse 11 who, if separated, must live celibately. In such a case, therefore, there would be no point in having any third category or group to receive marital instruction in this context. Further, the statement, ‘in such a case the brother or sister is not bound’ would make no sense whatever, if they too must remain celibate like the Christians of verse 11. If no third category is to be understood and the case of verses 13-15 is to be considered as the same as that of verses 10 and 11, then we obviously could add the statement ‘the brother or sister who has been departed from is not under bondage in such cases’ to the material in verses 10 and 11. But no one would want to do this, since verses 10 and 11 expressly say that they ‘must remain unmarried’—the exact opposite of ‘not being under bondage.’ ” (69)

“This point, that since Paul speaks to three separate categories and obviously gives separate instructions to each (otherwise it is pointless to divide them into three groups instead of two) has apparently escaped the notice of many students of this passage. It is the key, however, that should make us see that we should seek the *different* advice given to those Christians who have non-Christian spouses. This different instruction is that if their non-Christian spouse voluntarily *departs*, ‘they are not under bondage in such cases.’ ” (68, 76-77) This is the opposite of the instruction in 7:11 which shows that the marriage bond is still binding on the two believers.

Second, Thomas pointed out that *deo and douloo* may not be as much different as some claim and that both could refer to the marriage bond. He noted that there can be a varied use of words. (a) “Married” is used by Paul “to mean both approved and disapproved unions.” (69, Matt. 19:9 and Rom. 7:2-3) (b) “. . . the word ‘holy’ in verse 14 here, as applied to the children of the mixed marriage, does not mean its usual sense of ‘Christian.’ ” (69) (c) “*Douloo* does not always mean *slavery*, as in 1 Corinthians 9:19 . . . it means an obligation or tie that differs from slavery. Likewise Titus 2:3, ‘Bid the older women likewise to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves (*dedoulomenas*) to drink’ indicates an obligation different from literal slavery.

“*Deo* likewise has other meanings than the bond of marriage, as in Revelation 20:2 ‘*bound* him a thousand years’; Acts 21:33, ‘*bound*, with two chains,’ *et cetera.*” (70)

Thomas cited Liddell and Scott who thought that “perhaps” *douloo* was originally derived from *deo* (70), and Thayer who said *most* scholars thought it was derived from the root *deo*. (71) Thayer showed that *douloo* can refer to a general bondage. (71) There were others who thought that it did refer to the marriage bond in 1 Corinthians 7:15. (72-73) Thomas thought it did refer to the marriage bond. (70, 74, 82-83)

Separate or Depart

Thomas said that in 1 Corinthians 7:11 “separation” (*chorizo*) and “divorce” (*aphienai*) are used synonymously. (74) He quoted from R. L. Roberts, Jr. who said that *chorizo* was used four times in 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 and by our Lord when He said “let not

man *put asunder*.” (Matt. 19:6) There are lexicographers who say that it “has almost become a technical term in connection with divorce, as in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,15.” (74-75) Thomas said: “Now, if *chorizo* in our context does mean a real, complete divorce, originated and carried out by the unbeliever, and if the brother or sister is ‘in such cases not under bondage,’ it would seem that they are totally freed from that marriage and can scripturally enter another (except to whatever degree any other passages of scripture might have a bearing).” (75)

Concerning Matthew 19:6, he said: “The putting asunder (*chorizeto*) is actually the opposite of the ‘joining together’ and so clearly means a breaking of the marriage bond itself.

“Thus it would seem that on two counts, *chorizo* and *douloo*, we are speaking in verse 15 of a total separation, and in which case the deserted Christian is no longer ‘under bondage’ and thus is free to remarry, ‘in such cases.’ ” (83)

J. D. Thomas answers in the affirmative his question: “Does the voluntary *departure* of an alien spouse justify remarriage of the Christian?” (60, 64) He agreed with G. C. Brewer, whom he quoted as follows: “If Paul does not mean that the marriage bondage is broken and does not any longer exist, so far as the Christian is concerned, then his language has no meaning at all. To make it mean something else is to destroy his whole point. But someone suggests that he means that the Christian is not bound to live with and to give the marriage privilege to such a departing spouse. That would be a wise statement from an inspired man! Even Christians could live apart, if they so desire. He has already told them to live with these heathen spouses if they can. It would now be absurd to tell them that they are under no obligation to live with those who have deserted them, and refused their companionship. How could they live with such a person? But someone else suggests that he had said in verse 10 that those who depart should remain unmarried, or be reconciled to their mates. Yes, he said that to Christians who might desire to separate. But this is to those who are deserted by heathen partners. And, since they were not able to hold these heathen mates, what would be the sense in telling Christians later to be reconciled to them? The Christian was never other than reconciled. It was the heathen that departed. Did Paul call on these heathen to remain unmarried, or to be reconciled to their Christian companions whom they, because of their religion had

deserted?

“Absurd!” (65) Paul did not stipulate *why* the unbeliever left the believer. He did not say what kept him from being content to dwell with the believer. Brewer and Thomas assumed that the deserter in 7:15 would commit adultery (65, 75-76)

Thomas quoted Vincent’s statement on 7:15 that: “The meaning clearly is that wilful desertion on the part of the unbelieving husband or wife sets the other party free. (This statement was not in italics but had been underscored in the copy J. D. Thomas reproduced, J.D.B.) Such cases are not comprehended in Christ’s words.”

Fourth Category

J. D. Thomas added a fourth category made up of a Christian married to “a Bible-believing member of some present day denomination who respected God’s marriage law” and whom you had no reason to suspect of adultery after he deserted. (77) Jesus by the Spirit spoke to the two Christians (7:10-11), Paul by the Spirit to the mixed marriage (7:12-15), and J. D. Thomas by his own spirit created and spoke to the fourth group. This puts them in the covenant *in so far as marriage* is concerned but outside the covenant *in so far as salvation* is concerned. But they are either in the covenant or out of it. Does J. D. Thomas think this fourth category would qualify as one who was “in the Lord” for the marriage of 1 Corinthians 7:39?

Fifth Category

J. D. Thomas also has a fifth category of marriages, and this category was exempt from Christ’s law on divorce and remarriage. This category was the Jews who had been divorced and remarried while the law of Moses was in force. The law of Christ was not retroactive on them, and they could keep their wives. (*FF*, March 28, 1978, p. 199)

Sixth Category

J.D. Thomas has a sixth category. The Gentiles who married and divorced before Pentecost were under Genesis 2:24. Their divorces were not acceptable, therefore they had to break up their marriages when they obeyed the gospel. The law of Matthew 19:9

was not retroactive, therefore they could not remain in the second marriage even though the first marriage was broken up by fornication.

He Makes Them the Same

After making clear that different instruction is given to the two believers in 7:10-11 than is given to the believer in 7:15 (this believer can remarry; 66-69, 76-77), Thomas in effect teaches that the same instruction is given to both. He states that both are bound by Matthew 19:9 and the reason the believer in 1 Corinthians 7:15 can remarry is that you presume—but you must have some proof (77, 82-83)—the deserter will commit adultery and thereby free the believer. In other words, both deserted partners are to remain unmarried unless one of them commits adultery. And Thomas, I assume, would say that if the believer in 7:11 has proof of adultery by the deserting Christian that this Christian is free to remarry. Therefore, nothing really different has been said to the two cases. He makes them the same for he affirms there is only one ground for divorce and remarriage—fornication. (77) Therefore Christ's legislation covers the mixed marriages and Paul should not have said the Lord gave no legislation on such cases. Thomas said adultery is presumed in 1 Corinthians 7:15 "and Jesus and Paul then teach the same thing"—one ground, not two, for Christ's law on divorce and remarriage applies to all people both in and out of the covenant. (76)

Unnecessary and Impossible

After saying that the difference is that the believer is free to remarry on being deserted by the unbeliever (7:15), and after saying that Paul, not Christ, had legislated on the mixed marriage, Thomas then felt obligated to make Paul's legislation (7:15) fit Christ's legislation. (7:10-11; Matt. 19:9) *First*, this is *unnecessary* for he has already granted that Christ and Paul gave two different legislations on two different categories of marriages. He would not try to harmonize Genesis 2:24 with Christ's legislation which makes provision for remarriage on death (1 Cor. 7:39) and fornication. (Matt. 19:9)

Second, it is impossible to make them fit each other for although these two different legislations do not contradict one

another, (for they do not affirm contradictory things of the same thing,) they are different not identical. It is impossible to make Genesis 2:24 and 1 Corinthians 7:39 and Matthew 19:9 say the same thing, but they do not contradict one another. One deals with sinless people in a deathless world and the other is a different covenant under different conditions.

Desertion Is Not Adultery

The Christian who deserts in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 can commit adultery, and the unbeliever who deserts in 7:15 can refrain from adultery. Furthermore, desertion does not equal adultery or Paul would have assumed that it did in 7:11. Paul said the believer in 7:15 is free on desertion, and Thomas agreed with this, but Thomas also says that the real ground of freedom is adultery. He did this in spite of the fact that he quoted with approval Lenski's statement that the "perfect tense . . . reaches back to the day when the unbelieving spouse entered upon the desertion and states that from that moment onward the believing spouse has not been held bound. From that day onward the fetters of the marriage tie have been broken and remain so, now and indefinitely." (73) If adultery is involved, it must have been instant adultery, immediately as he deserted. But Thomas said: "Of course time is required before such adultery will occur. . . ." (82) How much time? What if the believer married a day or hour too soon? Would it be the same time with each deserter? If a detective was used Thomas said "no doubt" it "would not be long" before evidence was obtained. ". . . a reasonable time." (83) He thought "some circumstantial evidence" is involved even when a spouse is put away scripturally according to Matthew 19:9. (76)

When did Paul say the believer was not under bondage? Thomas agrees this means freedom from the marriage bond. Paul said the believer was free in the event the unbeliever *departs*. Thomas said the believer is free if the unbeliever *departs and commits adultery*. When does Thomas say the believer is free? Not when the unbeliever *departs* (divorces) but when the unbeliever *commits adultery*. Who is right, Paul (when the unbeliever *departs*) or Thomas (when the unbeliever *commits adultery*)? Is the believer *now* (on departure) free in view of a *future* act of adultery?

Additional Objections

First, on the one hand J. D. Thomas says that Paul “merely saves the deserted Christian the time and trouble of obtaining absolute evidence of adultery,” and on the other he says that even putting away a spouse scripturally usually does not involve absolute evidence, but “involves some circumstantial evidence, which is the same thing as making some assumptions.” (76) He also said: “Desertion alone is not grounds for divorce and remarriage. There must be a good basis for assuming adultery.” (82) “. . . may assume adultery in a reasonable time (unless there are good reasons why adultery should not be assumed)” (83) If a denominationalist who affirms faith in the Bible, deserts and moves to “a boarding house across the street where he could be observed daily, and if there were never the slightest reason to suspect adultery, the present writer holds that he has not absolutely ‘departed,’ and that the Christian spouse would therefore have no grounds for remarriage—since adultery could not be truly assumed.” (77) Paul does not speak of the “half gone” (half departed) but Thomas does. Would it be sufficient if you could not observe him nightly, if women also lived in the boarding house, and if you saw him walk out the front door with a woman once? Would it make any difference if he moved a block away? two blocks? Just how should we word 7:15 to make it fit Thomas’ explanation?

Second, on another occasion Thomas said adultery is foreign to the context of 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 (*FF*, June, 1978, p. 374) If so how can 7:15 presume adultery? (*DR*, 82)

Third, since desertion frees the believer why argue that a future act of adultery is that which really frees him? Some brethren deny that adultery committed after the divorce frees this believer. (*Your*, 474) All these brethren believe Matthew 19:9 is universal and covers 1 Corinthians 7:15. Matthew 19:9 places fornication before divorce.

Fourth, why cannot the deserted believer in 7:11 presume adultery? (a) The deserting believer has not shown respect for Christ’s law that they were not to defraud one another (7:2-5), nor the Lord’s command that the believer “depart not” (7:10), so why assume that this same deserter will honor the command not to commit adultery? (b) Thomas wrote that “Paul’s instructions to married Christians (1 Cor. 7:4-5), indicates that difficulty of

living celibate for a long time, for normal people who do not have a special gift of continency.” (76) Why should it be assumed that the deserting Christian is not a normal person without a special gift of continency? (c) Thomas said it is not “unwise or unscriptural to *assume* adultery on the part of the departed unbeliever.” “Jesus *assumed* it (adultery, J.D.B.) on the part of the *Christian spouse unjustly put away* (italics, J.D.B.) when he said, ‘everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress.’ (Matt. 5:32) When put away she is innocent, and in no way could she be an adulteress until she commits the act. So Jesus’ words have to assume that she will do just that. Jesus did not say, ‘if she remarries,’ but he said, ‘makes her an adulteress,’ which statement could not be true except for the assumption that she would remarry or enter some other sexual union.” (76) This argument applies to the unjustly deserted Christian in 7:10-11 as forcibly as it applies to the unjustly deserted Christian in 7:15. Therefore, on Thomas’ logic on Matthew 5:32 and 1 Corinthians the Christian in 7:11 has the right to assume that adultery will be committed as surely as does the believer in 7:15. They were both unjustly put away. And in arguing on Matthew 5:32 Thomas said Jesus assumed an unjustly put away person would commit adultery. Observe that Thomas identified the woman in Matthew 5:32 as a “Christian spouse unjustly put away.”

Fifth, Jesus did not assume that she would commit adultery. He was talking about *an actual case of remarriage*, not an assumed case of remarriage or some other sexual union. This is clear from the last part of the sentence. “. . . maketh her an adulteress”—because she might commit this or that sexual sin outside marriage? NO, but because she married, “*and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery.*” (Matt. 5:32) This no more assumes previous adultery on her part than it assumed previous adultery on the part of the one who married her. It clearly shows that the remarriage involved actual adultery, and that she was not simply *assumed* to be an adulteress. Instead, she was an adulteress for the same reason the man was—they married. It is not on the ground of an *assumption* of marriage, but on the ground of the *fact* of marriage. We know there are divorced women who do not remarry or otherwise sin sexually. We know our Lord would not have been guilty of *ignorance* in assuming that every unjustly put away woman

would commit adultery, nor would He have been guilty of *misrepresentation* and put a cloud over the good name of all women, unjustly divorced by their husbands, who did not remarry. This would have been an unjust assumption and accusation of unjustly treated women who remained unmarried and did not sin otherwise sexually. *Thomas' logic makes the unjustly deserted* in 1 Corinthians 7:11,15 guilty of adultery.

Sixth, what a strange argument for Thomas to make. He said that Jesus assumed that an unjustly put away *Christian* spouse would commit adultery, therefore J. D. Thomas is justified in assuming that an *unbeliever* who unjustly puts away the Christian spouse *will commit* adultery. Is he using a "how much the more so argument"? Is he saying that since an unjustly put away Christian spouse can be assumed to commit adultery after being put away, how much more may we assume that an unbeliever who puts away unjustly his Christian spouse can be assumed to commit adultery? He did not say he was using this type of argument. Also why did Thomas not argue that the Christian in 7:11 who deserted a Christian would commit adultery?

Seventh, why did not Thomas argue that since Jesus assumed that an unjustly put away Christian spouse will commit adultery, we are justified in assuming that the Christian spouse in 7:15 who was unjustly put away by an unbeliever will commit adultery?

Eighth, J. D. Thomas could have spared himself the entire discussion of the existence of three different groups, of the meaning of separate and of bondage, of the difference in the instruction. Instead he could have simply argued that the deserting unbeliever can be assumed to commit adultery and therefore the believer is free. *His major discussions had absolutely nothing to do with his conclusion.* His conclusion was already dictated by his interpretation of Matthew 19:9 which he universalized into the one ground for all divorce and remarriage. All these discussions were absolutely unrelated to his conclusion, a conclusion which he had drawn from Matthew 19:9 before he arrived at 1 Corinthians 7:10-15. He did not need Paul to even mention freedom from bondage in such a case.

Thomas can make the same argument on 7:11 as on 7:15. First Corinthians 7:11 permits remarriage if adultery is committed and 7:15 does the same and both of them do it for the same reason if

he is right, i.e., both are regulated by Matthew 19:9. What a waste of time and effort: To discuss something in detail and then to draw a conclusion which is not based on the discussion of the passage under consideration but on an entirely different passage. And to further confuse matters, he based it on a passage which Paul said did not apply to the case; for Paul said Christ's legislation applied to the case in 7:10-11.

Ninth, Paul did not say: Desertion plus fornication. He said desertion.

Tenth, as Singleton put it: If Paul "had meant that the non-believer's fornication freed the Christian to remarry, would he not have said so? What if there was one non-believer who did not commit fornication after leaving the Christian spouse? If the Christian remarried, assuming that fornication had taken place when it had not, would not Paul be guilty of encouraging the committing of adultery?" (*Divorce*, 20)

Eleventh, Roy Lanier's position is that even if the unbeliever departs and commits adultery the believer is not free to remarry. He contradicts Thomas. In his review of James S. Woodroof's book, Lanier said: "Next, the writer under review thinks the deserted believer may marry another on the ground that the deserting unbeliever will not practice continency after departing from the believer. But, according to the teaching of Jesus, it is not what is done after separation that gives a spouse the right to divorce and remarry, but it is what is done before separation which gives that right." He maintained on the basis of Matthew 5:32 that Paul could not have inferred this for it would have contradicted the teaching of Jesus. (*Your*, 474) (1) In applying Matthew 5:32 to this case, Lanier is doing what Paul did not do. Paul did not appeal to or apply any teaching of Jesus in legislating on the mixed marriage but said the Lord had not taught on this subject. (7:12) Thomas also applied it. (2) Paul did not contradict Jesus for the simple reason that Jesus' teaching did not deal with such marriages. (7:10,12)

Twelfth, Thomas wrote: "Repentance is a must before any sin can be forgiven. It is a change of will which is big enough to bring about a change of conduct. The change of conduct involves restitution of the original status insofar as it is possible. In no way can the penitent sinner keep the fruit of his sin." (80) But Thomas argues that Matthew 5:32 presumes that the unjustly put away believer will commit fornication. He also states that

fornication after divorce frees the spouse who did not commit fornication, and therefore in 7:15 the believer is free. Divorce took place *before* the adultery. (82-83) However, this involves him in the position that the man who unjustly put away his wife, and caused her to commit adultery, can reap the fruit from his unjust act by remarrying as an innocent party *after* the wife commits fornication. And Thomas said it is assumed by Jesus that she would. (Matt. 5:32)

My conclusions are that: (1) J. D. Thomas is right in arguing that different instructions are given by Paul to the mixed marriage than those given by Christ to the two believers. (2) Thomas is right in saying that bondage refers to the marriage bond. (3) Thomas is right that if the unbeliever departs, the Christian is free to remarry. (4) Thomas is wrong in then going back to Matthew 19:9 (which is a summary of the marriage law given by Christ) and forcing into the desertion of the unbeliever the meaning that remarriage on the ground of fornication, and not of desertion, is what Paul is legislating. We should leave it as Christ left it (His legislation applies to believers only) and as Paul left it (his legislation is for a believer in a mixed marriage) and refuse to try to force one into the mold of the other. Furthermore, we should not do what neither Paul nor Christ did, i.e., legislate for the world the conditions on which they divorce and remarry, and on the basis of this human legislation require people to separate before baptism if their marriage does not live up to Matthew 19:9. Thomas was right in his basic arguments and conclusion that if the unbeliever departs the deserted believer is not under bondage, i.e., is free to remarry. He is wrong when he then jumps to a conclusion (adultery is presumed) which is not mentioned by Paul. He jumps to this additional and wrong conclusion because he ignored his own arguments that Matthew 19:9 (1 Cor. 7:10-11) did not cover a mixed marriage; but Paul covered it with instructions which were different from 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 and Matthew 19:9.

Chapter VIII

THE CASE OF HEROD

“For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife; for he had married her. For John said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife.” (Mk. 6:17-18) Does Herod’s case prove that Christ’s law of divorce and remarriage is binding on the world? Answer: *First*, the law of Christ was not in force during Christ’s personal ministry. (Matt. 23:1-3; Col. 2:14-17; Eph. 2:13-19) Therefore, whatever law Herod violated it was not Matthew 19:9.

Second, in a time of easy divorce and remarriage, under the law, it was still possible to have a woman unlawfully.

Third, the Samaritan woman had had “five husbands; but he whom thou now hast is not thy husband.” (John 4:17-18)

Why Unlawful?

Herod’s marriage was unlawful because it was contrary to the law under which he lived, and he lived under Moses’ law. Moses’ law did not prohibit a man putting away his wife, and both remarrying. (Deut. 24:1-4; Matt. 19:3-8) Therefore, it must have been unlawful on some ground other than that they were divorced, for Moses permitted divorced people to remarry even when divorce had not taken place on the ground of fornication. John did not say it was “not lawful for you to have a *divorced woman*.” He did say: “It is not lawful for you *to have thy brother’s wife*.” (Mk. 6:18) Sztanyo argued that it was wrong because they were divorced (*Your*, 575), that this is a case of an unconverted couple living in adultery (578), of their being judged by Christ’s law in Matthew 19:9 (578), and that this case illustrates “the basic principle by which God deals with adultery in all ages, including today.” (577)

Herod had Jewish blood in him (573-574), and claimed to be a Jew although some think it was for political reasons. (574) Was there a law which told a Jew *not to have his brother’s wife*? (Mk. 6:18) Yes. “None of you shall approach to any that are near of kin

to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am Jehovah.” (Lev. 18:6) “Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother’s wife; it is thy brother’s nakedness.” (Lev. 18:16) The exception was that if the brother died, without children, his brother married his wife and raised up seed unto the deceased brother. (Deut. 25:5-10) John the Baptist condemned Herod because he was involved in *incest*. It was not unlawful to marry a woman whose husband was dead, or who had been divorced unless it was a near kinsman. If Herodias had not been Herod’s brother’s wife, and if she had been scripturally divorced, it would not have been unlawful for Herod to have her. Sztanyo’s argument means that if both of them had been scripturally divorced it would have been lawful for Herod to have his brother’s wife.

John the Baptist did not judge Herod’s marriage by Christ’s law in Matthew 19:9. (a) John preached the kingdom was *at* hand, not *in* hand. (Matt. 3:2) (b) John was not in the kingdom, nor were Herod and Herodias. (Matt. 11:11) (c) The law of Moses was still in force. (Matt. 23:1-3; Col. 2:14-17; Heb. 1:3,13) John did not judge Herod by the law of Christ which was not yet in force. He must have judged Herod by the law of Moses. The law of Moses did not prohibit divorced people marrying but it did prohibit incest. Herod was guilty of incest. Because Herod was in an unlawful marriage does not mean that every marriage in the world today is unlawful because these brethren call it unlawful.

Herod Insincere?

Because Herod’s “thin Jewish blood” had been “further diluted in Antipas,” and because it is assumed Herod was not sincere in his profession of Judaism, Sztanyo concluded: “Thus, it seems clear to me that John was dealing with two Gentiles who accepted the Jewish religion out of convenience.” (*Your*, 574) They were not subject to Moses’ law, and John did not apply it to them. (Compare *Your*, 579) Answer: *First*, Christ’s law did not apply to Herod’s case for Christ’s covenant was not yet established. If Moses’ law did not apply, by what law did John judge Herod?

Second, if Herod was hypocritical in his profession of Judaism, how does Sztanyo know it?

Third, is it wrong to judge a man by the standard he professes, even if he is a hypocrite? If it is, how can one judge a hypocritical

Christian by a New Testament standard? How can one judge a person by moral law, if he hypocritically professes faith in the moral law? How can one judge a hypocrite at all, if he hypocritically professes sincerity? A lot of Jews professed to be God's people but were pagan in spirit. (Isa. 1:2-20; Jer. 7:1-26) It was a remnant which was faithful. (Romans, chapters 9, 10, 11) The majority rejected Christ. (John 1:11-12; Rom. 11:5,20) Hypocrisy was rampant. (Matt. 15:1-9; Mk. 7:6) Was it wrong for John the Baptist to judge them by the law of Moses and rebuke the people for their hypocrisy? (Matt. 3:7-9) There were Jewish leaders who used Judaism for political purposes and other wrong purposes. Although not every one of them was a hypocrite, as a group the Pharisees were hypocrites. Since their profession of Judaism was hypocritical, what right did Jesus have to apply the law of Moses unto them, and utter the seven woes including the one which said they had left undone the weightier matters of the law? They said and did not. (Matt. 23:1-3,23) However, Christ judged them by the very law they professed hypocritically (Mk. 7:6), and which they made void by their traditions. (Matt. 15:1-9) Paul judged hypocrites among the Jews by the law which he said they were under. (Rom. 3:10-18, 19) In one case the high priesthood was bought in the time of the Roman occupation of Palestine. Did this mean this high priest could not be judged by the law of Moses? Who can say that Herod was any less hypocritical toward moral law than toward the entire law of Moses? Did this mean that Herod could not be judged at all because of his hypocrisy? If he was under Christ's law and took a hypocritical attitude toward it, could he be judged by Christ's law?

Herod a Gentile Alien Judged by Christ's Law?

Sztanyo is so determined to judge Herod by Christ's law that he does not grasp the reason John condemned him—he had his brother's wife—and therefore he appeals to what he calls "the historical background of our text," and concludes that John did not attempt "to bind Jewish law on them." (*Your*, 574) ". . . Herod and Herodias were historically identified as Gentiles. Again, this is significant." (580) Answer: *First*, on the basis of his assumptions, which he took from outside the Bible, he ignores the fact that John did bind Jewish law on them and said that it

was wrong for Herod to have his brother's wife. (Mk. 6:18; Lev. 18:6,16) When the Bible gives the reason, what right have we to reject it and think up one of our own in order to make the Bible fit our speculations? Sztanyo said it was wrong for Herod to have a divorced woman, and John said it was wrong to have his brother's wife. It should not be hard to determine who is right about Herod's case.

Second, Sztanyo said John was not judging Herod by the law of Moses (474, 475, 476), but by "exactly the same *principle* set forth by the Christ Himself during His earthly ministry (Matt. 5:32; 19:9)." (578) This would mean that although the law of Christ was not in force during the personal ministry, it was binding on Gentiles—Sztanyo identifies Herod as a Gentile. (574, 580) This is contrary to the fact that the law of Moses had not been done away, and the Gentiles were not under Christ's law but the truth which they had even without divine revelation. (Rom. 1:18-2:15) The law of Moses did not pass away a little at a time, for none passed until all passed. (Matt. 5:17-18) In the personal ministry, the law of Moses was still in force. (Matt. 8:4; 23:1-3; Heb. 10:9; Rom. 7:1-6)

Third, Sztanyo knows the law of Moses was in force when John spoke to Herod, and he knows that divorce and remarriage for various reasons were legal. (Deut. 24:1-4; Matt. 19:4-8) He should know the Gentiles were neither under Moses' law nor the law of Christ. They were without the law of Moses. (Rom. 2:12,14) For Sztanyo to hold a non-covenant people to a higher law than the covenant people under Moses were held contradicts the principle that those who are given more have more required of them. (Lk. 12:48) The Jews had the oracles of God, the Gentiles did not. (Rom. 3:2) The Jews were under the law of Moses, the Gentiles were not. (Rom. 3:19; 2:12,14) However, Sztanyo has the Gentiles held to a higher standard than were the Jews. What right did Sztanyo have to take Herod out from under Moses' law, make a Gentile out of him, and then bind him with the law of Christ which had not yet become of force? Sztanyo thinks Mark 6:17-20 "is one of the most significant passages in existence" for proving that *the law of Christ* demands that marriage formed *in the world* out of harmony with Christ's law in Matthew 19:9 must break up before baptism. (581)

Fourth, John the Baptist was not preaching Christ to Herod in an effort to make a Christian out of him. Christ's church was not

even built at that time. (Matt. 16:18) There was no reason for John the Baptist to preach Matthew 19:9 to Herod in order to get him to repent, for marrying contrary to Matthew 19:9, so that Sztanyo would think Herod was a fit subject for baptism into Christ.

Fifth, if Herod had to break up his marriage because divorce was involved every Jew who had been divorced and remarried in harmony with Deuteronomy 24:1-4 would have to break up his marriage in order to be a candidate for the kingdom. If dissolving this type of marriage was essential for Gentiles to come into the kingdom, when it was finally established, why was it not essential for Jews? Of course, we must keep in mind that the Bible teaches that incest was what was wrong with Herod's marriage. He had his brother's wife. (Mk. 6:18) That John rebuked this type of unlawful marriage does not prove that John would rebuke every marriage that Sztanyo would rebuke and dissolve as a prerequisite to baptism.

Illustrating a Principle for All Ages?

Sztanyo said: "I believe that inspiration records this case to illustrate the *basic principle* by which God deals with adultery in all ages, including today." (*Your*, 577) John prepared a people and a way for the Lord. (Lk. 1:17; 3:4) "Did he do that when rebuking Herod and Herodias? If he actually prepared the way for the Son of God, then by what parity of reasoning do we conclude that Jesus completely reversed (undermined or set aside) this work of preparation by requiring only those within the covenant to separate (this is the thrust of arguments being made on Matthew 19:9 by Brother Bales and others)? Why would God incarnate allow John to be put to death for enforcing a principle that He did not accept Himself? The answer, of course, is that this is exactly the same *principle* set forth by Christ Himself during His earthly ministry (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). And His apostles did not *change* the principle. Rather, they applied it to a particular situation. Moreover, if the way that John prepared was a righteous way, then by what force of logic do we conclude that this 'righteous way' is now actually an unrighteous way? Surely this must be the implication of brethren who hold that separation is no longer required of unconverted couples living in adultery. They must, of necessity, believe that brethren who teach that

separation is required as those who 'shut up the kingdom of heaven against men' (Matt. 23:13a). In other words, an 'unrighteous principle' is being bound upon men which we have no right to bind (if the doctrine advocated by these brethren is true). But why is *not* this principle still binding (if it was a righteous principle), since the basic principles by which God deals with men (regardless of the covenant in force) remains the same (see Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 6:18; Titus 1:2; James 1:17; etc.)? For example, the principles contained in the ten commandments are still binding, not because some have been 'carried over' (they have not, Col. 2:14; 2 Cor. 3:1ff; Rom. 7:1-7; etc.), but rather because God's law is so intertwined with His nature. While men today are not bound to observe the specific requirements of the law of Moses, it is true that the basic principles by which men were governed then are still in force. Such things as lying, stealing, murdering, etc., are eternal principles receiving their strength from the nature of God!! It has never been right to lie precisely because God cannot lie (Titus 1:2) and sin is essentially a contradiction of the nature of God (Rom. 3:23; 1 John 3:4; 5:17). Not even the Son of God could have changed this basic principle, making it right to lie under the new covenant. Now, if the case we are discussing represents the basic principle by which God deals with the sin of adultery, then not even the Son of God could have changed (or, altered) this basic principle!! This is the case because God is immutable (i.e., unchanging), so the basic principles by which God deals with men do not and cannot change. **AND NO MAN HAS THE RIGHT TO CHANGE THEM** (not even the Son of God, John 4:34; Matt.26:39; etc.). If this case does not represent God's basic way of dealing with adultery, then what does it represent? Truly, John WAS straightening the crooked paths (Lk. 3:4)." (577-578)

Sztanyo is using this case to prove how God has always dealt with adultery and how He deals with it today. He is *defining an adulterous marriage* as one which violates the principle set forth by Christ in Matthew 5:32; 19:9. He claims this is an abiding principle which does not change any more than the nature of God changes. It is the principle which God has always required; therefore it is necessary to break up any marriage which does not conform to the standard of Matthew 19:9.

In answering these arguments I call attention to the following: *First*, he is defining an adulterous marriage as one which violates

the principle that divorce and remarriage can take place only for fornication. (Matt. 19:9) If this is “*the basic principle by which God deals with adultery in all ages, including today*” (577), what follows? (a) Abraham was a lost man because he had wives and concubines. How could he be lost when he will be in heaven? (Matt. 8:11-12) (b) The law of Moses was wrong for contradicting this principle. (Deut. 24:1-4) (c) Jews who divorced and remarried according to the law of Moses were in adulterous unions. (d) Paul taught error when he said Christ legislated for Christians married to Christians and not even for mixed marriages. (1 Cor. 7:10-11, 12-15)

Second, Sztanyo ignores the significance of the fact that Herod’s marriage was illegal because it was incest. It was not adultery because it had been formed according to Moses’ law instead of according to Christ’s law. John said it was not lawful to have his, Herod’s, brother’s wife (Lev. 18:6,16) Sztanyo said it was not lawful, even while Moses’ law was in force, for a divorced man to have a divorced woman. Herod’s marriage was adulterous because it was illegal, and it was illegal not because divorce had taken place but because it was incest. A woman could be dismissed lawfully and become another man’s wife, and the man could become another woman’s husband, under Moses’ law. (Deut. 24:1-4) Sztanyo is wrong in thinking that John the Baptist repealed what Moses authorized. Sztanyo recognized they were divorced, and Waldron said they were both divorced prior to this marriage. (*Your*, 586-587 citing Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 18, Chapter 5:1; 5:4)

Third, Sztanyo’s argument says that if both Herod and Herodias had been divorced because of fornication on the part of their spouses, it would have been right for Herod to have his brother’s wife. This would have made it scriptural even though the law of Leviticus 18:6,16 was in force. Does Sztanyo think the law of Moses would have sanctioned Herod’s marriage if his wife was dead, and if Philip was dead but had had children before he died?

Fourth, if Matthew 19:9 is a principle for all ages of God’s dealing with man, and as a principle could not be changed even by Jesus, how was it that the principle of Genesis 2:24 got changed so as to permit remarriage because of fornication or the death of a spouse? Does the original marriage law make a marriage today, based on Matthew 19:9, adulterous?

Fifth, John could not have prepared the way for Christ by applying Matthew 19:9 to Herod's marriage. The law of Moses was then in force. John did not prepare the way for Christ by abrogating Moses' law on divorce and remarriage. (Deut. 24:1-4) Furthermore, we know that the law of Moses, which was then in force did not pass away a little at a time. (Matt. 5:17-18; 8:4; 23:1-3; Col. 2:14-17; Heb. 1:3,13)

Sixth, John was put to death for teaching Moses' law on incest. (Mk. 6:18; Lev. 18:6,16) God would not have required John to enforce Christ's law of Matthew 19:9 before it was in force, and thereby bringing about the death of John for proclaiming a law, which was not even in operation, and binding it when he had no business binding it.

Seventh, Christ no more reversed John's work than He reversed His own preparatory work. Christ condemned Jews for making void God's old covenant word (Matt. 15), and for hypocrisy in dealing with the old covenant word. (Matt. 23) However, He did not reverse His preparatory work by abolishing the law of Moses. But He did abolish Moses' law. Jesus did not reverse John's work in binding Matthew 19:9 on Herod for the simple reason John never bound this law on Herod. If John was binding Matthew 19:9 in condemning Herod for having his brother's wife, it means that Matthew 19:9 does not teach remarriage on the ground of fornication, but only on the ground of incest. The only marriages which can be dissolved are those in which incest is involved. John was talking about incest, and if John was talking about Matthew 19:9 and applying it to Herod, it means that all Matthew 19:9 is talking about is incest.

Eighth, if John was enforcing Matthew 19:9 to prepare the way for Christ, John had to teach every divorced Jew, who divorced according to Deuteronomy 24:1-4 (except when fornication was involved) to break up their marriages. For John to have done this would have been to make an unlawful attempt to abrogate the law of Moses while it was in force.

Ninth, the Old Testament was preparatory to Christ's kingdom, but this does not mean that the law of Christ was in force in the Old Testament periods.

Tenth, it was not unrighteous on John's part to hold people to the law of Moses, instead of to the law of Christ, during John's ministry. However, it is not right for people today to shut the kingdom of heaven against divorced, and remarried people in the

world by requiring them (which Christ has not done) to break up marriages which were contracted on grounds other than fornication.

Eleventh, if Matthew 19:9 is an unchangeable principle, why was it not in force: (a) in Eden (Gen. 2:24), (b) during the days of the patriarchs, (c) under the law of Moses (Deut. 24:1-4), and (d) why did not Paul bind it on a mixed marriage? (1 Cor. 7:12-15) Why all these changes if it is as unchanging as God and could not be changed even by "the Son of God"? (577-578)

Twelfth, the law against incest, that John applied to Herod, was not an eternal, unchangeable principle, for there were exceptions. (a) The children of Adam and Eve married brothers and sisters. (b) A brother could marry the wife of his deceased brother, if he left no children, and raise up seed unto his deceased brother. (Deut. 25:5; Matt. 22:24)

Thirteenth, the Seventh-day Adventists get into trouble also when they take it on themselves, as Sztanyo did with reference to Matthew 19:9, to decide what is an eternal (at least as far as this earth is concerned) principle. They have decided that the ten commandments are as eternal and unchangeable as God, therefore the Sabbath is binding today. However, it was abolished. (Matt. 12:8; Col. 2:14-17) The Lord of the Sabbath abolished the Sabbath. The ten commandments do not speak of *the mercy of God for sinners*. There are nine principles in this law which are in the New Testament, although in the New on a higher level, but we know this because they are found in the New Testament. See my *Christ: The Fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets*. Sztanyo said the *ten* commandments were all binding principles today. He forgot about the Sabbath not being bound on Christians.

There is no scriptural justification for taking John's charge of incest against Herod, transforming it into Christ's teaching on Matthew 19:9, binding this law of Christ before Christ's covenant was in existence, and then binding it on people in the world today and requiring them to break up marriages which do not conform to Matthew 19:9 on divorce and remarriage. (Note: See pages 202-205.)

Chapter IX

“FROM THE BEGINNING IT HATH NOT BEEN SO”

When the Pharisees asked Jesus whether one could divorce for every cause, He reminded them of the original marriage law. They asked: “Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: *but from the beginning it hath not been so.*” (Matt. 19:3-9) Moses’ law differed from Genesis 2:24. Christ’s was stricter than Moses’ but not as strict as Genesis 2:24. (Matt. 19:9) In Mark’s account, Jesus said Moses had commanded the giving of the bill of divorcement. (Mk. 10:3-5)

What did Jesus mean by “from the beginning it hath not been so”? J. D. Thomas said it meant that Genesis 2:24 had been bound on all humanity from the Garden until the establishment of the new covenant, with the exception of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 which was for the Jews only. The Gentiles had “no ‘divinely given’ grounds for divorce and remarriage.” (*FF*, June 13, 1978, p. 374) J. D. Thomas agrees with Rabbi Chananiah who said: “God has not subscribed His name to divorces, except among Israelites, as if He said, I have conceded to the Israelites the right of dismissing their wives; but to the Gentiles I have not conceded it.” (Dummelow, 688; compare *Your*, 411) Thomas maintains that Matthew 19:9 now regulates all marriages, including those in the world. He said this in spite of the fact that he recognized that Christ had not legislated on mixed marriages, and Paul’s legislation in 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 was different from that of Christ in 7:10-11. (*D&R*, 67-68)

What This Position Involves

If Genesis 2:24 was in force for all humanity, except for the Israelites, until the coming of the new covenant, what follows? As I mention these things keep in mind *I am not discussing God’s ideal for man*, but what did God accept from fallen man with reference to marriage and remarriage? *First*, (a) Genesis

2:24 made no provision for remarriage in the case of death, which did not even exist when this law was given. It is futile to appeal to Romans 7:2-3 or 1 Corinthians 7:39 which were not given until long after Eden. (b) Remarriage could not take place because of fornication. There was no sin when the original marriage law was given, and divorce and remarriage for fornication were not mentioned until long after the fall of man.

Second, if J. D. Thomas is right, the pagan world was held to a higher standard than God's covenant people—Israel. The pagans were left to walk in their own ways (Acts. 14:16), in a time of ignorance (Acts 17:30), without a written law. (Rom. 2:12-15) The Jews had the oracles of God (Rom 3:2), were in covenant relationship with God, and had a written record which told them of the original marriage law. (Gen. 2:24) The Gentiles who did not have the light of the divine oracles, and who were not the people of God, were held to a higher standard than God's people who had the light of the divine revelation. This contradicts the Biblical teaching that *more* is required of those who have more light and opportunity. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities." (Amos 3:2) "And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more." (Lk. 12:48) Thomas reversed the principle and had much required of those to whom little had been given and little required of those (Jews) to whom much in every way had been given. (Rom. 3:1-3)

Third, if a Gentile wanted to get a divorce with God's approval he had to convert to Judaism, come under a lower law on the question, and then it would be acceptable to God. (Deut. 24:1-4)

Fourth, a pagan on Pentecost who obeyed the gospel would step down from a higher marriage law to a lower one which permitted divorce for fornication. (Matt. 19:9) If Thomas is right, Jesus was the first one to lower the marriage and divorce standard for the world as a whole.

Fifth, J. D. Thomas agreed the law of Christ was not retroactive on Jews who had been divorced and remarried under Deuteronomy 24:1-4. These Jews could keep their wives in their second marriages, or third as the case may be, but a Gentile could not keep his wife if he had been divorced and remarried even on the ground of fornication. He had not been under a law which permitted this, and Christ's law which permitted it was not retroac-

tive and would not cover his case if he had been divorced and remarried before the church was established.

Sixth, if J. D. Thomas is right, from the Garden in Eden until the establishment of the church, the patriarchs and the Gentiles could not put away their wives and remarry even if their wives became whores.

Seventh, since Christ's law on divorce and remarriage is a command taught to converts (Matt. 28:20), and since Paul showed that Christ's law on divorce and remarriage covered two Christians, and not even a mixed marriage (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15), the Gentiles are still under the law of Genesis 2:24. If they want to divorce on the ground of fornication, God does not permit them to do so unless they become Christians first! Believe it he who can.

Genesis 2:24 Enforced from Eden on?

Some brethren think Jesus said: "From the beginning the marriage law of Genesis 2:24 has been in force." This cannot be its meaning for it was not required of the patriarchs, or of Israel while the law was in force. Jesus could say concerning Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39: "From the beginning it hath not been so that a man was free to remarry on the death of his wife, or the wife on the death of her husband." Death did not exist from the beginning. Fornication did not exist in the beginning. The law of "except for fornication" did not exist from the beginning. Consider what the Bible teaches took place some time after the fall. I am not affirming this was God's ideal for man. Matthew 19:9 is not God's ideal for man. Genesis 2:24 is God's ideal for man. The issue, however, is what has God permitted or tolerated without condemning men and women?

After the Fall

After the fall marriage continued, but there is no *recorded* legislation in the Bible that marriage after the death of a spouse was legal, or that divorce and remarriage because of fornication was permitted. There is no express statement which says that God did not hold man to the high standard of Genesis 2:24 but long before Moses we know that men who were still accepted by God did not abide by this standard. I assume God permitted it

for the same reason He did under the law, i.e., “for your hardness of heart.” (Matt. 19:8)

Lamech had two wives (Gen. 4:23), Adam had only “his wife.” (4:25). Marriage continued. (6:2) Noah had one wife. (6:18) Noah’s sons and their wives had children. (9:1,7) Some of their children must have married those who were close of kin, and out of these families came the nations. (10:32)

Abram married Sarai, and Nahor married Milcah. (11:2-9) Pharaoh was not in covenant relationship with God, and there is no reason to assume that he was a single man when he took Sarai. (12:15-17) Pharaoh knew it was wrong to have another man’s wife even though he was a pagan. He rebuked Abram. (12:17-20) It was not God’s plan for Abraham to have a child by Hagar, but she became “his wife.” (16:1-3) He now had *two* wives. Hagar fled, God sent her back (16:8-9), and Abraham accepted her child as *his son*. (16:15; 17:23-26) Hagar’s being sent away later was in effect a divorce. Sarai died. “Abraham took another wife” (Gen. 25:1) although there was no provision in Genesis 2:24 for remarriage on the death of a spouse. During part of his life, and until his death, Abraham had concubines. (25:5-6) God must have accepted these things, for Abraham was saved, and there is no scripture to justify the assumption that it was wrong for him to marry after his wife died, or to have two wives plus concubines. He will be in heaven. (Matt. 8:11-12)

However, J. D. Thomas said “the original marriage law was binding on all except while the law of Moses was in force.” “The only God-given exception ever made to this *obligation upon all men* was the Mosaic concession that allowed divorce *for Jewish men only*, if they had found something ‘unseemly’ in a wife. (Deut. 24:1f) No such concession was allowed to non-Jews, in spite of the fact that brother Bales would like to believe that ‘the world today is not held to a higher standard in this matter than were God’s people under the Old Covenant. . . .’ ” (FF, June 13, 1978, p. 374) God made the covenant through Moses with the people in his day, and not with their fathers (Deut. 5:2-3) such as Abraham. If it was wrong for him to have more than one wife, or marry after Sarai died, why is this not proved by the Bible? He kept the ways of Jehovah; this did not mean he never lied for at least twice he did, but he was never rebuked for not observing Genesis 2:24. (Gen 18:19) He was “a prince of God” (23:6), “Jehovah had blessed Abraham in all things” (24:1), and he was

not lost, for he is the father of the faithful. (Rom. 4:11,16; Matt. 8:11-12) God tolerated a lower standard of marriage long before Moses' day.

Polygamy Like His Lies?

Was his marriage after Sarai's death, and his polygamy, like his lies and not acceptable to God, or tolerated by God? Answer: *First*, if Genesis 2:24 was in force he lived and died in violation of it, and was lost. He was not lost though he had concubines the last part of his life. (25:6; Matt. 8:11-12; Rom. 4:11,16)

Second, God rebuked Abraham for his lies about his wife, through two pagans. (a) Pharaoh knew God brought a plague on him "because of Sarai, Abraham's wife." Pharaoh rebuked Abraham. (12:17-19) (b) God expressly told Abimelech that Sarai was Abraham's wife and should be restored to Abraham or he would die. (20:2-7) Abimelech severely rebuked Abraham for bringing on his kingdom a great sin, "thou hast done deeds unto me *that ought not to be done.*" (20:9) Abraham was rebuked for lying but not for his marriages.

Abimelech

There is no proof that either Pharaoh or Abimelech were in covenant relationship with God. Abimelech had a wife and maid-servants who bore children. (20:17-18) God did not say to Abimelech: "Behold, thou art but a dead man, because thou hast taken a second wife in violation of Genesis 2:24 which is binding on all humanity whether of my covenant people or not." God did say: "because of the woman whom thou hast taken; *for she is a man's wife.*" (20:3) She was "Abraham's wife" (20:18) and was restored to Abraham. (20:7) Abimelech viewed himself and his nation as righteous. "Said he not himself unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and the innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in the dream, Yea, I know that in the integrity of thy heart thou hast done this, and I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet. . . ." (20:4-7) Nothing was said about it being wrong for

him to take another wife, but it was wrong for him to take another man's wife.

Abimelech later rebuked Isaac for lying about his wife, and exposing his people to "guiltiness" if one of his people had "lain with thy wife." (26:7-11)

Esau and Jacob

Esau did not marry within the circle of relatives, as did Isaac. (24:1-4,7,15,29,38,48,50; 25:20) He married two Hittite women. (26:34-35) These were a grief to Isaac and Rebekah, and they wanted Jacob to marry a kinsman's daughter. (27:46-28:2) Esau then married again, but a kinsman's daughter this time. (28:8-9) Eliphaz, a son of Esau, had concubines.

Jacob was deceived into marrying Leah. (29:10-13,14,15-25) Neither Laban nor Jacob thought Genesis 2:24 was in force, and he married Rachel also. (29:26-30) It was not done in haste! God recognized both women as Jacob's wives, and "*he* opened her (Leah's) womb." (29:31-35) Rachel was barren (30:1), and she gave Jacob "Bilhah her handmaid to wife" and he had children by her. (30:5-7,3) "And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son." (30:6) If J. D. Thomas had been there he would have told her she was wrong, for the law of Genesis 2:24 was in force (according to Thomas).

Leah gave Zilpah "to Jacob to wife" and Zilpah bare Jacob a son. (30:9-13) Jacob now had four wives. Leah told Jacob on one occasion, "I have surely hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob a fifth son . . . And Leah . . . bare a sixth son . . . And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb . . . Jehovah added to me another son." (30:14-24) Again Leah had more children (30:20), and "God hearkened to her (Rachel), and opened her womb." (30:22) Jacob took his wives back to his own country. (30:25-26; 31:17) God had been with Jacob (31:5-7,9,11), Rachel and Leah (31:14-16), and Laban knew it. (31:29) God had not sent him away empty. (31:42,50,53) He kept his wives and "his two handmaids." (32:22; 37:2) If Genesis 2:24 was in force at this time, neither God nor his people knew it. So obviously it was not in force, and Thomas is wrong.

Sexual Sins Possible

Although Genesis 2:24 was not in force, sexual sins were still possible. *First*, there were harlots, or prostitutes. (38:15,21-22) A harlot in this context was “a woman dedicated to impure heathen worship: see Deuteronomy 23:17, Hosea 4:14.” (Dummelow, 39) The law of God did not say to burn a prostitute or harlot, but Judah pronounced this penalty. (38:24) It does show that harlotry was condemned. Judah changed his mind when he found out she had conceived by him. (38:25-26) *Second*, Pharaoh (12:15-20) and Abimelech knew it was wrong to lie with another man’s wife. (20:1-18; 26:7-11) *Third*, homosexual practices were wrong. They are contrary to the revealed law and the law on man’s heart. (18:20; 19:4-8; Rom. 1:24-27) *Fourth*, Joseph knew it was wicked and a sin against God to lie with another man’s wife. (Gen. 39:7-9)

Levirate Marriage Law

The original marriage law of Genesis 2:24 made no provision for a man to marry the childless wife of his deceased brother and raise up children unto his brother. There was finally such a law but we do not know when it was first revealed. *First*, it was “evil in the sight of Jehovah” for Onan to have sexual relations with his deceased brother’s wife and then to prevent conception. (38:9-10) *Second*, the law of levirate marriage was incorporated into the law of Moses. (Deut. 25:5-10; Matt. 22:23-28) *Third*, Judah had promised his son Shelah to Tamar, and when he failed to keep his promise, she tricked Judah. (38:14,26)

J. D. Thomas is clearly wrong in claiming the law of Genesis 2:24 was the law for all men, except for those under the law of Moses, until the time of the new covenant.

Gentiles Not under Moses’ Law

J. D. Thomas thought Genesis 2:24 was binding on all from the beginning, except those under Moses’ law. “This means that none of those Gentiles, who were never under the Mosaic Covenant, had the Mosaic concession, and therefore had no ‘divinely given’ grounds for divorce and remarriage. If Brother Bales insists that they were under the same detailed laws as the Jews, we need for him to furnish the facts upon which he bases

this judgment.” (FF, 374) Answer: *First*, Gentiles, with the exception of proselytes, were never under Moses’ law. They were under the work of the law written on their hearts. (Rom. 2:12-14)

Second, Abraham and Jacob were not under Moses’ law but they were not held to Genesis 2:24 either. It is contrary to scripture to assume that Pharaoh and Abimelech, who were not in the Abrahamic covenant, were held to a higher law than Abraham to whom much had been given. (Lk. 12:48) None of these believed it was wrong to take another wife, though they knew it was wrong to take another *man’s wife*. (Gen. 12:14-20; 20:4-7)

Third, Thomas recognizes that Moses’ law *was not made with the Gentiles*. It was only for those in Moses’ covenant. (FF, 374; Deut. 5:1-3) The law forbidding Israelites to marry people of other nations was not bound on Gentiles (Deut. 7:3-6), and Moses’ particular legislation on divorce was for Israel, to whom God gave “an inheritance.” (Deut. 24:1-4) Thomas recognizes that the word “whosoever” referred to Moses’ regulation, and *was limited to Israel*. “It was said also, *Whosoever* shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you. . . .” (Matt. 5:31-32) Christ then gave His law which differed from Moses’ law. Thomas recognizes that it is unscriptural to bind Moses’ law on those who were outside of Moses’ covenant; so why cannot he realize that he ought not to try to bind Christ’s law on marriage and divorce to those who were outside of the covenant? He admits that “whosoever” in Matthew 5:31 refers to “whosoever” was in Moses’ covenant. Why cannot he see that Christ’s “whosoever” of Matthew 19:9 was for those in His covenant, as Paul clearly shows? Do not bind it on outsiders.

Fourth, in the light of Luke 12:48 we know the Gentiles, non-covenant people, were not held to a law on marriage which was higher than the one Abraham lived under and the one Moses gave to Israel to *regulate* divorce although it did not *originate* the practice of divorce.

From the Beginning

“Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: *but from the beginning it hath not been so.*” (Matt. 19:8) Thomas interpreted this to mean that all humanity, except Israel, was held to Genesis 2:24 until the new covenant came. An-

swer: *First*, if this were true none of these could remarry at the death of a spouse, or divorce and remarry even if a spouse became a fornicator. Furthermore, it meant that the Gentiles stepped down from a higher law to a lower law, remarriage on the ground of fornication, when the new covenant came.

Second, I *demonstrated* that the patriarchs from at least Abraham on were not held to Genesis 2:24.

Third, Jesus did not say the original marriage law had been in force on all humanity, except Israel, since the beginning. *He simply said the Mosaic legislation had not been the original marriage law*. It had not started with and existed from the beginning. It came later. Conditions in Abraham's day were not mentioned because the Jews were asking about Moses' law. Jesus reminded them it had not been the original marriage law, and that His law would be higher than Moses'. How long God enforced the original marriage law, Jesus did not say. Christ's marriage law had not been so from the beginning, but it is now in operation for His covenant.

Fourth, hardness of heart did not exist from the beginning, for God created man upright. (Gen. 1:31; Eccl. 1:7,29) However, even though hardness of heart, divorce and polygamy did not exist from the beginning, they did not start in Moses' day. Moses regulated divorce to some extent, but it was practiced by God's people long before Moses.

Fifth, Jesus was not discussing Gentiles, or patriarchs before the law, when He discussed Moses' law for the old covenant and Christ's law for the new covenant.

Legislation for the World?

J. D. Thomas wrote: "Some claim, however, that God's *marriage law* today is only for the church, but do not explain why aliens have to keep other laws of God that are valid in this dispensation, while being exempt from its laws of marriage. Furthermore, they do not offer scriptural justification for 'two laws of marriage' of all kinds—one for Christians and another for aliens." (FF, 183) Answer: *First*, Jesus spoke His law to the marriage of believers, and not to that of others. (1 Cor. 7:10-11, 12-15) Paul legislated for believers, not the unbelievers, in mixed marriages (7:12-15), and neither Christ nor Paul legislated for two unbelievers. These brethren have taken it on themselves to

contradict Paul (7:10-11,12) and also legislated for people in the world.

Second, I have shown, and Thomas agrees (*FF*, March 21, 1978, p. 183), that it was possible for Gentiles and patriarchs who were not under Moses' law to sin sexually. Why cannot people outside the covenant today sin against the law on the heart, as did the Gentiles who were not sinning against the Mosaic law (Rom. 2:14-15), without sinning against the laws regulating those in the new covenant?

Third, Thomas teaches that two marriage laws were in operation while the law of Moses was in force. (a) Genesis 2:24 for all humanity except Israel. (b) Deuteronomy 24:1-4 for Jewish men only and "for minor reasons." (183) Since two marriage laws were in force during the time of Moses' law, why should Thomas find it difficult to learn from Paul that Christ's law of Matthew 19:9 is for marriages within the covenant, and not for others? (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15)

To Be under a Lower Law Is Not to Be Without the Law

Is it necessary to be in God's covenant in order for there to be laws which one ought to obey but can transgress? To be under a lower law, is this to be without law? Answer: *First*, if Gentiles had no law of any kind they could not sin. (Rom. 5:13; 1 John 3:4) Gentiles did sin. (1 Cor. 6:9-11. See the Question and Answer section for comments on this passage.) There were surely some Gentiles in the church in Corinth. The Gentiles were under the law on the heart which condemned many sins, including homosexual practices. (Rom 1:24-32) Because they had sinned against the truth which they had, they needed to repent. (Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 3:9,23) This did not mean the Gentiles had every law the Jews had in the written law. (Rom. 3:2) They could know that idolatry is wrong (Rom. 1:18-23), but this did not mean that every law the Jew had is paralleled by a law the Gentiles had.

Second, Jews lived under a more lenient marriage law than Genesis 2:24 and Matthew 19:9, but this did not mean they were without any law, and could not commit adultery, for example. (Matt. 19:8 ; Deut. 5:18)

Third, the patriarchs were under a lower law and some of them had more than one wife including concubines. (Gen. 22:24; 25:5-

6) However, it was a sin against God for a man even then to take another man's wife. (Gen. 12:11-20; 20:2,3, 5-9) Polygamy and concubinage were permitted in Jacob's day but sexual transgressions were possible under this lower law. Shechem was not a circumcised son of Abraham, however he transgressed some law when he "lay with" Dinah, defiled her, and "had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; *which thing ought not to be done.*" (Gen. 34:2,7) God gave David "thy master's house *and thy master's wives into thy bosom.*" Polygamy must have been sanctioned, even though it was not in the law of Genesis 2:24 and there is no recorded statement telling when God first sanctioned and tolerated it among His people. Although God still permitted David to keep Bathsheba, God did punish him for his adultery, for slaying Uriah and taking "his wife to be thy wife." (2 Sam. 12:7-10) It is possible that she might have been put to death if David had not married her. Although under a lower law which permitted David several wives, he sinned by having intercourse with another man's wife. Because the Gentiles are not under, and were not under, the high law of Genesis 2:24 and the lower law of Matthew 19:9 does not mean that it is not possible for them to sin sexually. I am not denying that the world, to which God has not committed His oracles, can sin sexually when I maintain they are not held to the high law to which God holds His covenant people today. (Matt. 19:9; Lk. 12:48)

Some Similarities Without Being Identical Laws

There can be similarities between two different laws without these being the same law or covenant. *First*, Christ's law and Moses' law forbids idolatry, etc., but we are not therefore under Moses' law including Moses' law on divorce and remarriage. (Deut. 24:1-4; Matt. 19:9)

Second, there were some similarities between the work of the law written on the heart, the law of Moses, and the law of Christ. J. D. Thomas wrote: "Obviously Gentiles sin by violating *their own law*—i.e., by violating whatever divine laws had filtered down to them through tradition, by whatever moral laws they figured out for themselves and adopted, and by violating their own conscience. Any of these violations is a sin before God. Thus, when Romans 3:9 says, 'both Jews and Greeks are under the power of sin,' and Romans 3:23, 'all have sinned and fallen short

of the glory of God,' there is no question but that all non-Mosaic-covenant people sinned in all kinds of ways just the same as the Jews sinned. This would obviously include violating God's will in sexual and marriage problems." (*FF*, March 21, 1978, p. 183) Thomas was commenting on Romans 2:12-14. Thomas argued also that the Jews and Gentiles did not have the same marriage law. Gentiles had Genesis 2:24 and Jews had Deuteronomy 24:1-4. I have shown he is wrong on this, but it is still true that people under a lower law on marriage and remarriage had some laws which forbade some sexual sins. The old covenant, the law on the heart (*W-F*, 16; Rom. 1:18-24), and Christ's law condemn idolatry. (Gal. 5:20) However, this does not mean these laws are the same laws and all contained the same thing. Jews and Gentiles on the day of Pentecost were sinners, but not because they had sinned against Christ's new covenant. It did not start until Pentecost.

The evidence which has been presented shows that all people, except the Jews, were not held to the high standard of Genesis 2:24, and that one does not have to be in covenant relationship with God in order to sin. However, there are laws in God's covenant to which outsiders are not held even though they are held to those laws which parallel laws in His covenant with His people. (Rom. 1:18-2:15)

Chapter X

Questions and Answers

UNLESS UNDER CHRIST'S LAW EVERYTHING GOES?

There are questions asked by Warren, and arguments made by him and others which assume that unless aliens are under the law of Christ, everything goes with reference to marriage and morality. If they are not under Christ's law, they are not under any law. Warren should be able to realize that because Christ's high standard of divorce and remarriage are not required of a people, it does not follow that they are without any laws at all concerning marriage. Everything one can imagine was not permitted just because people were allowed to live under a much lower law than that of Christ.

First, the Jews were permitted to live under a much lower law than the Christian. Elkins said: "In Moses' time, as in subsequent times, many of the Jews were cruel to their wives, and because of that cruelty and hardness of heart, God permitted divorce (Matt. 19:8). These cruel Jews divorced their wives for 'every cause' (Matt. 19:3)." (*Your*, 525) "Some argue that this 'uncleanness' was immorality but this could not be the case because the unfaithful Jew was stoned to death." (*Your*, 526; Deut. 22:22-24; Num. 5:20-24,31; Lev. 20:10)

"The reason for the death penalty was to 'put away evil from among you.' Not only was the put-away one of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 allowed to live but she was allowed to remarry. When the Jewish leaders brought the divorce dispute to Jesus, they argued by implication from this Deuteronomic law that it taught a man could put away his wife for 'every cause.' Jesus explained that the reason Moses permitted laxity in the putting away of the wife was for their 'hardness of heart' (Matt. 19:3-9). Note: *Jesus would not have said that this divorce was for hardness of heart if the woman had been immoral!* This is proved by the very fact that Jesus allowed divorce and remarriage *only* on the ground of fornication. (Matt. 5:32; 19:9)

“When they divorced according to the regulations of Deuteronomy 24:1,2, the woman could ‘go and be another man’s wife.’ . . . It should also be noted that when the woman married the second time, she did not have two husbands because God referred to her first husband as her ‘former husband.’ The divorce under consideration dissolved the first marriage.” (*Your*, 526-527)

Not only were the Jews allowed easy divorce and remarriage, but polygamy was allowed. God gave David several wives, and even permitted him to keep Bathsheba although he punished David for his adultery and murder. However, she later bore him Solomon. (2 Sam. 12:1-25)

The Jews were under a much lower law than Christians are under. God permitted this for Israel, and Jesus acknowledged that God had permitted Israel to live on a much lower level than Christ permits people in His covenant to live on. However, it did not mean that therefore there were no limitations of any kind for those who lived under the law. This much lower law did not mean that so-called “group marriages” were therefore permitted, or that homosexual relationships could be called “homosexual marriages” and accepted under the law.

Elkins, who is Associate Editor of *The Spiritual Sword* of which Warren is editor, pointed out that, concerning the law of Moses, Hillel taught that a Jew could divorce for every cause and Shammai said for only one cause—fornication. “It should be kept in mind that the dispute was between the *every cause* of Hillel and the *one cause* of Shammai. Note: *It was not a dispute about remarriage but only about the lawful cause of divorce that allowed remarriage!*” (*Your*, 527)

“Jesus, in deciding the divorce question, indirectly answered a dispute between rival groups.” (527) “Jesus taught that fornication is the *only* cause for the dissolution of marriage (Matt. 5:32; 19:9).” (527) Of course, Jesus taught this with reference to His covenant, and not with reference to Moses’ covenant. It is obvious that Elkins believes that Jesus agreed that Moses did allow divorce for every cause. If Jesus said Moses allowed it only for the cause of fornication, this would have meant there was no difference between Moses’ law on the subject and Christ’s law. But, as Elkins said, concerning Matthew 5:22,28,32,34,39,44, “It is incredible that anyone could read these passages and fail to see that what Jesus taught was different from Moses’ teaching. The

same holds true in Matthew 19:9.” (529) One can not imagine a looser standard for divorce and remarriage than for every cause.

“The Pharisees use the phrase, ‘Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for EVERY CAUSE?’ This is the exact teaching of Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Jesus then restates God’s original edenic law and accepts it as binding today.” (Connally, *Your*, 539)

If Warren had been there, when Jesus talked with the Jews in Matthew 19:3-9, and had taken Shammai’s position that Moses allowed divorce and remarriage for only one ground (fornication) he could have argued against Jesus’ looser interpretation. He could have said that it would lead to the sanctioning of group “marriages” and other such things as he raises in connection with the position that the world is not held today to the high standard that Christ holds His people in His covenant. Warren could have argued that if the law of Moses was this loose, a man who had a yen for 18-year-old-virgins (this is one of the illustrations which Warren used with reference to my position) could have had ninety-nine and would be allowed to continue to be married with the hundredth—if he wanted to settle with her, of course. Furthermore, he could have kept this hundredth if he had married her while the law was in force, but obeyed the gospel after the church was established. And Warren’s objections of this nature would have been just as futile against the fact that God did permit a lower standard to the Jews, and that Jews who had been divorced and remarried under this lower standard were not required to break up their marriages when the church was established and they obeyed the gospel. The law of Christ in Matthew 19:9 was not retroactive and therefore these marriages were not broken up.

If Christ’s law had been retroactive the following describes these Jews’ predicament.

‘Twas the night before Pentecost,
And all through the house,
Everything was moral with Silverberg
and his second spouse.
Comes the dawning of the morning,
And much to her surprise,
“We’re living in adultery.”
Silverberg cries.

You see, he had just learned of the law of Christ, that he was now under it, and it was retroactive on his divorce and remarriage which had taken place while he was under the law of Moses which

allowed grounds other than fornication.

Second, Warren agrees with me that while the law of Moses was in force the Gentiles were not under the law of Moses but were under whatever moral and spiritual truth they discerned from the work of the law written on their hearts. (Rom. 1:18-2:15) Although Warren thinks this system ended at the cross, he acknowledges it was in force before the cross for the Gentiles. "The expression 'have not the law' refers to the Gentiles not having the *law of Moses*. This refers to a time *anterior* to the gospel dispensation. At that time the Jew was amenable to the law of Moses; the *Gentile* was *not* amenable to the law of Moses." (*Your*, 362) It is obvious that the Gentile, while the law of Moses was in force, was not amenable to the law of Christ for no one was amenable to it before the establishment of the church. The Gentile was not amenable to Moses' law nor to Christ's law. What marriage law was he amenable to? It could not have been higher than the one the Jew was amenable to, for the Jew had the oracles of God (Rom. 3:2) and other advantages, and God has said that to whom is given much more is required. The Gentile had been given less than the Jew and less was required of the Gentile while the law of Moses was in force. (Lk. 12:48) To say the least, they were not under a higher law than were the Jews concerning divorce and remarriage. Therefore, they could divorce for every cause. The places where Moses tightened up on matters were on giving a writing of divorcement and not going back to the first husband after a second marriage.

Gentiles who had been divorced and remarried before the cross no more had the law of Christ, in Matthew 19:9, applied retroactively than did the Jews to their marriages contracted before the church was established.

If Thomas B. Warren had been in the church on Pentecost, and after the entrance of the Gentiles in Acts 10, he could have argued that the law of Christ on divorce and remarriage must be retroactive on the Gentiles. If it were not, then all sorts of dire consequences would follow—such as those which he raises concerning marriage today unless, according to him, the law of Christ is made retroactive on those outside of the church. He would have asked the other brethren, who maintained the law of Christ was not retroactive on Jew or Gentile, all the questions he asks me and made all the arguments he makes against my position that the law of Christ is not retroactive on people who

contracted marriages in the world on a lower standard than Matthew 19:9. In other words, he would have made all the arguments, and asked all the questions, which he now asks of us who maintain that divorces and remarriages, on some ground other than fornication while in the world, do not mean that these marriages must be broken up at the point of repentance before they are baptized into Christ.

All Warren needs to do to understand the futility of these arguments against my position is to realize that the world, those outside of the covenant today, is in the same situation with reference to the law of Christ on divorce and remarriage that Gentiles were who had married and divorced prior to Pentecost and later wanted to obey the gospel.

Furthermore, at the very time Paul wrote the Corinthian letter, he clearly stated that the Gentiles "are without law" in contrast with the Jews who were "under the law." (1 Cor. 8:20-21) Paul became to them "as without law." (9:21) However, at the very time they were "without law" Paul was "not being without law to God, but *under law to Christ*, that I might gain them that are without law." (9:21) Paul was under law to Christ, but at the very time when he was under law to Christ *the Gentiles were without law*. They were without the law of Moses, and they were without the law of Christ. If they were not, it was ridiculous for Paul to speak of becoming without law to the Gentiles in order to win some of them. Warren's doctrine would correct Paul and say, Paul do you not realize that the Gentiles were under law to Christ at the very time you wrote the Corinthian letter, and this is the reason the law of Christ on divorce and remarriage was retroactive on them?

The Jews and Gentiles were not under law to Christ. They were not in the "church of God." (1 Cor. 10:32) Paul was in the church, therefore he was under law to Christ. Because the Jew and Gentile had sinned against the law each was under (Rom. 1:18-2:15; 3:9,19,23) they needed to be saved. The gospel was not preached to them to make them sinners. They were offered pardon because they were already sinners in need of salvation. Once they accepted Christ they were then under law to Christ, as was Paul, and were taught to observe all things Christ commanded *Christians* to do. (Matt. 28:20) Though Paul was trying to save Jew and Gentile (1 Cor. 9:20-21), and though they had to obey the gospel to be pardoned, Paul knew they *were not yet under law to*

Christ.

It should be clear that regardless of whether or not the people outside of the covenant are under almost all of the laws of Christ, they are not under this law on divorce and remarriage; for Paul said that Christ gave this law for two believers, and that Christ had not even spoken on mixed marriages. (1 Cor. 7:10-15) Neither Christ nor Paul legislated on the conditions of divorce and remarriage for those who are outside of the covenant. However, when one obeys the gospel he comes under Christ's law on the subject and from then on he obeys this law. In other words, he ceases to divorce and remarry for every cause.

Paul did not mean that the Gentiles were without law in any sense, because if they were it would have been impossible for them to have been sinners in need of salvation. (Rom. 5:13) However, although without law which the Jews had, and without the law of Christ, it is still true they were sinners because Paul became as without law to them that he "might gain them that *are* without law . . . that I may by all means *save* some." (9:21-22) Will Warren please tell us what law, if it was not Rom. 1:18-2:15, that the Gentiles were under when Paul wrote the Corinthian letter?

Abused: Would Not This Teaching Be Abused?

Would not some abuse this teaching by trying to force the unbeliever to leave, or claim their spouse was not really a Christian, or some become Christians for a short time to take advantage of this teaching, or would not some fail to try to convert the unbelieving spouse? Answer: Almost any teaching can be abused, but this does not falsify the teaching. *First*, shall we discard the exception in Matthew 19:9 because some may try to drive their spouse to commit adultery?

Second, shall we discard 7:11 because some believer may desert a believer in hopes that the deserted one will commit fornication?

Third, because murder can be forgiven do we encourage some to commit it?

Fourth, intention is involved in marriage. Shall we reject the fact that intention to marry is involved in becoming married because someone might abuse it and say they were not really married because they did not intend to marry? Therefore, they can break up the so-called marriage and on repentance be free to marry.

Fifth, shall we recommend that people live together without marrying, because if they marry they cannot divorce and remarry except for fornication?

Sixth, shall we reject remarriage on the death of a spouse because someone might try to drive the spouse to suicide or murder the spouse? (Rom. 7:2-3; 1 Cor. 7:39)

Seventh, one cannot actually become a Christian if they intended to become one only for a short time.

Adultery Possible Before Conversion? (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

Paul said adultery, and a number of other sins, had been committed by the Corinthians before their conversion. Does this prove that prior to conversion the Corinthians were under Christ's new covenant law? Answer: *First*, if it does, it does not disprove my case on 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 since Paul clearly established that Christ's law on marriage was for two believers, and not for others. (7:10-11,12)

Second, Paul did not say here what law these Corinthians violated—whether Christ's, Moses', or the law on the heart (Rom. 2:12-15). Paul did not say Christ's law was bound on them prior to conversion.

Third, Paul did not say which sins the Corinthians, who had been Gentiles, had committed, and which those who had been Jews had committed. As far as I know, neither Christ nor Paul accused Jews of idolatry, though they did transgress in other matters and dishonor God. (Rom. 2:17,23) Some who abhorred idols committed adultery and robbed temples. (2:22) However, Paul did not say that prior to conversion they were under Christ's new covenant law. These sins were condemned both by the law of Moses and the law on the heart. (Rom. 2:12-15) No one was regulated by the Mosaic covenant, for example, who was not in Moses' covenant. (Rom. 3:19)

Fourth, when Paul proved that Jews and Gentiles, prior to entering the new covenant, sinned, how did he prove it? Did he prove it by the new covenant? When Paul proved that Gentile and Jew were sinners, and when *he proved it in the very period of time that he wrote the Corinthian letter* (for the Roman letter was written in this period of time), how did he do it? *I cannot go wrong in following Paul's arguments* (which he used at that very time) *to prove that Jews and Gentiles in Corinth had sinned before conversion*. Certainly there were those in the church in

Corinth who had been Jews and those who had been Gentiles. (Acts 18:5-11) (a) The Gentiles had sinned because they had violated the work of the law written on their hearts. (Rom. 2:14-15) (b) The Jews had sinned because they had violated the law of Moses. Thus all had sinned. (Rom. 2:17-3:19,23) If there was no longer any validity to these arguments, why did Paul use both in the Roman letter *long after the cross*? The Jews had not only *once* had an advantage, but *even then* they had an advantage over Gentiles. "What advantage then *hath* the Jew? or what *is* the profit of circumcision? Much every way: first of all, that they *were* intrusted with the oracles of God." (Rom. 3:1-2)

Fifth, furthermore, *when Paul wrote Corinthians* he said that in some sense each, Jew and Gentile, was under his particular law while he, Paul, was under law to Christ. Jews—"them that are *under the law*." (1 Cor. 9:20) Gentiles—"them that are *without law*." (1 Cor. 9:21; compare Rom. 2:12-14) Paul—"under law to Christ." (1 Cor. 9:21) At the very time these brethren affirm that Jew and Gentile were under law to Christ, *Paul placed only himself under law to Christ*, and they were under different laws. I cannot be wrong in saying that the Corinthians who had committed the sins of 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 prior to baptism had not sinned while under law to Christ but under the different laws which each (Jew and Gentile) were under. If these brethren deny that in some sense the Jews were "under the law," and the Gentiles "without law" *when Paul wrote Corinthians*, they can take it up with Paul. Their argument is with Paul, not with me. Paul was not speaking of his condition or their condition before the cross.

Warren believes that the moral principles in the Old Testament are as binding today as they were in the Old Testament. There is enough truth in the Old Testament even today to condemn any Jew who claims to live by it, for no one has obeyed all the moral truths contained in it. But the Jew today does not have to be under the old covenant. He is condemned by his failure to live up to the truth which is written on his heart. The moral nature of man and the moral principles which are set forth in Romans 1:18-2:15 have not been abolished so that they are no longer binding on those who are outside the covenant. *Jew and Gentile are both out of covenant relationship with Christ today*, unless they have obeyed the gospel. People outside the covenant are under the work of the law written on the heart. Surely the nature of man in

the world has not changed since before the cross. People without divine revelation today can learn the truths set forth in Romans 1:18-2:15. No one outside Christ has lived up to all of these truths, so they are condemned by the law on the heart as surely as the Gentiles were in the first century.

Sixth, these brethren cannot give any scripture which proves that the Jews and Gentiles in Corinth, whom Paul converted, had become sinners because, while they were outside of Christ, they had sinned against the law of Christ. Paul proved they were sinners by proving Jews had transgressed the old law and the Gentiles the law on the heart. (Rom. 1:18-2:15; 3:9-10,19,23; 1 Cor. 9:20-21) It is right to use Paul's statements in Corinthians and Romans in proving what laws these Gentiles and these Jews transgressed when they committed the sins in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.

These brethren may say that the Jew and Gentile were really under the law of Christ, but Paul just accommodated himself to their way of thinking when he said the Jews were under law and the Gentiles were without law. (a) There is no proof of this position. (b) Regardless of their situation, Paul definitely contrasted where he was (under law to Christ) with reference to where they were. (c) When Paul wrote the Galatian letter he said: "Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor *to do the whole law.*" (Gal. 5:3) Those who were circumcised as binding themselves to the law of Moses, were obligated to keep the entire law. No man could do this, so those who tried it were under the curse the law pronounced on the sinner. (Gal. 3:10) What was the condition of those who bound themselves to the law? "Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace." (Gal. 5:4) When Paul wrote, there were people who had been brought up under the law when it was a divine institution. And regardless of what is said about the abolition of the law of Moses, it is clear that nothing similar is said about the law on the heart. (Rom. 1:18-2:15)

Seventh, someone may argue that the law was done away with at the cross and therefore no one could be under the law of Moses after that time. (Col. 2:14-17) Answer: I do not have to have the remotest idea why Paul said, *when* he wrote the Corinthian letter, that the Jews were "them that *are* under the law" (1 Cor. 9:20), that Paul "not being myself under the law" (9:20), that the Gen-

tiles were “them that are without law” (9:21), and at this very time Paul was under an entirely different law; “not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law.” (9:21) Paul said it, I believe it, that settles it whether I can explain it or not.

The only problem is with reference to the Jew and the law of Moses, and not with the Gentile and the work of the law on the heart. (Rom. 2:14-15) The problem is raised with reference to the Jew, for the New Testament teaches that the law of Moses had been abolished. Nowhere does the New Testament teach that the law under which the non-covenant people lived (Rom. 1:18-2:15) has been abolished. This law could not be abolished without abolishing moral law and the very nature of man himself. I have discussed this at length in *The Law On The Heart*. Therefore, a failure on my part to explain how the Jew was under the law when Paul wrote Corinthians in no way: (a) mitigates against the fact of what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:20-22 or (b) the fact that the law on the heart has not been abolished. Those outside the covenant are still under it. They have enough truth to condemn them for failing to live up to the truth they have, but they do not have the way of salvation unless they accept Christ.

Some suggestions can be made concerning the Jew and the law at the time Paul wrote to the Corinthians. (a) The law was not abolished at the moment of the cross, but by virtue of the cross, for Christ had first to appear in heaven and make the sacrifice for sin. (Heb. 1:3,13) Also long after Pentecost God tolerated Jewish Christians walking according to the law. (Acts 21:17-26) This may parallel the fact that although the gospel was for the Gentiles beginning on Pentecost (Matt. 28:19) in fact God tolerated Jewish Christians not taking it to them until the household of Cornelius. The total abolition of the law was one of the hard things to bear (John 16:12-13) and God tolerated Jewish Christians continuing in things of the law for a period of time although they were not allowed to bind the law on the Gentiles. God made it all impossible with the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem and it indeed then vanished away. (Heb. 8:13) This is what some think is meant when Daniel said that it was some time after the cutting off of the Messiah that the sacrifices would cease, and that this was the end that came according to Jesus' statement about the abomination of desolation seen by Daniel (Dan. 9:24-27; Matt. 24:14-18). Then the complete destruction

took place and the seventy weeks terminated.

I have discussed the question of the Jewish Christians and the law in my book *Instrumental Music and New Testament Worship*.

(b) Paul said that those who were circumcised, in order to bind them to the law, were fallen from grace and such a one was "a debtor to do the whole law." (Gal. 5:3-4) Those who went back to the law went back to a system under which they had to earn their salvation by doing all the law said all of the time. (Gal. 3:10) If one had perfectly lived by the Old Testament law he would have been saved, but no man could do it and therefore to return to the law was to return to the condemnation which the law pronounced on sinners.

(c) It may be that during the time before God made it impossible for anyone to keep the law, the only way the Jew could be severed from the law was to accept Christ. He then passed from the curse of the law to the redemption which is in Christ. It was the *Jewish Christians* who Paul at this time said were not under a tutor but were under grace instead of the law. (Gal. 3:25) The Jew had to be made free from the law through accepting Christ and His death, and thereby being severed from the law and its curse. (Rom. 7:4) It was through this means one died to the law and was released from it. (Rom. 7:6) These no longer needed to fear the law and its condemnation of the sinner. (Gal. 3:10) The Gentile also is made dead to the principle of justification through an earned righteousness when he accepted the gospel.

When the entire law vanished away, and God made it impossible for anyone to continue in the law, the Jew, like the Gentile, became of those who had not been in covenant relationship with God.

Don Campbell in his manuscript on *The Divorce Dilemma* called my attention to the use of these three points in connection with the question of how Paul could say that at the time he wrote to the Corinthians the Jews were under the law of Moses. If these explanations are all wrong, their failure does not in any way change the fact that Paul said what he did in 1 Corinthians 9:20-22 and that these things were true at the very time Paul wrote and at the very time he was trying to convert Jew and Gentile. If these brethren are not satisfied with any of these explanations, let them come up with an explanation of their own. However, their explanation must not contradict the fact that while Paul

was under the law of Christ the unbelieving Jews were under the law of Moses and the Gentiles were without the law. Brethren today who put Paul, the Jews, and the Gentiles all under the law of Christ at one and the same time are standing in contradiction to Paul's teaching. I have no intention of accepting anyone's explanation if it makes me contradict the Bible. (1 Cor. 9:20-22)

Eighth, the sins listed in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 were against truths taught in the law of Moses. They were also sins against the truths perceived by the Gentiles. Paul expressly mentioned some of them as contrary to the work of the law on the heart which the Gentiles were able to perceive.

(1) Unrighteousness. (1 Cor. 6:9; Rom. 1:29)

(2) Fornicators. (1 Cor. 6:9) Fornication existed among Gentiles. (5:1)

(3) Idolaters. (1 Cor. 6:9; Rom. 1:22-25)

(4) Adulterers. (1 Cor. 6:9) The Spartans were permissive, but forbade what they viewed as adultery. (*Plutarch's Lives*, London: F. Warne and Co., I 37-38) ". . . the son that she had by him in adultery." (*Plutarch's Moralia*, London: J. M. Dent, p. 162) Aristotle spoke against adultery. (R. W. Browne, *Aristotle's Works*, V, ii, 2-4, p. 121) "A man may know that keeping a mistress is the worst kind of insult to his wife, but lust will drive him in the opposite direction." (Seneca, *Epis.* 95, 38; Gummere, III, 83) See also Tacitus, *Annals* VI, xlvii; Vol. III, p. 237. *Annals* VI, XL, Vol. III, p. 225)

(5) Effeminate. (1 Cor. 6:9; Rom. 1:24-27)

(6) Abusers of themselves with men. (1 Cor. 6:9; Rom. 1:24-27) Petronius, who died A.D. 66, in his will "wrote out a long account of the Emperor's (Nero) perversions, naming all his bed-fellows, male and female, and categorizing the specialty of each, and sent it under seal to Nero. . . ." (Dudley, *The World of Tacitus*, 1968, p. 57; Tacitus, *Annals*, XVI, xix, Vol. IV, p. 367; Seutonius, Nero, xxviii, II, p. 133) Leana had been with a "Lesbian woman," "But I'm ashamed, for it's unnatural." (M. D. Macleod, *Lucian*, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1961, VII, p. 381) It was said that male and female should retain their own nature. (Lucian, *Affairs of the Heart*, 19, VIII, 18, 195)

(7) Thieves. (1 Cor. 6:10) Plato condemned thieves. (B. Jowett, *The Works of Plato*, Vol. II, p. 31)

(8) Covetous. (1 Cor. 6:10; Rom. 1:29; Juvenal, *Satire*, I, 86, 110-115; Tacitus, *Annals*, VI, xxxi; Vol. III, p. 207; XI, i; Vol.

III, 249)

(9) Drunkards. (1 Cor. 6:10) Without the divine revelation human reason can see that man was not made to pickle and confuse his brains with alcohol. Spartans opposed drunkenness for their own people. (*Plutarch's Lives*, I, 48) Tacitus spoke of the "drunkenness and incontinence dear to Barbarians"—the Germans. (*Annals*, XI, xvi; Vol, III, p. 273)

(10) Revilers. (1 Cor. 6:10) They would be included in at least one of the sins of Romans 1:28-31. Condemned by pagans. (Epicetetus, *Discourses*, III, iv, 9; Oldfather, 39; III, xx, 9-10; p. 21; III, xxi, 5-6, p. 127; IV, iv, 46-48; pp. 329-331; IV, v, 32, p. 343; *Encheiridion*, c. 10, p. 491; c. 42-c. 43, p. 527)

(11) Extortioners. (1 Cor. 6:10) Condemned by pagans. (*The Orations of Demosthenes*, Vol. V, p. 250; Tacitus, *Annals*, XI, v; vol. III, p. 225; XI, vi; Vol. III, p. 257; XIII, xlii; Vol. IV, p. 75; XI, xiii; Vol. III, p. 269)

As I have documented in *The Law On The Heart* the pagans recognized the existence of these evils as well as of others. There is no need for one to assume that the Corinthians, prior to conversion, had to be under law to Christ in order to commit these transgressions. They were contrary to the law of Moses (for the Jews) and the law on the heart (for the Gentiles).

Adultery Promoted?

Some charge that my position on 1 Corinthians 7:15 promotes adultery and fills the church with adulterers. Answer: *First*, if they are wrong they are promoting the breaking up of homes that God does not will to be broken up, and are guilty of refusing to baptize people whom God authorizes to be baptized. Some of these brethren will not baptize people in such marriages unless they first break up. They shut the kingdom against many people.

Second, some of these brethren are conscientious objectors. Warren and Deaver are not. Do they accuse Warren and Deaver of filling the church with murderers? Do Warren and Deaver accuse conscientious objectors of filling the church with rebels against God and a legitimate order of civil government?

Third, G. C. Brewer (*Contending For The Faith*, 73-74; *Gospel Advocate*, August 5, 1954, p. 613), and Foy E. Wallace, Jr. (*Sermon*, 40-41) did not believe such marriages should be broken up. Are they guilty of filling the church with adulterers?

Fourth, J. D. Thomas did not believe in breaking up the marriages of Jews who had been divorced for various reasons under the law of Moses, but obeyed the gospel on or after Pentecost. (*FF*, 3-28-78, p., 199) Did this fill the church with adulterers?

Fifth, if they are wrong, these brethren have legislated where God did not.

Sixth, a man who was promiscuous can marry, a man who lived with a number of different women can marry, according to these brethren. Are they filling the church with promiscuous people? If they say the man ceases to be promiscuous when he comes into Christ, I agree. The man who lived under a lower law of divorce and remarriage (as the Jews did, for example) ceases to divorce and remarry for various reasons when he comes into Christ.

Seventh, can fornication be forgiven? Does this promote fornication?

Eighth, since my position on 1 Corinthians 7:15, and marriages between unbelievers, is scriptural it does not promote adultery or fill the church with adulterers. These brethren should answer the arguments on 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,12-15. They cannot even try to answer my position without assuming Paul was wrong in saying Christ had not spoken on mixed marriages. They assert that He spoke on all marriages.

Baptism: Does Baptism Change An Adulterous Situation into a Scriptural Situation?

Does baptism change an adulterous marriage into a scriptural marriage? Answer: *First*, if it is wrong for a believer to be married to an unbeliever, did the baptism of one spouse turn a scriptural marriage of two unbelievers into an unscriptural marriage?

Second, if a woman was divorced, for a reason other than fornication, and remarried while in the world or in the church would this marriage be turned into a scriptural marriage if her former husband died before she or her second husband died?

Third, did the Jew who had been divorced for a trivial reason while the law was in force have to give up his wife when he obeyed the gospel? If not, did his baptism into Christ permit him to keep a wife which he could not have scripturally had if he had waited until after Pentecost to divorce and remarry; or even if he had divorced and remarried before conversion?

Fourth, I do not believe the marriages which take place in the world on some ground other than fornication are any more adulterous marriages than they were under the law. Therefore my answer is that baptism does not change an adulterous marriage into a scriptural one for the simple reason it was not an adulterous marriage.

Be Better If Spouse Is An Unbeliever?

If I am right, would it not be better for a Christian's spouse to be an unbeliever since in the case of desertion the believer would be free to remarry? Answer: *First*, ask Paul, he made the distinction by the Spirit.

Second, would you argue it would be better for the deserted believer if the deserting believer was not continent (7:6-7), committed adultery, and freed the deserted? (Matt. 19:9)

Third, would it have been better for the two believers, and the believer and the unbeliever, to have been living together without marriage? In such case, either would be free any time to quit the arrangement, repent, and marry.

Fourth, would it be better if one drove the other to suicide and was thereby free to marry?

Fifth, Christians are less apt to leave Christians than unbelievers are to leave Christians. It does happen. However, the Christians are held to a higher standard than others. (1 Cor. 7:10-11; Lk. 12:48)

Blessings: Why Receive?

"If they are *not* subject to the law of Christ, why did they receive its full blessings when they obeyed it? (Eph. 2:13-22)" *First*, Gentiles, whom Paul was trying to convert, were outside the law of Moses and the law of Christ under which Paul lived. They were not in the same place (under law to Christ) where Paul was. (1 Cor. 9:20-22) Paul tried to convert them so that they could receive the blessings of the covenant. However, they had to come into the covenant to receive its blessings. Receiving its blessings when you enter it does not prove that you are under it before you entered it.

Second, if aliens are already under all the laws of Christ they are already under all His laws on which blessings are predicated.

Therefore, they should be able to receive the full blessings of the covenant even while they are outside of the covenant.

Can a Christian Terminate a Mixed Marriage?

If Matthew 19:9 is not legislation for a mixed marriage can a believer ever take the initiative and terminate a marriage to an unbeliever even if the unbeliever commits fornication? *First*, I cannot appeal to Matthew 19:9 to regulate 1 Corinthians 7:12-15. I wish these brethren would cease contradicting Paul and binding Matthew 19:9 on a marriage concerning which *Paul said the Lord had not spoken*; or on marriages in the world concerning which neither Christ nor Paul spoke.

Second, Christ permitted the believer to leave the unbeliever but in such a case both must remain unmarried or be reconciled. (7:10-11) Paul did not permit the believer to leave the unbeliever. (7:12-13)

Third, Paul did qualify the statement about not leaving "If . . . she is *content to dwell* with him, let him not leave her . . . and he is *content to dwell* with her, let her not leave her husband." (7:12-13) "Content to dwell" means not just willing to have sex relationships, while going to bed with other women as if he were free to do so and still remain married to the believer. *The unbeliever who is not content to dwell as the lawful spouse of the believer is not content to dwell in the sense in which Paul uses the expression.* If the unbeliever says he will not remain in the marriage unless the believer renounces Christ, he is not content to dwell. If he will not be faithful to his spouse, he is not content to dwell. An unbeliever who forms a homosexual relationship, or brings another wife home, is not content to dwell with the believer. The believer is not required to dwell in the marriage bond with an unbeliever who shows that he is not content to dwell with the woman who is a believer. If the unbeliever is not content to dwell with the believer, the believer is not under bondage in such cases. However, it is the unbeliever, not the believer who has taken the initiative.

1 Corinthians 5:1

The fornicators in 1 Corinthians 5:1 were disfellowshipped. Would this marriage have been scriptural if it had been made before either was converted? Answer: *First*, it is usually assumed

she was his stepmother. If it had been his actual mother, would Paul have spoken of her just as “his father’s wife”? This was “a sort of incest which was condemned by the Greeks, and Romans, as we learn from Cicero, Orat. pro. Cluentio, sect. 4 and from Virgil, Eneid x line 389.” (MacKnight) It was condemned also in the Old Testament though there was a distinction between a man’s mother (Lev. 18:7) and his stepmother. (Lev. 18:7; “thy father’s wife,” 18:8)

Second, Paul’s position, that Christ did not legislate for a mixed marriage, does not sanction incest. (a) The Old Testament had a lower standard of divorce and remarriage than the New (Deut. 24:1-4; Matt. 19:3,7-8), but this did not mean that it sanctioned incest (Lev. 18:7). (b) A marriage can be broken up and another formed in case of fornication. Shall we conclude that Matthew 19:9 means the innocent person in such a divorce is free to marry one of the innocent person’s parents? (c) A single person can marry. Does this sanction incest? (d) A person whose spouse is dead can remarry, does this mean he can marry his mother or stepmother, if his father is dead? (Rom. 7:2-4) Could the widow in 1 Corinthians 7:39 marry her father if her mother was dead, or her father had divorced her mother because of fornication? These things do not sanction incest, so why charge Paul’s position with sanctioning incest? The deserted believer in 7:15 was not free to marry a believing parent who had been deserted by an unbelieving spouse or for any other reason.

Third, these two were not married. She was his father’s wife (5:1), and their coming together was not that of man and wife but of fornicators. (5:1) She was evidently an unbeliever, for Paul said nothing of disfellowshipping her. (5:5,7, “the wicked *man*” 5:13.) Like the Samaritan woman, some people lived together without being married. (John 4:16-18)

Fourth, Paul said to avoid fornication have your own wife, not your “father’s wife.” (7:1-2; 5:1) A Christian was not to take another man’s wife whether the other man was a believer or an unbeliever. Fornication is wrong whether one is married or single, and whether it is a parent or child.

Fifth, when the law of Moses was in force, Jews were not without any laws concerning marriage just because they were not under Matthew 19:9. The Gentiles were not without any kind of law or any understanding at all about marriage. They knew incest was wrong. “. . . such fornication *as is not even among the*

Gentiles.” (1 Cor. 5:1; Rom. 2:14-15) Gentiles were not without a law against incest because they were not under Matthew 19:9.

Sixth, I think the father was alive. (2 Cor. 7:12) If he had been dead, do these brethren think Romans 7:2-4 would have made it scriptural for this man to marry his father’s wife?

Seventh, when polygamy was accepted, it was still wrong to have another man’s wife (Gen. 20:2-3,5-9). The question raised on 1 Corinthians 5:1 proves no more against Paul’s position on 1 Corinthians 7:15, and whether marriages in the world are held to Matthew 19:9, than the question on 1 Corinthians 5:1 proves against Matthew 19:9 (where marriage has taken place after divorce for fornication) or Romans 7:2-4.

1 Corinthians 6:15-20

R. L. Roberts wrote that: “Before answering the questions posed, some of which were regarding the continuation of marriages of Christian partners, and mixed marriages, Paul establishes the permanency of the marriage bond and relationship (cf. 6:15ff.). This principle has very significant bearing upon the passage herein discussed.” (113) In commenting on 7:11, he said: “Paul is here stating the rule not the exception. We are not to infer that he does not know or allow fornication as an exception, as does Christ in Matthew 19:9. Having already (chapter 6:15ff) established that fornication breaks the marriage relation as well as one’s relation to Christ, he proceeds with this fact understood as a matter of course. As Meyer says, ‘the validity of *this* ground of divorce is self-evident.’

“All of this fits well with the context of this section of the book from 6:12 to 7:40 in which Paul first establishes the indissolubility of marriage (6:15-18) and also the immediate context where the absolute strictness of the command of Christ regarding divorce is applied to Christians married to each other.” (p. 118)

First, I do not see how Paul’s statement in 6:15 either strengthens or weakens any arguments made on 1 Corinthians 7:10-15. The “one flesh” could be used against the position that marriage for any reason is authorized for a Christian who is divorced. However, in the light of Matthew 19:9 we know that remarriage is permitted under certain circumstances. Whether it is permitted in 7:15 must be decided on the basis of a study of 7:12-15.

Second, the marriage bond and its permanency is not being discussed in 6:16. Paul is not discussing a man and a *wife* but a man and a *harlot*. He does not speak of being joined to a wife, or cleaving to a wife, but of being joined to a harlot. How could one argue that one joined to a harlot is joined in a permanent marriage bond? Was a harlot in a permanent marriage bond with *everyone* with whom she fornicated? Paul's subject is not sex in marriage but sex outside of marriage. He is speaking of fornication, not of the union of a man and wife. (6:13-18) They were to flee fornication (6:18), but they were not to flee marriage. Paul did not quote Genesis 2:24 to prove the permanency of union with a harlot.

Third, Paul shows that the body belongs to Christ, that we belong to Christ, that our body is the temple of the Spirit, and we should not take that which belongs to Christ and join it to a harlot. He did not say that it was wrong to join our bodies and spirits in the marriage bond. (6:13-20) He cites Genesis 2:24 *not* to establish the position that one is married to a harlot but to show the *intimacy* of the union, and that this act, which is reserved for marriage, is a sin against God's purpose and is in a unique sense a sin against one's own body.

The subject under discussion in 6:13-20 is not the same as the subject in 7:10-15. Marriage is discussed in 7:10-15 but fornication with a harlot is discussed in 6:13-20. In discussing fornication Paul sets forth some principles which bear on many things, even though these were not the main subject under discussion. However, what is said in 6:13-20 does not settle the issues raised in 7:10-15.

Fourth, the brethren in Corinth already knew adultery and fornication were wrong, as some of them had repented of such sins prior to baptism. (1 Cor. 6:9-11) However, they did not know the answer to the questions asked in 1 Corinthians 7. Therefore, obviously Paul had not taught them all about Christ's marriage law prior to their conversion. If some marriages in Corinth had been broken up prior to baptism, these brethren would have already known in detail about Christ's marriage law and would have already had their questions answered about the permanency of marriage. And if Christ's law was universal for the church and for the world, they already knew the answers about marriages between believers and unbelievers.

Different Laws?

Some think they have refuted my position by saying that this means that different laws regulate the two different categories of marriages. They say this would be unfair and unjust. Answer: *First*, some of these brethren maintain that 1 Corinthians 7:39 means to marry a Christian. Paul did not specify that the woman was a Christian, any more than he specified the woman in Romans 7:2-3 was a Christian. Furthermore, these brethren believe all Christ's laws on marriage apply to all people. Then, too, they claim it would be unfair to have two different laws concerning marriage. Therefore: (a) All men and women must marry Christians. (b) However, for unbelievers to marry Christians, Christians must violate 1 Corinthians 7:39 and marry unbelievers. (c) The marriage of the unbeliever to the believer is scriptural, for the unbeliever has obeyed 1 Corinthians 7:39. But the marriage of the believer to the unbeliever is unscriptural for the believer has married contrary to 1 Corinthians 7:39. Is this not where their position leads?

Second, J. D. Thomas said that during the time the law of Moses was binding, there was one marriage and divorce law for the Israelites and a higher and different one for those outside the old covenant.

Third, some affirm that the marriage law of 1 Corinthians 7:39 is not binding on the unbeliever or on the man who believes. This means they hold to two different marriage laws.

Fourth, a Christian ought to marry a Christian, but if one does not, it is still a marriage (1 Cor. 7:12-13) even though it does not measure up to the ideal marriage for a Christian.

Fifth, the Spirit through Paul showed there are different laws regulating the marriage of two believers (1 Cor. 7:10-11) and a mixed marriage (7:12-15) The Lord passed these different laws and I accept them as God's truth.

Sixth, as brought out elsewhere, some of Christ's laws apply only to believers. Believers are not to go to law with believers (1 Cor. 6:1-7), but Paul carried his dispute with unbelievers to Caesar (Acts 25:8,10), instead of before Festus another unbeliever. (25:9) Unbelievers were not forbidden to go to law with unbelievers.

Seventh, see the question on "unjust and unfair."

Disfellowship: Before You Disfellowship

There are some who have disfellowshipped those of us who disagree with them that the marriages of aliens, which do not measure up to Matthew 19:9, must be broken up prior to baptism. Before they disfellowship, I wish they could consider the following: *First*, they will be the ones to break fellowship, not I.

Second, they should ask themselves: Have I made an uninspired universalization of Matthew 19:9 (“whosoever”)? Did I make up my mind on Matthew 19:9 before I got to the complete revelation on this subject? (John 16:12-13; 1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15) Will I refuse to accept additional truth on this subject if all the truth on this subject is not found in the Gospels? Why do I think that all truth on it must be contained in the Gospels? Will I affirm that Christ could not reveal anything after His ascension that in any way limited the “whosoever” of Matthew 19:9? If I do, by what authority do I do it? Who am I to tell the Lord that the complete revelation on divorce and remarriage had to be revealed in the Gospels which contain the incomplete stage of revelation? (John 16:12-13)

Third, if I take the position that some take (that all mankind but the Jews while the law of Moses was in force were under Genesis 2:24), will I accept the conclusion that Abraham, Jacob, etc., were condemned for not abiding by this standard? (Genesis 25:6; 29:25-28; 30:3-7,9-13; Matt. 8:11-12) Were the Gentiles who were without the law held to a higher standard than the Jews? (Lk. 12:48; Rom. 2:14-15) Did a Gentile on or after Pentecost step down to a lower law (Matt. 19:9) than Genesis 2:24 when he obeyed the gospel?

Fourth, will you maintain that Matthew 28:20 was bound on people in the world, when Christ said these things were to be bound on those who were actually converted?

Fifth, how can you bind Matthew 19:9 (1 Cor. 7:10-11) on those in 7:15 when Paul said Christ did not speak on mixed marriages? What right have you to say Christ spoke on all marriages in Matthew 19:9 and contradict Paul when he said he, *not the Lord*, spoke on mixed marriages? (1 Cor. 7:12)

Sixth, the Spirit through Christ legislated on two Christians in marriage (7:10-11), the Spirit through Paul legislated on a mixed marriage (7:12), but did the Spirit *through you* legislate on the marriage of two unbelievers?

Seventh, do you disfellowship, or if you had lived when they did would you have refused to fellowship, all of the following? (1) Alexander Campbell and Walter Scott who took the position I take on 1 Corinthians 7:12, Matthew 19:9 and the world. (*Millennial Harbinger*, V, 1834, 72)

(2) G. C. Brewer who thought that 1 Corinthians 7:15 was presumptive proof of adultery. (*Contending*, 100-102) J. D. Thomas also thought so. (*DR*, 64-65, 75-77) Neither accepted the entire argument which I make on 7:10-11 and 7:12-15. Brewer thought churches should not divide over such marriages. (73-74; *Contending*, 81-82) Perry Mason, brother Brewer's son-in-law, told me he had heard brother Brewer counsel that such a marriage (which had not met the standard of Matthew 19:9) not be broken up.

(3) Foy E. Wallace, Jr. said it was "a presumptuous procedure" to break up family relations or refuse to baptize people in such marriages. (*Sermon*, 41)

(4) Roy H. Lanier, Sr. took the position that to marry "for social or financial gain, or with a view to physical enjoyment for a few years, is no marriage in God's sight. The union is to be taken seriously and with a view to the accomplishment of God's purposes when he instituted marriage." (*Your*, 89-90) This means that most marriages in the world are not recognized by God as marriages, and it would be right for them to break up these relationships and enter into a marriage which God recognized. This would not violate Matthew 19:9 for it dealt with marriages which God had joined people in. If Lanier is right, we do not need to be concerned about whether their "marriage" measured up to Matthew 19:9 prior to baptism. What you would need to do is to break up most couples or demand that they get married with the proper intentions (as defined by Lanier) before baptism. After all, these brethren would not want to fill the church with people living together who in reality are not married, if Lanier is right.

(5) Will they disfellowship Reuel Lemmons for being involved in the publication of the *Firm Foundation Commentary* on 1 Corinthians which takes the same basic position on 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,12-15 which I take although it does not trace out all of its ramifications?

(6) Will they disfellowship Jack P. Lewis who does not advocate a person going back to the first mate, if they have married again, for he thinks we cannot know that it is not an abomination

now as it was in Deuteronomy 24:1-4? (*Your*, 418)

(7) Will you fellowship Thomas B. Warren who many times called a homosexual relationship a *marriage* (he did not put it in quotation marks) although he thought such should be broken up? (*SS*, Oct., 1978).

(8) Will you disfellowship Leslie G. Thomas who thought that both the innocent and the guilty in Matthew 19:9 could be free to remarry, and that repentance did not demand separation of either party in their second marriage? (*Sermon*, 63) This book was published by the *Gospel Advocate*. A similar position was published in the *Advocate*. (June 5, 1975, 359, 360)

(9) Will they disfellowship Robertson L. Whiteside who published the essence of this position in the *Gospel Advocate* and it was later published in Miss Inys Whiteside, Editor, *Reflections*, 408-427? Also a position similar to Leslie G. Thomas'. (102-107)

(10) Will you fellowship Warren (*Your*, 391, 394), Deaver (*Your*, 92-93) and Lanier (*Your*, 90-91) who maintain that marriage takes place at the marriage ceremony and without sexual union? Or will you fellowship the *Advocate* whose official lesson commentary said: "A scriptural marriage is the blending of the lives of two eligible persons of opposite sex into one through (1) mutual agreement on their part, (2) legal contract as authorized by the state, and (3) sexual cohabitation through which God makes them one." (*Annual Lesson Commentary*, August 11, 1963, p. 193) Also Brewer. (*Contending*, 78-79)

(11) Will you fellowship Lanier who maintained that fornication must take place before divorce in order for the innocent to be able to remarry (*Your*, 474), or J. D. Thomas and G. C. Brewer who say it can take place after the divorce or separation? (*DR*, 66-76, 82-83)

(12) Will you fellowship those who teach that the marriage has taken place in its fullness, that God has joined the couple, even though the sexual relationship is refused by one after the ceremony? These brethren did not mention a refusal, but they maintain that the marriage takes place at the ceremony and before and without the sexual act. There have been refusals. I have heard of two cases in the last two weeks. If these brethren are right, the rejected spouse could not get a legal divorce and marry someone else. If the *Advocate* is right, the rejected spouse can get a legal divorce, for the marriage was not consummated,

and marry someone else. Which of the two would you disfellowship?

(13) The marriage of Herod and Herodias was condemned because they had been divorced on some ground other than fornication. (*Your*, 575, 579) Do you fellowship the ones who take this position, and disfellowship those who maintain that the law of Moses permitted remarriage on grounds other than fornication and that Herod and Herodias were condemned because of incest — she was his brother's wife.

(14) John the Baptist applied to the marriage of Herod "exactly the same *principle* set forth by Christ Himself during His earthly ministry." (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; *Your*, 578) Will you fellowship this person who maintains that this law on the subject was in force in the personal ministry, or the one who denies it?

(15) Will you fellowship those who maintain that all Christ's laws are binding on all people, including those in the world (*Your*, 362-367), or those who maintain that at least some of Christ's laws are not binding on the world?

(16) Will you fellowship those who maintain that the work of the law on the heart has been abolished for those outside the covenant (Rom. 1:13-2:15; *Your*, 362, Implied), or those who maintain that the world is still under this law; which is sufficient to condemn them but not sufficient to justify them?

(17) Will you fellowship those who maintain that all the commands which Jesus had in mind in Matthew 28:20 are to be bound on all people before conversion?

(18) The Jews were not to intermarry with those outside the covenant (Ex. 34:14-16; Deut. 7:3; Josh. 23:12-13; Neh. 10:29-30; 13:23-31) and such marriages were broken up. (Ezra 9:1-15; 10:1-3,4,5-11,12-19,20-44; Neh. 13:23-24) The official *Gospel Advocate* commentary on the Bible class lessons says: "A settled conviction with reference to mixed marriages is sadly lacking among those who ought to know Jehovah's law regarding this question. Many seem to think that those who speak against such unions have no scriptural authority on which to base their teaching; but that the whole matter is more or less left up to the individual taste. Consequently, so far as the Bible is concerned, there is a general indifference regarding this question. But, contrary to general opinion, the Bible clearly teaches that Jehovah has had a uniform law on mixed marriages in every age of the world. And furthermore, this law is not based on statutes ar-

bitrarily imposed, but on the fundamental principles of the kingdom of heaven.” (*Gospel Advocate Annual Lesson Commentary*, August 11, 1963, p. 194)

Paul did not break up the marriage in 1 Corinthians 7:12 and he did not say *when* these were contracted. There are uninspired brethren who legislate and say they must have been contracted while in the world, and then one of the unbelieving spouses became a believer. Will you fellowship those who maintain that the law in the New Testament is uniform with the law in the Old Testament with reference to marriages between people in the covenant and those out of the covenant? Or will you disfellowship those who maintain that a marriage between a believer and an unbeliever is a marriage regardless of when the believer enters into this marriage? Will these brethren withdraw from those Christian widows who do not marry a Christian? (1 Cor. 7:39) Will they withdraw from all those who are in mixed marriages?

I hope that you will even go so far as to fellowship me and those who agree with me.

Eighth, why not treat this issue as we have the war question? Should the conscientious objectors disfellowship other brethren and accuse them of filling the church with murderers? Will those who are not conscientious objectors disfellowship them as rebels against God and government? It will do no good to dodge this question by saying it is not an issue now. We have had many wars in my lifetime. There are many in the church who have gone to war in the past. Is not the issue of killing people as important as the divorce and remarriage issue?

Double Standard?

Am I advocating a double standard? Answer: *First*, the fact that the Spirit gave different laws concerning different categories of marriage (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15) cannot be refuted by calling it a double standard. Different standards are applied by the Spirit to *different* categories of marriage.

Second, a different standard regulates our relationship to fornicators in the church and fornicators in the world. We do not eat with those in the church, for example (1 Cor. 5:9-11).

Third, J. D. Thomas said a higher standard regulated the non-covenant people, when the law of Moses was in force, than regulated God's covenant people.

Fourth, J. D. Thomas said a Jew on Pentecost, who had been divorced and remarried according to Deuteronomy 24:1-4 while it was in force, was not required to break up his marriage on obeying the gospel. He thinks other people are required to do so.

Fifth, unbelieving widows are not told to marry only in the Lord. (1 Cor. 7:39)

Sixth, others could do it (Deut. 24:1-4), but "the priests, the sons of Aaron" (Lev. 21:1) were not permitted to marry "a woman put away from her husband." (Lev. 21:7)

Seventh, an unmarried adulterer can be forgiven and marry, but a woman who commits adultery while married cannot repent and remarry. A single man committing adultery with a married woman can repent and marry, but if she is divorced by her husband she cannot repent and marry. Is not this a double standard?

Eighth, it is a double standard which permits the unbeliever to take the initiative and separate, but forbids the believer from taking the initiative. (1 Cor. 7:12-13,15)

Ninth, a different standard is used to judge a marriage that has taken place after a divorce for fornication, than the one where there has been no fornication. (Matt. 19:9)

Tenth, the Spirit teaches that the deserted believer in 1 Corinthians 7:11 is under the marriage bondage, but that the deserted believer in 7:15 is not.

Let us accept what the Bible teaches, even if some call something a double standard.

Express Statement?

Must we have an express statement to settle such an important matter? Answer: *First*, why do they not produce an express statement which says: Christ's law in Matthew 19:9 binds the world also? Elsewhere I have shown that "whosoever" is limited by other passages.

Second, Paul expressly said Christ did not speak on mixed marriages, but He did speak on two believers. (1 Cor. 7:10-11, 12-15)

Third, suicide is as important as divorce and remarriage, but there is no express statement saying: "Thou shalt not commit suicide." However, we know that we are to love ourselves, as well as our neighbor, and love prohibits our working ill to ourselves.

To kill ourselves is to work ill to ourselves. (Matt. 22:39; Rom. 13:8-10) Paul did not tell the jailor it was wrong to commit suicide. The jailor did not believe it was wrong, and by the time Paul got through proving it to him it would have likely been too late. Paul stopped the attempt by saying it was unnecessary, for all the prisoners were there. (Acts 16:27-28)

Firm Foundation: Has It Been the Policy of the Firm Foundation to Publish Only One Side of This Issue?

I have never researched the *Firm Foundation* for articles on this subject to see just what has been published. However, I do know that the *Firm Foundation* published in 1977 its own commentary on first Corinthians by Burton Coffman which maintains that in His personal ministry Christ did not legislate on mixed marriages and that the believer, who is deserted by the unbeliever, is not under the marriage bond any longer and is free to remarry.

Fuqua

Is not your position either basically, or with modifications, that of E. C. Fuqua? (SS, Oct. 1978, 42, 43) (5) Answer: *First*, I no more believe the world is under civil law only today, than Warren believed the world was under civil law only when the Jews were under the law of Moses. I agree with Warren that the non-covenant people, during the time the law of Moses was in force, were under the unwritten law of Romans 1:18-2:15. I maintain that non-covenant people today are still under this law, but Warren thinks it, like the law of Moses, has been abolished. This is implied in the following statement of Warren: "The expression 'have not the law' refers to the Gentiles not having the *law of Moses*. This refers to a time *anterior* to the gospel dispensation. At that time the Jew was amenable to the law of Moses; the Gentile was not *amenable* to the law of Moses. Now (after the gospel has come into effect) neither Jew nor Gentile is amenable to the law of Moses—it was nailed to the cross. But all men (both Jew and Gentile) are amenable to one and the same law—the law of Christ, the gospel!" (*Your*, 362) This implies that the law on the heart has been done away.

Second, men today are not lost because they have sinned against the laws which Christ binds on converts. (Matt. 28:20) They have sinned against the truth which they have in the world. They must accept Christ's law of pardon to be saved. Then they are bound by the laws which regulate those who are in the covenant. (Matt. 28:20)

Third, Why cannot Warren see that nowhere is it stated that the law on the heart was nailed to the cross? Of course, we know that the law on the heart was never sufficient to justify the sinner, although it was sufficient to show that man is a sinner. The unwritten and unrevealed (unrevealed to the Gentiles) law of Romans 1:18-2:15 is still the law under which non-covenant people live and it is the law which will condemn them if they do not accept pardon and redemption which is offered through Christ and His new covenant. Why cannot Warren see that at the very time Paul wrote Corinthians, and was himself under law to Christ (1 Cor. 9:21), the Gentiles were still without law. (9:20-22) They were neither under Moses' law nor Christ's law, but were still "without law;" which is where Paul said they were in Romans 2:12-15.

Fourth, Warren understands that while the law of Moses was in force the Gentile was not under the law of Moses unless he accepted the terms of admission and entered the covenant. Why cannot he understand that non-covenant people today are not under law to Christ unless and until they accept the gospel and come into the covenant? Paul was once under the law of Moses, but he did not come under law to Christ until he became a Christian. Paul drew a sharp line of distinction between the Gentile whom he wanted to convert, who was without law, and himself, Paul, who was *under law to Christ*. (9:20-22)

General Law and Specific Exception?

Matthew 19:9 lays down the general law on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, and 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 gives a specific exception. "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13) is the general law but exceptions were made for war and certain crimes and sins. Answer: *First*, there are some who maintain that kill in Exodus 20:13 means murder. However, even in such a case other commands were needed to spell out what was murder and what was not. But a command against murder would not be as broad as a

command against killing. However, I think the following show that these brethren cannot successfully make the above argument.

Second, it is argued that the general command covered two Christians and two unbelievers but the Lord did not have in mind a mixed marriage. (a) these brethren do not make the general and the specific argument. They maintain that Matthew 19:9 is universal legislation covering all marriages. "Whosoever" means "whosoever" is married, they argue. They cannot change arguments without abandoning everything which they have said in an effort to prove it is universal. Are they willing to abandon these arguments? (b) If Christ covered two in the world and two in the church, how could He keep from covering a marriage between one in the world and one in the church? The church is under this law and the world is under this law. How could it be possible that a cross-over with reference to marriage would not be under this law since both parties are under the same law? Warren insists, for example, that all people in and out of the church are under the same law. Deaver said "the married" in 7:10 includes every married person. (c) Once these brethren make the mixed marriage an exception they open up their own position to some of the arguments which they have made against my position; such as: (1) Some would marry unbelievers so as to have a way of escape if the marriage did not work out. (2) Some would not try to convert an unbelieving mate. (3) There would be no end to the number of times a believer could marry if he married unbelievers and if they left him. (4) Some would charge it contradicted Matthew 19:9. (5) Some would say that Paul was speaking of the rest of the questions, and not the rest of the marriages. (6) Some would say that 7:10-11 was an unrecorded statement of Christ. (7) Some would say that 7:10-15 does not discuss divorce and remarriage. And so on and on.

Third, these brethren all deny that 7:12-15 gives an exception so that one can divorce and remarry because of desertion. All their arguments about "not under bondage" are used to prove that 7:15 is not an exception to Matthew 19:9. In fact, their entire case is built on the assumption that Matthew 19:9 must be universal, that there can be no other exception for a mate being put away and one party given the right to remarry.

Fourth, neither can they argue that the difference between the universal legislation of Matthew 19:9 and the legislation in 7:15

is that the deserted believer is granted the privilege of living separately. (a) How could the believer keep from living separately if the unbeliever left? (b) This cannot be the difference between 7:15 and 7:11 for the believer in 7:11 is granted the right to live separately.

Fifth, if Christ spoke on all marriages in Matthew 19:9, Paul could not have said that he, *not the Lord*, spoke on mixed marriages. Therefore, the Lord's statement in 7:10-11 could not have been addressed to all marriages, but which Paul amended, as it were, by saying that now the Spirit reveals there is one classification of marriages which is an *exception* to the general law which the Lord had announced in His personal ministry. Since the Lord had not spoken on it, it could not now be declared to be an exception to what the Lord said about all marriages.

But some insist that "the married" in 7:10 must mean all the married. (a) If this were the case, the Lord had spoken on the mixed marriage for he had spoken on all marriages. (b) It should be observed that *nowhere in the immediate context did Paul address the unbelievers and give legislation to them*. He did not even address the harlot in 6:15-16, even though the law on the heart could show the harlot that she was immoral. The harlot's body was not a "member" of Christ (6:15), nor a temple of the Spirit. (6:19) In the verses which immediately surround 7:10 and 7:12, Paul is speaking to Christians. He is replying to *their* questions. (7:1) "The unmarried and widows" in 7:8 are not all unmarried and all widows. "He that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, *how he may please the Lord*. . . . So also the woman that is unmarried and the virgin is *careful for the things of the Lord*." (7:32,34) These are Christians. "A wife" in 7:39 is not an unbeliever but a woman who is a believer and who is to marry only in the Lord. "Each man" is not every man, but only those who are in Christ for "each man" is called by the Lord and abides in the calling "wherein he was called, therein abide with God." (7:17, 24) "The married" of 7:10 are just as clearly Christians married to Christians. *Paul addresses no unbeliever whether married or unmarried in this chapter*. The "married" are contrasted with Christians married to non-Christians (7:12-13). Paul does not even speak a word to the unbelievers who are married to believers.

Sixth, these things prove that "the married" in 7:10-12 cannot refer to all married people in the world and in the church.

Therefore, 7:10-11 cannot be laying down the general marriage law for all people, and 7:12-15 making an exception to this general law on marriage. Since Matthew 19:9, and other passages in the Gospels, are appealed to in 7:10-11 it follows that Matthew 19:9 cannot be laying down the marriage law for all marriages in the world and in the church.

Seventh, if Matthew 19:9 covers two Christians and two unbelievers, but not a mixed marriage, it means that: (a) If a Christian marries an unbeliever, the Christian and the unbeliever are neither one under Matthew 19:9 any longer. They were both under it until they married one another. (b) Two unbelievers are under Matthew 19:9. However, if one of them becomes a Christian, they are both released from the law of Matthew 19:9. While both were unbelievers, and had little committed to them, they had more required of them. Now that one has much more committed unto him, having received the gospel, less is required of both! (Lk. 12:48)

Gospel Advocate: Has It Published Only One Side?

No. Although I have not researched the *Advocate*, I have run across the following: *First*, when Robertson L. Whiteside was Query Editor of the *Advocate*, he wrote articles which maintained that Christ did not give the complete revelation on marriage during His personal ministry, that Paul revealed additional information, that the Lord had not spoken on mixed marriages, and that desertion by an unbeliever freed the believer from the marriage bond. (Miss Inys Whiteside, *The Reflections of Robertson L. Whiteside*, 102, 105-106, 412, 414-415, 416, 418, 421) He also said: "This problem is stated: 'A and B, both Christians, marry; A divorces B for fornication. A then marries another wife who is not a Christian. B also marries, and her husband is a member of the one body. All attend the same congregation. As an elder, what would you do?'"

"Well, what could I do? A evidently had a right to marry again. So far as I know, this may have given B a right to marry also. On that point no one can speak with authority, for nothing is said about it. A safe rule seems to me to be: When in doubt as to what you should do, take the safe side; if you are in doubt as to the conduct of another, give him the benefit of the doubt." (411)

Second, P. W. Stonestreet published two articles in the *Ad-*

vocate which maintained that desertion by the unbeliever gave the deserted Christian the right to remarry. (May 3, 1945, pp. 243-244; June 14, 1945, pp. 315-316)

Third, G. C. Brewer said: "A slave was not his own: his will was not his own. He was no more amenable to law than is an irresponsible child. His wife was not his own, his children were not his own.

"I think we may conclude that slavery was never in harmony with God's will. Polygamy was never intended by God, and divorce was not in God's plan and purpose for man. God permitted all these things, but none of them were in harmony with his law 'from the beginning.' "

"It may be true that men and women, in their alien sins, have been so promiscuous—have lived in such disregard of God's laws—that no union has ever been formed, even though several marriage ceremonies have been said. This being true, of course, such sins are all forgiven when they become Christians. They must now depart from iniquity; break up all sinful relationships, forsake sinful associations and henceforth serve the Lord in the beauty of holiness." (*Gospel Advocate*, March 20, 1952, p. 184)

Brewer also said: "From this you can see that I draw the conclusion that a relationship that may begin by a sinful act might later become a legitimate and a sanctified relationship. The sinful act which started the relationship could be as nearly corrected as such acts can be corrected by an honorable treatment of each other and of decent living thereafter. In other words, if a child is begotten by a sinful act, this does not change the fact that the child is related to both parents and such relationship is not destroyed by the fact that the life was begun by a mistake or by a sinful act.

"The above conclusion may be carried out in such cases as the one with which we are dealing. Even if this sister's separation from her first husband was wrong and if her marriage to her present husband was in the beginning a violation of the principle, do you not see that it could be possible that the fact that they have since dedicated their lives to the Lord and are living together as husband and wife—the relationship sanctified by love and by Christian treatment of each other, as well as Christian behavior in the rest of their lives, together with the fact that they have three children to whom they owe an obligation and whose lives, both here and hereafter, might be affected by their

decision—this relationship now could be continued with the Lord’s approval and that to break it up might destroy the souls of four, if not five, individuals? *The marriage to the first man certainly does not exist now.* He has a wife, perhaps children; the woman has a husband and three children. So by the most legalistic reasoning on the matter, the woman and the man to whom she was first married no longer belong to each other and could not be put back together. If she does not belong to this man, certainly in some sense, if not in every sense, she definitely does belong to the man who is the father of her children, *and in these children these two have become one flesh.* Would it not be possible that God has thus joined them together, and should we put asunder what God has joined? These are thoughts I think we should weigh and questions we should consider.” (*Gospel Advocate*, August 5, 1954, p. 613)

Fourth, Leslie G. Thomas as late as 1975 wrote that a marriage, which was formed contrary to Mark 10:11-12 involved the committing of adultery. Whether the couple lived together after that or not, this adultery must be repented of by the persons involved. However, “the only way that such a couple could continue to live in adultery, would be for the marriage bond, which bound the man and his divorced wife (or the woman and her divorced husband) together, to remain intact in spite of his having committed adultery against her.” Thomas said that the act of adultery, when they married, was sufficient to break the previous marriage bond (the one the unjustly divorced person was in previously). This breaking of the previous marriage bond meant that, although they must repent of the adultery which they committed when they married, they can continue in the new marriage. He said: “But where is the New Testament teaching, either by direct commandment, approved example which is applicable to the question now under consideration, or a necessary inference, which requires a husband and wife to separate, even though their marriage should not have taken place?” (*Gospel Advocate*, June 7, 1975, p. 360)

Knowing that material on divorce and remarriage in his book *The Sermon On The Mount* was controversial, Leslie G. Thomas called B. C. Goodpasture’s attention to it in order that Goodpasture could leave it out of the book, which the *Advocate* was publishing, if he so desired. Goodpasture printed the material without any changes. (Personal conversation with Thomas in

Chattanooga, Tennessee on December 18, 1978)

Fifth, David Lipscomb, editor of the *Advocate* and President of David Lipscomb College, invited G. G. Taylor to present at Lipscomb the position on civil government which differed from Lipscomb's. He said the students had the right to know the other side. (December 18, 1978, Leslie G. Thomas told me that he heard this from H. Leo Boles when he, Thomas, was a student at Lipscomb.)

Sixth, I have not referred to the different positions found in the *Advocate* to evaluate them, but to prove one point, i.e., the *Advocate* has published many sides.

Group Marriages

Does my position sanction group marriages? Answer: *First*, how can one be accused of sanctioning group marriages because one maintains that Paul shows that Christ's law of divorce and remarriage binds the two Christians and not mixed marriages or the world?

Second, were group marriages sanctioned among the Jews because they were not bound by Matthew 19:9? Or the patriarchs? Or Gentiles?

Third, if a woman was married to a man, other men in a group could not have her for she is another man's wife. Pagans knew this was wrong (Gen. 12:17-20; 20:1-18). If she was not married to any of them, she was committing adultery and the patriarchs, pagans, and those under the law of Moses knew that adultery was wrong.

Fourth, if men and women in so-called group marriages are not married to all, and they are not, can they be forgiven if they break up this fornicating group? If they cannot, what scripture do you cite to prove that such fornicators cannot be forgiven? Since they were not actually all married to all, and in such an arrangement no one was actually married to anyone else, can such individuals on forgiveness marry? If not, what scripture do you cite to prove that fornicators who are single cannot repent and marry scripturally?

Fifth, in the church a man is to have his own wife. (1 Cor. 7:2) He is not to share her or share another man's wife, or a single woman.

Harding College's Position?

Is Harding College's position on Matthew 19:9 and its relationship to mixed marriages and the marriage and divorce of aliens the same as mine?

First, it is the position of the Bible, but I cannot speak for Harding College. Because I take a position it does not mean that I speak for the school or that anyone in the school agrees with me.

Second, as far as I know the vast majority of teachers at Harding do not take this position.

Third, the chances that a student at Harding college will hear this position advocated in class are very, very slim. I do not teach any class in which this subject comes up. As far as I recall, students have gotten off the subject and asked me in class what I believe about this matter only once in twenty years. It is quite likely that the first time any students have heard that I take this position was when they heard someone somewhere who opposed my position on it.

Fourth, as far as I know every college among us has someone on its faculty who agrees with this position.

Fifth, all students, in a class in which divorce comes up, will be told that the Bible teaches that Christians are to marry for life.

Homosexuals: Perversion, Not Marriage

Will not your position justify what some call homosexual "marriages"? Answer: *First*, Thomas B. Warren is the only gospel preacher whom I know who says that a homosexual relationship is a marriage. Four times in an article on "Will Preaching the Truth on Divorce and Remarriage Hinder Evangelism?" (*Gospel Advocate*, August 10, 1978, p. 499) Warren called it a marriage and he did not put marriage in quotation marks. Was that just a momentary slip on his part? Around two months later he reprinted the article in *The Spiritual Sword*. (October, 1978, p. 44) In the same issue he called it a marriage ten times in another article on "Will Some Preachers and Professors Lead Churches of Christ to Accept Homosexual Marriages?" (42) Does Warren think a sexual relationship between a man and a beast is also a marriage? Warren charged that a certain position "could fill the church with *men* married to *men* and *women* married to women." (44) I am ashamed for Tom that he should take such a view of marriage that he could use the word

“marriage,” without even using quotation marks, to label a reprobate relationship between two reprobates who parade their shameful relationship before the world. Even pagans can know better than to call such a relationship a “marriage.”

Warren is even bolder in his use of the word “marriage” to describe this relationship than is the so-called “Gay Christian Movement of Britain.” They agreed “on the final text of the vows to be exchanged at a religious service to bless the union of homosexuals, it was announced in London. A spokesman for the group told reporters that such unions are not marriages nor an imitation of marriages.” (*The Christian News*, October 23, 1978, p. 9) It may be that they were not brazen enough, or blind enough, to call them “marriages.” However, they were brazen enough to call it “gay” and “Christian” when it is neither.

Second, Paul taught that even the pagans could know that such a relationship is wrong. It is against nature as is proved by the fact that it is contrary to “the natural use of the woman” and of the man. (Rom. 1:26-27) Those “without natural affection” (1:31) with reprobate minds refuse this teaching (Rom. 1:28-32), but the work of the law on the heart proved to the pagan that it was, and is, wrong. (2:14-15)

Warren twice cited Romans 1:26-27 to prove that homosexual practices are condemned by the new covenant. (*GA*, 499, 504) Why he did this, to prove something for people *under the new covenant*, cannot be harmonized with his position that the work of the law on the heart in Romans 1:18-2:15 has been abolished and that these passages do not refer to people outside or inside the covenant today. “This refers to a time *anterior* to the gospel dispensation.” (*Your*, 362) It is my conviction it referred both to the non-covenant people before the cross and after the cross. When Paul wrote Corinthians the Gentiles were still without the law and were not under law to Christ. (1 Cor. 9:20-22)

Although there was no *recorded* law then, and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were outside the covenant which God had with Abraham, it was wrong to engage in homosexual activities. “Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly.” (Gen. 13:13)

“And Jehovah said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is very great, and because their sin is very grievous. . . .” (Gen. 18:20) They were so bad that there were fewer than ten righteous people in that city. (Gen. 18:22-23,31,32) The young and old men

of Sodom flocked to the house of Lot with the intention of committing homosexual acts. (Gen. 19:5-9) Judgment came on the city, but Lot and the few other righteous people were spared, although Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. (Gen. 19:12-26) However, even these righteous people did not live on the level they should have. Lot was willing to turn his two daughters over to the men to protect his visitors (Gen. 19:8), and his two daughters later got him drunk and conceived by him. (Gen. 18:30-38)

How could these pagan people in Sodom know that homosexual acts were wrong? The same way that Gentiles knew it in Paul's day and people without the Bible can know it today. It is against nature (Rom. 1:24,26-27) and the law written on the heart. (Rom. 2:12-14) Even without the law written on the heart, anatomy shows that such is not the purpose of the Creator for man.

Third, the New Testament does not call a homosexual relationship a marriage. Therefore, I shall not call it a marriage. Warren is not speaking as the oracles of God when he calls it a marriage.

Fourth, perhaps Warren will say that he does not mean that such a relationship is a marriage, but that he was using an *argumentum ad hominem*. Such an argument is directed toward another person's position, which you do not hold but which he holds, and is designed to blow up the position from within. However, Warren cannot be using such an argument in dealing with those who disagree with him on 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 because none of them believe that a homosexual relationship is a marriage. Warren said: "In what, to me at least, has been a shocking display of invalid reasoning, acceptance of false (anti-Biblical) premises, and self-contradiction, presently some preachers and professors seem bent on trying to persuade Christians to accept a position (in regard to divorce and remarriage) which implies that people who are involved in homosexual marriages—*provided* those marriages are entered *before* the parties involved are baptized are to be regarded by Christians as being acceptable to God. I do not question their motives; I feel sure that they want to teach the truth. But we do not create truth by good motives." (Warren, *Spiritual Sword*, Oct. 1978, p. 42)

Since none of these brethren view a homosexual relationship as a marriage, regardless of when entered into, nothing which they argue about marriages can prove that such is a "marriage" and

can be continued scripturally.

After saying "I do not question their motives," his next paragraph said: "About twenty-five years ago a similar situation arose in the Lord's church (no doubt because the doctrine involved is so 'full of comfort' that men *want* it to be true)." (42)

Are we justified in assuming that the reason Warren calls homosexual relationships "marriages" is that he so strongly wanted to prove how wrong his opponent's position is that he deceived himself into thinking that such were "marriages" and that this being the case he thought some arguments of his opponents justified such "marriages" also?

If I understand him rightly, Warren does not believe that the Jews who had been divorced and remarried according to Deuteronomy 24:1-4 under the law of Moses were required to break up these marriages when they came into Christ. Would not this position be condemned by Warren's argument that unless we believe that marriages in the world measure up to Matthew 19:9 homosexual "marriages" must be accepted?

Fifth, some may say that Warren became over-eager in his argument and got so carried away that he forgot that he does not believe that a homosexual relationship is a marriage and that his opponents do not believe it either.

(1) If this is what happened, I shall gladly accept it if Warren tells me that such is the case. If he does not tell me that this is the case, I shall have to represent him as he represents himself, i.e., that he believes that such a relationship is a marriage.

(2) Someone may say that what he means is that a position occupied by you brethren implies that a homosexual "marriage" is right. Did not Warren say that some are trying "to persuade Christians to accept a position (in regard to divorce and remarriage) which implies that people who are involved in homosexual marriages—*provided* those marriages are entered *before* the parties involved are baptized are to be regarded by Christians as being acceptable to God"? (SS, Oct. 1978, p. 42) Here he calls it a marriage. (a) None of these brethren view it as a marriage. (b) In this article Warren mentioned no principle advocated by any of these brethren which could remotely be distorted to imply that a homosexual relationship can be a marriage or can be continued in. Warren was talking about different categories of *marriages* in all of this article, but none of us put the homosexual relationship into the category of marriage.

(3) Someone may say, but Warren referred in another article to their use of 1 Corinthians 7:20, and the way they use it proves that any and every relationship one is in before he hears the gospel is right for him to continue in. (SS, 44; *Gospel Advocate*, 499) Answer: (a) No brother that I know of maintains that one can continue in a relationship which is *inherently* sinful. Homosexual practices are inherently sinful. (b) I do not maintain that marriages contracted in the world are adulterous just because divorce and remarriage did not take place according to Matthew 19:9. Such a marriage is no more adulterous than was such a marriage when the law of Moses was in force, or when the Gentile was under the law of Romans 1:18-2:15 (Lk. 12:48). Therefore, I do not believe that they are called when in an adulterous relationship, and 1 Corinthians 7:20 cannot mean that they are to continue in an adulterous relationship. Warren cannot prove that such marriages are adulterous unless he contradicts Paul, and binds all marriages by Matthew 19:9. (1 Cor. 7:10-11, 12-15)

Sixth, in one of his articles Warren spoke of men "married to men." An imaginary character in his dialogue said that "homosexuality is sinful" and must be repented of. Warren, under the name of Jones in the dialogue said: "Good! Now all you have to do is to make the same application to every other marriage: the *only* ground for divorce and remarriage is *fornication!*" (GA, 499, SS, 44-45) Since Warren says they are married, what is he going to do with those faithful "homosexuals" who do not violate their "marriage" bond by committing fornication? Warren may say that homosexual practices are a form of fornication. I agree. Does fornication break up fornication between two homosexuals? I deny the relationship is a marriage and that Matthew 19:9 applies to it. Breaking up that relationship of perverts has nothing to do with the issue of whether *marriages* between men and women in the world are held to a higher standard than Jews were under the old covenant.

Warren, either drop your position that they are married or accept such into your fellowship. As the title of Warren's article, in part, asked "Will Some . . . Professors Lead Churches of Christ to Accept Homosexual Marriages?" (42) After all his discussions on the binding nature of the marriage bond, and divorce only for fornication, now Warren wants to break up these arrangements which he calls "marriages" *even if fornication has not taken*

place. Warren, how can you break up these “marriages” when the two partners are faithful to one another? Remember that Warren himself said “this article will be confined to a consideration of homosexual marriages.” (43) If you say that a man cannot be a wife (Matt. 19:9) and therefore such a relationship is not a marriage, why did *you* call it a marriage? Surely if you slipped and misidentified such a relationship, you will want to correct this gross degradation of the very word “marriage” by correcting it in the *Advocate* and the *Spiritual Sword*. Warren asked us: “Brethren, face this dilemma honestly”; this dilemma created by him for us—in his own imagination when he called a homosexual relationship a “marriage.” I have no such dilemma facing me for I do not believe that such is a marriage. Let Warren face honestly this dilemma: (1) If it is a “marriage,” and neither had been divorced and remarried before they “married” one another, and both have been faithful to one another, is it unscriptural to break up this “marriage” and free them to marry women? Jesus said it was fornication which makes it right to break up the marriage. (2) Renounce your position that such a relationship is a marriage. When this is done, you can no longer argue that this or that position taken by the brethren, against whom you write, sanctions a homosexual “marriage.”

We all need to be careful when we pick up a stick to beat another person’s argument over the head with, lest that stick bloodies the head of our own argument and not that of our opponent.

I did not make Warren call a homosexual relationship a “marriage.” This is what he called it. Am I unkind for attributing to him the very view which he set forth? I hope Warren will renounce this unnatural, unscriptural, and degrading view of marriage. If he does not, I shall be obligated to represent him as he represents himself. I have endeavored to put quotation marks around the word “marriage” when speaking of homosexuals except when presenting Warren’s view of what the word “marriage” covers. I asked him before publishing this book to renounce it, but he did not.

Inference

Are you basing your position on an inference? Answer: *First*, it is not unscriptural to accept a conclusion which follows from a

principle or statement in the Bible. Paul did not tell the husband in 7:11 not to remarry someone else. He told the wife to remain unmarried or be reconciled. I think that Deaver rightly said of the husband who left the wife: "but (by implication) if he should leave his wife—A. Let him remain unmarried; or B. Let him be reconciled to his wife." (*Your*, 445)

Second, I am not basing my position on an inference but on clear statements. (a) By inspiration Paul said that Christ's law was for two believers (1 Cor. 7:10-11). (b) By inspiration Paul said that he, *not the Lord*, spoke on the mixed marriage. Concerning this marriage he said something different from what the Lord said. I do not infer that the deserted believer in 7:15 is not under bondage. Paul said this believer was not under bondage. (c) It is a fact that neither Christ nor Paul bound Christ's law or Paul's law on two unbelievers. These laws were not spoken to unbelievers. Unbelievers are not in the covenant, therefore they are not under a regulation just because it is bound on someone in the covenant. The principle laid down by Paul is that the law speaks to those who are under the law. (Rom. 3:19) This principle is as true of the new covenant law as it was of the old covenant law.

John 3:5

There is only one way to enter the kingdom, and only one ground for divorce and remarriage. One has no more right to take the "except" out of Matthew 19:9 than to take it out of John 3:5 and maintain there is another door into the kingdom. (Warren, *Your*, 401-402; Deaver, *Your*, 441, 442) Answer: *First*, at least some of these brethren agree that Jews who had been divorced and remarried while under the law of Moses were not required to break up these marriages when they later obeyed the gospel. Shall we argue they take the "except" out of Matthew 19:9 and that they also have the same right to take it out of John 3:5? If they reply these Jews were not under Christ's law when they did this, and His law is not retroactive, my reply is that the same thing was true of the Gentile in the first century and the Gentile (non-covenant people which now includes even a Jew who has not obeyed the gospel) today.

Second, if there was a passage which showed that John 3:5 was limited to Jews, or some other group, and was not universal, I would accept the position that the new birth was not required of

those to whom it was not applied by the Bible. The Scriptures teach that Christ spoke His marriage law to two believers, that He did not legislate on mixed marriages but Paul did, and that no scripture can be produced which shows that either Paul or Christ legislated on the marriage of two unbelievers.

Let these brethren meet the arguments on 1 Corinthians 7:10-15 instead of going to John 3:5 concerning which there is no passage limiting it as 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,12-15 limits Matthew 19:9.

Loose Attitude?

Am I encouraging a loose attitude toward marriage and encouraging divorce? Answer: *First*, was God encouraging divorce when He legislated Deuteronomy 24:1-4 through Moses?

Second, if one does not have to break up a marriage because of fornication, but forgives the fornicator, does this mean that a loose attitude toward fornication is being promoted?

Third, did the church in Jerusalem encourage a loose attitude because the law of Matthew 19:9 was not made retroactive on Jews who had divorced and remarried according to Deuteronomy 24:1-4?

Fourth, is a loose attitude toward sin promoted because sinners can be forgiven? (1 Cor. 6:8-10)

Fifth, did Paul encourage a loose attitude when he said that he, not the Lord, legislated on mixed marriages and when he gave different instructions than the Lord gave to two believers? (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15)

Sixth, am I promoting a loose attitude when I affirm the deserted believer in 7:15 is not under bondage to the deserter who is an unbeliever?

Seventh, because the Gentiles are not under the law of Christ does this mean one is promoting atheism, etc. No, the Gentiles are under the work of the law written on the heart (Rom. 1:18-2:15).

Eighth, can a man be forgiven for murdering his wife? If not, what scripture do you cite? Can a man whose wife is dead remarry? (Rom. 7:2-4) If not, what scripture do you cite? Do you promote a loose attitude toward murdering wives?

Marital Problems Cause Me to Take This Position?

Someone asked if I had marital problems which led me to take this position. Answer: *First*, one must be on guard not to twist scripture in an effort to rationalize and justify his own conduct. However, a scripture is not wrong just because it justifies one's conduct in a particular matter. An argument cannot be overthrown just because it justifies something in a person's life.

Second, my wife assures me she has never thought of divorce and I have never thought of divorce.

Third, if my beloved Mary and I had had problems, 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 would not justify anything for us since both of us are Christians.

Fourth, when I took this position as early as 1954 none of my children were contemplating marriage much less divorce and remarriage.

Fifth, someone must be having a hard time answering my arguments and found it easier to imply that I had twisted scripture in order to justify some marital situation in my own family.

Married While in Unbelief? 1 Corinthians 7:17

Does 1 Corinthians 7:17 prove the believer in 7:12 was married while in unbelief? Answer: *First*, if it is wrong to be married to an unbeliever, this wrong is not righted because one married before either heard the gospel. Although I think a Christian should marry a Christian, I believe the widow in 7:39 would be married in God's sight if she married a non-Christian.

Second, if all Christ's marriage laws apply to all marriages, is it right for an unbeliever to marry an unbeliever?

Third, I think it is likely that then as now there were cases where one spouse obeyed the gospel and one did not.

Fourth, both believing spouses were called while in unbelief. I do not know whether they became Christians before or after they married. All we *know* is they were both believers when Paul wrote to them.

Fifth, no one knows when the believer married the unbeliever, whether before conversion or not. All we *know* is one was a believer and one was not. It would not change the situation if the believer married the unbeliever before or after conversion. Do these brethren think if the believer married the unbeliever after

conversion that Paul would have said for the believer to divorce the unbeliever?

Matthew 5:32: Automatically An Adulterer

Does a woman become an adulterer just because she is put away unjustly? Answer: *First*, yes, if some brethren are right. "... *every one* that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, *maketh her* an adulteress: and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery." (Matt. 5:32) Why not argue that "*every one*" must mean every man who unjustly puts away his wife causes every such put away wife to be an adulteress. This would make an unjustly put away wife, who kept herself pure, an adulteress. She became an adulteress because of something she did not do. She did not put herself away and she did not commit adultery.

Second, it should be obvious that Jesus is speaking only of those wives who were put away and who then married. This is clearly implied by the next statement "and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery."

Matthew 19:9 Deals Only With Divorce and Remarriage?

Does Matthew 19:9 deal only with divorce and remarriage? Answer: *First*, the Jews asked about divorce (19:3), Christ stated the original marriage law (19:4-6), they asked why Moses allowed divorce (19:7), Jesus acknowledged that Moses had allowed it because of their hardness of heart (19:8), then He gave His legislation on the subject which was higher than Moses' but not as high as the original marriage law which made no provision for remarriage on the ground of fornication. (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:9) One can remain unmarried but it is right to marry. (19:10-12)

Second, the emphasis in Matthew 19:9 is on the binding nature of the bond and not on divorce, although it gives one ground for divorce and remarriage.

Third, Paul appealed to Christ's law (Matt. 19:9) to show the Corinthians that it is right for two Christians to remain married, and what should be done if one departs (for some reason other than fornication is evidently under consideration). However, in dealing with questions concerning mixed marriages Paul said that he, *not the Lord*, legislated on these. (7:12-15)

Matthew 19:9: Did Not Jesus Say Not to Divorce and Remarry?

Jesus said not to divorce and remarry except for fornication, therefore 1 Corinthians 7:15 cannot mean one is loosed from the marriage bond. Answer: The word which Jesus used for divorce was *choridzo*: "let not man put asunder." (Matt. 19:6) Paul said in 7:10-11 that Jesus said one believer was not to *choridzo* (depart) another believer. However in 7:11 a divorce had taken place for the believer was now "unmarried" (*agamos*) and was to remain unmarried or be reconciled. Since this divorce had not been for fornication, although they were divorced, Christ held them to the marriage bond. They were to remain unmarried or be reconciled (7:11). In striking contrast with this, if the unbeliever *choridzos* (departs) the believer, the believer is free, is not under bondage. The divorce freed the believer in this case from the marriage bond.

The word *choridzo* used both by Paul and by Jesus (Matt. 19:6; 1 Cor. 7:10,15) proves that, contrary to Deaver and Warren, divorce and remarriage are under consideration in 7:10-15 although they are not the only things under consideration.

One Hundred Wives

Warren asked if a man had married 99 women at different times, could he marry and keep the 100th with God's approval. (*Some Crucial*, 24; *Your*, 400) Answer: *First*, if a man had done so under the law of Moses, could he keep the 100th? If he had done this while the law was in force, could he have kept the 100th if he obeyed the gospel on Pentecost?

Second, if he had poisoned the first 99, and repented of the murders could he keep the 100th? If not, please cite the scripture. If he cannot cite a scripture, does it mean he approves murdering wives?

Third, it is a lot cheaper to seduce young women than to marry them. Could the man who had seduced 99 women repent and be free to marry? It is cheaper and easier to live with a woman than to marry her in many cases. And even if it is not easier and cheaper, does Warren think that a man who had lived with 99 different women, started living with another, repented of his past deeds, can then obey the gospel and marry the one he was living

with at the time he was baptized?

Questions like this cannot overthrow scriptures, and this question cannot overthrow 1 Corinthians 7:15 and place the deserted believer in bondage to the deserter. If someone does not like the questions which I asked, let him cease asking me such a question as this one.

Put Asunder by Whose Permission?

What right have I to put asunder those whom God joined? Answer: *First*, I have no such right.

Second, God gave specific permission for putting asunder in Matthew 19:9 to two believers.

Third, God did not bind Matthew 19:9 on a mixed marriage or on two unbelievers. God through Paul said the believer deserted by the unbeliever is not under bondage. (7:15) What right have you to place them under bondage when God said they are free?

Fourth, what right have you to put asunder marriages which took place in the world, even though they do not meet the high standard of Matthew 19:9? (Lk. 12:48) God did not say put them asunder, why do you try to do so? Why do you loose this marriage tie which God has bound? Would you have loosed the marriage tie of a Jew on Pentecost who had been divorced and remarried according to Deuteronomy 24:1-4?

Polygamy?

Does my position sanction polygamy in the church? Answer: *First*, God's original design was one man and one woman. (Gen 2:24)

Second, polygamy was tolerated among the patriarchs. (Gen 16:1-3,15; 17:23-26; 25:5-6; 26:34-35; 28:8-9; 29:10-30,31-35; 30:5-7,9-13).

Third, the non-covenant people were not under a higher law than the covenant people. (Lk. 12:48) Abimelech had more than one wife but he knew it was wrong for even a polygamist to have another man's wife. (Gen. 20:1-18)

Fourth, under the law of Moses *God gave David more than one wife.* (2 Sam. 12:7-8)

Fifth, polygamy is not to exist in the church, for each is to have his own mate, not mates. (1 Cor. 7:2) Once we come into Christ we live by His law for His people. The people who in the world

divorced and remarried for various reasons cannot do this any more after they come into Christ. The Lord gives only one reason for those in His covenant. (Matt. 19:9) Once we become Christians we must abide by Christ's laws from then on.

Polygamy: Consecutive?

Since I maintain that the world is not held to a higher standard than was Israel (Deut. 24:1-4) on divorce and remarriage, some maintain that this means "consecutive polygamy" for a man could marry, divorce, marry another, etc. Answer: *First*, does this mean every Jew who practiced Deuteronomy 24:1-4 was a polygamist?

Second, is a woman a polygamist, in a consecutive sense, if each of her five husbands died?

Third, if a woman had the bad luck, or bad judgment, to marry a man who then committed fornication, and so on until she had been scripturally divorced from six husbands, would she be a consecutive polygamist?

Fourth, if one lived with twenty different women over a period of time, would he be a consecutive polygamist even though he had not married them? Would he be free to marry?

Fifth, the fact that Christ did not legislate for mixed marriages or marriages in the world does not mean that marriage and divorce in the world, for some reason other than Matthew 19:9, is consecutive polygamy.

Promiscuity: Am I Encouraging Promiscuity?

Brethren agree with me that a person in the world who has been promiscuous, and has joined in the sex relation over a period of time to two hundred women (one man of whom I had read had been joined to 10,000) could obey the gospel, be forgiven and scripturally marry. Are they encouraging promiscuity? Then why accuse my position on 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 of encouraging it?

Romans 7:2-3

If the deserted believer in 1 Corinthians 7:15 is free to remarry, does it contradict Romans 7:2-3? (Lanier, *Your*, 493) Answer: *First*, Matthew 19:9 does not contradict Romans 7:2-4 just

because it gives an exception Romans 7:2-4 does not give.

Second, Paul does not contradict himself. He shows that Christ's law in Romans 7:2-4 and Matthew 19:9 is for two believers, and that he, Paul, gives a different legislation for mixed marriages on which our Lord did not speak. (7:10-11, 12-15) These different laws do not contradict for they do not both apply to the same category of marriages. Deuteronomy 24:1-4 does not contradict Romans 7:2-4 nor does 7:2-4 contradict Genesis 2:24. They are different laws applying to different people.

Third, Paul's purpose in Romans 7:1-6 is not to discuss every law which Christ's covenant involves for marriages in the church, mixed marriages, and marriages in the world. Paul is discussing the law and the gospel, and showing the necessity of dying to the law that we may be joined to Christ. He illustrates this by an appeal to the general marriage law (that it is for life) of Christ. (Rom. 7:1-6; 8:1; 2 Cor. 3:5-8) Paul knew that the law of Moses and the law of Christ did make provision for remarriage on some ground other than death. However, he cited the ideal, not the exception, when he illustrated how we became separated from the law and joined to Christ. That he did not mention desertion by an unbeliever (1 Cor. 7:15) is no more significant than the fact he did not mention fornication. (Matt. 19:9) This does not mean that Romans 7:2-4 refers to an unrecorded statement in the law or the Gospels.

Fourth, Romans 7:2-3 does not mention that Christ permitted two Christians to live apart, but it does not contradict 1 Corinthians 7:11. It would not have fitted Paul's illustration in Romans 7:2-4 to speak of living apart from the law without being divorced in actuality from it, or of deserting the law.

Fifth, some use Romans 7:2-4 to prove that one cannot divorce and remarry because of fornication. I disagree. Christ's legislation is for His people in His covenant (1 Cor. 7:10-11) and unless it applies now it never applied because it was not in force during the personal ministry when the law of Moses was in force. Moses' laws did not pass away a piece at a time. (Matt. 5:17-18; Col. 2:14-17) The fact that fornication is not mentioned in Romans 7:2-4 is no more significant than the fact it is not mentioned in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11.

Sixth, brethren who insist that "whosoever" must be universal and cover the world and the church, do not argue that "the woman" in Romans 7:2-4 means every married woman. They

agree that Matthew 19:9 (“fornication”) limits this law and that a woman can be freed by fornication as well as by death.

Pentecost: Did All Christ’s Laws Start Then?

Did all of Christ’s laws go into force on Pentecost? Answer: *First*, all His laws were contained in His will, or covenant, at the time of His death but the will did not become operative until He had ascended, made purification for our sins, sat down at God’s right hand, and sent the Spirit to inform the world that He now reigns as King and Priest. (Heb. 1:3,13; 8:1-4; Acts 2:34-36)

Second, however, all the truth was not revealed in its fullness on Pentecost. The Spirit did not guide the apostles into all the truth on that first day. (John 16:12-13) (a) In spite of Matthew 28:18-19; Acts 2:39, the apostles and the church in Jerusalem did not understand, until the revelation at the household of Cornelius, that the Gentiles were to obey the gospel without being bound by the law. (Acts 10:9-16,17-23,26-35; 11:1,2-3,4-18; 15:1-5,6-7,8-12,22-31) (b) For a time Jewish Christians were permitted to walk according to the law, although they were not to bind it on Gentiles. (Acts 21:17-26) However, by the time the book of Hebrews was written no one who served the tabernacle had any right to our altar, and Christians had to leave the city, or camp, and go outside the city wall; so to speak. (Heb. 13:10-14) These two points illustrate the fact that not everything was revealed in its fullness on Pentecost. I agree with Deaver that 1 Corinthians 13:9-10 shows that not everything was revealed at once, but a part now and a part then until all was delivered (*Spiritual Sword*, April, 1974, 35-36).

Third, truth was often orally revealed before it was written down. The events of Acts 2 were not recorded until long after Acts 2.

Fourth, if the truth in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,12-15 (that Christ had spoken on the marriage of Christians but not of others) was revealed orally long before Paul wrote it, I have no knowledge of it. It certainly had not been revealed to the Corinthians before this, otherwise they would not have been so ignorant of these matters concerning marriage which they asked. We know it is revealed in 7:10-11,12-15. We who have the complete revelation do not need to worry about Christians who lived in the time before the revelation was completely made. When it was first

revealed after the church was established is irrelevant to our understanding of it, and our realization that it was not revealed during Christ's personal ministry—"I, not the Lord." (7:12) John 16:12-13 proves there was an earlier revelation which was incomplete and later revelation which completed the new covenant truth.

Fifth, surely they were not required to obey a new covenant truth before the Spirit revealed it. When a truth was first revealed is irrelevant to our obligation to accept and act on it today.

Sin for One but Not for the Other?

Can a marriage be right for one and wrong for another, a sin for one and not for another? An unbeliever can divorce and remarry without sinning, but a Christian cannot except for fornication. If a divorced unbeliever marries an unscripturally divorced believer is it sinful for the Christian but not for the unbeliever? Do not adulterers come in pairs? If the unbeliever sins, against what law does he sin? If the law of Matthew 19:9, does this not prove he is under it? Answer: *First*, a single person is eligible to marry but that does not prove that a particular person is eligible to marry this single person. Another man's wife is not free to marry him, and he is not free to marry her. An unbeliever is not free to marry a believer who is not free to marry even though the unbeliever is under a different law.

Second, regardless of this problem Paul, *not the Lord*, legislated for mixed marriages, and neither legislated for the two unbelievers.

Third, these brethren are saying it would not be wrong for the unbeliever if he is not under Christ's covenant law. If it is wrong for him to do so, it must be because he is under new covenant law in this matter. It is a fact that God told Israel not to make covenants with, nor show mercy to, nor contract marriages with non-Israelites in the land. (Deut. 7:1-3) These nations were not under Moses' law and God gave no such law to them. Did a non-Jew sin if he showed mercy to an Israelite? Did a non-Jew sin if he made a covenant with or contracted a marriage with a Jew? If so, against what law did he sin? Was he under the law of Moses? These brethren will not argue that he was under Moses' law. Did a Jew sin if he made a covenant with or married one in these

nations? Was the same marriage a sin for the Jew but not for the non-Jew? Was it right for them to marry someone God said could not marry them? If one cannot figure out the answer to these questions, we both still know that the non-Jew was not under the law of Moses and that the Jew was not to marry the non-Jew. When these brethren have figured out the answer to these questions, they have figured out why an unbeliever who is not under Matthew 19:9 cannot marry one who is bound by it and has not been divorced because of the fornication of his or her mate.

Fourth, Ezra did not tell the foreign women they had sinned in marrying Jews, nor that they had to take the initiative and break up the marriage. “*We have trespassed against our God, and have married foreign women . . . let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives.*” (Ezra 10:2-3) “*Ye have trespassed . . . to increase the guilt of Israel . . . separate yourselves . . . we have greatly transgressed in this matter.* (Ezra 10:1-13) Nothing was said of the guilt or lack of guilt of the non-covenant wives.

Fourth, Paul told the believer not to depart but he gave no instructions to the unbeliever. If the unbeliever in 7:12-15 left, what instruction of Paul did the unbeliever violate? None. The same act (depart) was forbidden to the believer but not to the unbeliever.

Fifth, the widow in 1 Corinthians 7:39 is instructed to marry a Christian, but there is no such instruction to widows in the world. Is it wrong for a Christian widow to marry an unbeliever but not for an unbeliever to marry an unbeliever? If an unbeliever married this widow (1 Cor. 7:39), what law did the unbeliever violate? Is there a law which says an unbeliever is not to marry a believer? If 1 Corinthians 7:39 tells an unbeliever not to marry a believer, how can *these* brethren (who say all Christ’s laws on marriage apply to all people) say that 1 Corinthians 7:39 does not bind an unbeliever to marry a believer? If the unbeliever married the believer in 1 Corinthians 7:39 was the marriage right for the unbeliever but wrong for the believer?

Sixth, a Christian is not to keep company with, “no, not to eat” with the ones disfellowshipped in 1 Corinthians 5:9,11. A Christian and an unbeliever are eating with a Christian who has been disfellowshipped. There is no law of Christ which regulates the eating of those without with a disfellowshipped person. (5:12-13) Is the eating wrong for the Christian and right for the unbeliever? If all Christ’s laws apply to all people, how can it be

right for the unbeliever?

Seventh, a Christian is commanded not to be unequally yoked with an unbeliever. (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1) Christians were to come out and be separate. Is the unbeliever commanded not to be yoked unequally with a believer? Is the unbeliever commanded to come out from among the believers? Who is commanded to do the separating?

Eighth, is it right for the Christian who has sinned to repent and pray (Acts 8:22) but wrong for the alien sinner to try to find remission of sins in this way? (Acts 2:38) Is it right for the Christian to repent and be baptized unto the remission of sins? (Acts 2:38) How can the same act be right for the alien sinner but wrong for the Christian who has sinned? Because two different laws of Christ apply to these two different categories of sinners. The Lord's law of pardon to the Christian is not the law of pardon to the alien.

What Is the Answer?

If I do not know the answer to the question, whether it is a sin for one but not for another, I know that the Gentiles were not under the law of Moses but it was a sin for an Israelite to marry with the nations when they went into Palestine. (Ezra 10) If I do not know the answer, it is still true that Christ did not speak on mixed marriages and neither Paul nor Christ spoke on the marriage of two unbelievers. (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15) Why are people so determined to make Christ legislate on all marriages, and convict Paul of error when he said he, *not the Lord*, spoke to mixed marriages? What is the answer to the previous question?

First, the Christian who is not scripturally divorced is not eligible to marry either a believer or an unbeliever. The Israelites were not eligible to marry foreign women, and such a marriage was not recognized by God for it was forbidden to His people. The law to God's people is sufficient to keep a marriage of one of God's people from being valid when it violates God's law for His people, regardless of the law under which people outside the covenant live. God does not unite in marriage those who marry contrary to His law for His people.

Second, the Christian who is unscripturally divorced from a Christian is still that Christian's married mate. People outside

the covenant, who were evidently under the law on the heart of Romans 2:14-15, knew it was wrong to marry another man's wife. This was a violation of the law they were under even though they were not under the covenant. (Gen. 12:15-19; 20:1-18) It was wrong, it was adultery. It was wrong for people in the world to commit adultery or fornication. (1 Cor. 6:9) People outside the covenant committed adultery, which was condemned by the law on the heart, when they married another man's wife whether that woman was in or out of the covenant. *At the very time* Paul wrote the Corinthian letter he spoke of the Jews as being *under the law* (1 Cor. 9:20), the Gentiles being *without the law* (9:20-21), and Paul spoke of himself as being in another category, i.e., "*under law to Christ.*" (9:21) Being without the law had reference to the law of Moses (9:20-21), for the Gentile was not without any law at all. "For as many as have sinned *without the law*. . . *have not the law* . . . *not having the law*, are the law unto themselves; that they show *the work of the law written in their hearts.*" (Rom. 2:12-15) The Gentile under the law on the heart had a law against adultery, and it was adultery to have another man's wife. However, the Gentile in Paul's day did not have the law of Christ on divorce and remarriage that Christ set forth in Matthew 19:9.

Safe Course?

Is the safe course for the believer in 7:15 not to remarry? Answer: *First*, no. What is safe about acting as if you were under bondage when Paul said you were not?

Second, is it a safe course to legislate where Christ did not and bind 7:10-11 on 7:12-15? Is it a safe course to contradict Paul who said Christ did not speak concerning mixed marriages? Is it a safe course to bind Matthew 19:9 on marriages on which Christ did not bind it and refuse to baptize people who will not break up their marriages? Is it a safe course to break up such marriages?

Temptation: Free Because Exposed to Temptation?

Is the deserted believer in 7:15 free because subjected to temptation? Answer: No. The deserted believer in 7:11 is also exposed to temptation. Paul said the believer in 7:15 was free if the unbeliever was not content to dwell and departed (7:12,15).

When a Non-Christian Learns of Matthew 19:9 Is It Not Binding on Him?

When a person outside of Christ learns that Christ taught Matthew 19:9, does not that law then and there become binding on him? Answer: *First*, no, because they are not yet under the covenant. Christ's law in Matthew 19 was bound on the marriage of Christians and not that of non-Christians, or even on a mixed marriage. (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15) To illustrate: A gentile who learned the various things that were required of Israel, while the law of Moses was in force, was not automatically bound by the laws which operated within the covenant. Of course, if there was a parallel law in the law on the heart he was under, it was not because it was in the law of Moses but because it was a moral law discernible even without divine revelation. However, when the Gentile entered the old covenant he was bound by the laws which operated within the covenant.

Second, it is true that the Jews, while under the old covenant, were obligated to accept Jesus as the Messiah when He was manifested to them. However, they were not at that moment obligated to be born of water and the spirit into the kingdom (John 3:1-5) for the kingdom was not yet in hand. (Matt. 3:2; 4:17,23; 10:7; Mk. 9:1) They were not in the kingdom, for it had not yet come, therefore they were not obligated to comply with its terms of admission at that time. Furthermore, they were not obligated to accept Christ's teaching on divorce and remarriage while they were outside of the kingdom, and they were outside of it for it had not yet come. The law of Moses did not pass away a little piece at a time. None of it passed until all of it passed. (Matt. 5:17-18) Matthew 19:9 did not go into operation until the establishment of the kingdom. However, they were obligated to accept Jesus as the Messiah. The kingdom came on the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection. People in the world are in sin, not because they have refused to believe in Christ (of whom many of them have not yet heard), but because they have sinned against the truth which they do have. (Rom. 2:14-15) If they want to be forgiven, they must accept Christ's law of pardon for the alien sinner. And Christ said that after they were converted, after they were baptized into Him, they were to be taught to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded. (Matt. 28:20) However, Christ does not bind these things on the world, but on

the converts. By these things I mean the things commanded in Matthew 28:20.

When Did You Arrive at This Position?

I do not know exactly when I first came to this conclusion. *First*, in 1954 I sent a brief statement of my position to several preachers for criticism. I sent one to E. C. Fuqua and he wrote me June 2, 1954. I never believed Fuqua's position that the world is under civil law only. Paul taught otherwise. (Rom. 2:14-15)

Second, in 1959, I distributed less than a page of material on it to my class in Corinthians. If I recall correctly, I stopped teaching Corinthians about that time. In fact, I do not recall discussing it in class since 1959 until November 1978 when a student raised the question in class. I did not discuss it though I stated my position in very brief form.

Third, the topic assigned me in Abilene in 1961 necessitated my comments on 1 Corinthians 7:12-15. (*ACC Lectures*, 1961, 327-337) As far as I recall, no one gave *me* any adverse criticism then.

Fourth, I answered briefly a question relating to this subject at the preacher's forum at Harding in 1976. I was asked to speak on it at the forum in 1977 at which Roy Deaver spoke in opposition.

Fifth, I had one article published on one aspect of the subject in the *Firm Foundation* in 1978.

Sixth, I have heard reports which indicated that my position was not really understood. One person wrote an article saying that I had used no scripture to prove my point in 1977 but "had only assumptions based upon the Roman and Greek cultural backgrounds." In fact, I made no such arguments.

Seventh, although some people have been pressing the other side continually, I have not spoken on it since the forum of 1977.

Why Did the Corinthians Need to Ask These Questions?

Deaver said the Corinthians had asked Paul such questions as whether it was right to marry, whether it was right for two Christians to remain married, and whether it was right for Christians to remain married to unbelievers. (*Your*, 444, *Notes*, Chart 8) The church had written Paul and needed these answers on marriage. "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote. . . ."

(7:1) Why was the church so ignorant on these questions about marriage? If Paul had preached what these brethren say must be preached, the church in Corinth would have had all these questions answered before they were baptized, and before the church even existed. Furthermore, everyone who was converted would know the answers before conversion. Garland Elkins wrote: "We have heard it said, 'There is no example in the Bible where the inspired apostles required an adulterous couple to separate when they were baptized.' Of course there is none, because repentance was placed before baptism, and its meaning was so clear that all sinners knew they had to quit all unlawful relationships and practices. When repentance is properly taught today, and people obey the truth, the church will not have much trouble over unscriptural marriages. That problem will have been solved before baptism." (*Your*, 150)

First, we know that Paul properly preached repentance. Therefore before baptism all the questions about marriages were dealt with, likely some marriages were broken up before baptism, and every convert knew the truth on all these questions in 7:10-15 about marriage—if Paul and these brethren preach the same things about these matters. Elkins said when repentance is properly taught the problem of unscriptural marriages "will have been solved before baptism." All sorts of marriages existed in Corinth, therefore Paul answered all questions before baptism. Paul could not have straightened out all these problems about marriages before baptism without having taught marriage is right, Christians are to remain married, remarriage is only for fornication, and a Christian should remain married to an unbeliever. The fact that these questions were raised later by the Corinthians proves that neither Paul nor any other preacher who taught the Corinthians had broken up any marriages prior to baptism. If brother Elkins had converted them, they would have had the questions settled before baptism. The fact Paul had not settled them before baptism proves he did not preach what Elkins preaches about marriage and the aliens. *Is it not clear that Paul left them in the married state in which he found them?* (1 Cor. 7:20)

Someone may say that Paul preached the resurrection, but some denied it. (1 Cor. 15:4,11) True, but Paul in dealing with it *reminded* them of the fact that he had already preached the resurrection of Christ to them. (15:4,11) "Now *if Christ is*

preached that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (15:12) Paul reminded them it had been preached to them in order to save them. (15:1-5) Some, not all of the church, questioned the resurrection. If I understand rightly, they were denying that others would be raised but not that Christ was not raised. However, Paul showed they already had the information about the gospel which was sufficient to show the resurrection would take place. In dealing with the questions on marriage, Paul did not rebuke them and remind them that when he was with them, and prior to baptism, he had already answered most of their questions about marriage. As low as was the standard of divorce and remarriage among Jews and Greeks, some marriages must have been split up if these brethren are right. This would have been such a dramatic thing everyone would have remembered it. And even if it had not been necessary to split any, if Elkins was right, Paul had clearly dealt with most of these questions, or at least the ones in 7:10-15.

Elkins must prove that the divorce and remarriages of aliens, which were on some ground other than fornication, were adulterous.

Second, the church in Corinth knew that sexual sins were wrong. (5:1, they should have already mourned about this, 5:2) Although people may know some things about which they need to be reminded, 1 Corinthians 7:1,10-15 shows that these questions about marriage, divorce, and remarriage had not been settled for them before this. Since some of them had been fornicators and adulterers before conversion (6:9-11), if previous marriages had been broken up prior to baptism they would have known that marriage is right both for believers and for mixed marriages, that divorce and remarriage, except for fornication were forbidden for people in the world, that two people who separated must remain unmarried, and that all who are married are in bondage to this marriage unless divorce takes place because of fornication; if these brethren are right. Paul had evidently left them in the marriage situations in which he had found them, for if any of these marriages had violated what God would accept of them when they came into Christ, Paul would have taught them and they would not have raised questions such as they raised in 1 Corinthians 7. Obviously they had raised no questions on polygamy, although having one's own wife or

husband eliminated polygamy. (7:2)

Third, whatever is essential to repentance had been preached to the Corinthians. Breaking up marriages formed on a lower basis than Matthew 19:9 would have been required in repentance, if these brethren are right. (SS, July 1978, p. 41) They could not have been washed, sanctified, and justified if they had not done so. (6:11) They *knew something* about adultery before they were converted. (6:9-11) They had been washed, etc., but they had these questions about marriage; so these questions had evidently not been covered prior to conversion. Paul either failed in his duty to preach the truth to them, or these brethren are guilty of binding on prospective converts what Paul never bound. Paul would not have baptized the impenitent any more than John would have. (Matt. 3:7-8) If Elkins had converted them, they would have known that all Christ's law applies to all marriages and they would have known about marriages between believers and about mixed marriages. If Elkins had preached to them before conversion, they would have told Paul he was wrong when he said the Lord had not spoken on mixed marriages because Elkins preaches that He spoke on them in Matthew 19:9.

Unjust and Unfair?

It would be unfair and unjust for God to treat two believers in the same situation by different laws. The deserted believer in 7:11 cannot remarry but the deserted believer in 7:15 can. This is unfair, therefore God did not give two different laws for these two believers. (Warren, *Charts*, 222; Lanier, 17; *Your*, 495) This is related to the double standard argument. Answer: *First*, we must accept what the Bible teaches even if it seems unfair to us. (a) We do not take baptism out of the Bible because it seems unfair to one on whom a tree fell when he was on his way to be baptized. (b) Is it fair that the Jewish woman put away under the law could remarry, but the Christian cannot? (Deut. 24:1-4; Matt. 19:4-9) These two different people are not under the same law. (c) Is it fair to treat a woman unjustly divorced with reference to marriage the same way one treats the woman divorced for fornication? The woman divorced for a trivial reason has been unjustly deprived of her husband and home. (d) J. D. Thomas says the deserted believer in 7:15 is free because it is presumed that the deserting unbeliever will commit fornication. The Christian deserted by a moral person is at a disadvantage, in so far as

marriage is concerned, in comparison with the woman deserted by a person who fornicates. (e) Is it just to permit a woman to remarry who lost her husband by death, but not one who permanently lost her husband by desertion? (1 Cor. 7:39; Rom. 7:1-4) (f) Is it just for a single man who fornicates with a married woman to be free to marry but the woman is not free to remarry if her husband divorces her? Are there different laws for the single fornicator than for the married fornicator? If so, why find it impossible to believe different laws regulate the two believers in 1 Corinthians 7:11 and 7:15? (g) The man who murders his wife is free to remarry after repentance, if the state does not execute him. David's marriage, though God expressly punished him otherwise, was accepted even though he had Bathsheba's husband murdered. Is not a murderer in such a case treated differently than the innocent believer in 7:11? (h) J. D. Thomas said the Jew who had been divorced and remarried under the law of Moses was not required to break up his marriage when he obeyed the gospel, but all others are. Is this just? (i) J. D. Thomas teaches that the Gentile who was without a written law from God was held to a higher standard of divorce and remarriage than the Jew who had the oracles of God. (Rom. 3:2) Is this fair? Does it harmonize with Luke 12:48? (j) What is fair about their position that a man in the world can live at different times with fifty women, but if he does not marry any of them, he is free to marry after obeying the gospel; but if two people in the world divorce and remarry one time on grounds other than Matthew 19:9, they cannot be baptized unless they break up this marriage?

Second, Paul showed that Christ gave one law to regulate the marriage of two believers, and the Spirit through Paul gave another law to regulate a mixed marriage. (7:10-11,12-15) Instead of *our* deciding what is unjust and unfair, let us accept what the Bible says even if the Bible gives two different laws for two different categories of marriage. Why should it be thought unscriptural for two Christians who have the oracles of God to be held to a higher standard of divorce and remarriage than a mixed marriage and one between two unbelievers? Is not more required of those who have more? (Lk. 12:48)

Unjust If Unbeliever Can Break Up the Marriage?

Would it not be unjust if the unbeliever has the power to break up the believer's marriage? Answer: *First*, the unbeliever can

leave, and can remain away the rest of the believer's life. Would it not be unjust for the unbeliever to be able to do this for this, in fact if not in theory, ends all married life for the believer? Yet the one who raised this question recognized that the unbeliever can leave permanently.

Second, would it not be more unjust if the unbeliever can leave, never to return, and the believer still be bound in the marriage bond and condemned to live a celibate life?

Third, would it not be more unjust if the unbeliever could leave any time he wanted to, but could come back any time he wanted to, and claim the believer's body in the marriage relationship? (1 Cor. 7:3-5)

Fourth, if one is going to reject a position because it is not strictly just, he should reject the statement of Paul that when one believer deserts another believer, both believers must remain unmarried or be reconciled. (1 Cor. 7:11) What is just about forcing the deserted believer to remain unmarried? The believer who deserts is guilty of fraud against the deserted believer. "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency." (7:5) It is unjust for the defrauder (the one who does the deserting) to defraud and to expose the deserted believer to Satan's temptations. However, none of us are going to reject the clear statement of Paul ("remain unmarried, or else be reconciled," 7:11) just because it is unjust. Why place the believer, deserted by the unbeliever, under bondage in 7:15, when Paul said this believer was not under bondage, just because you think it would be unjust for the unbeliever to have the power to break up the marriage and the believer not have a similar power to desert the unbeliever and break up the marriage? If one is going to argue on the basis of strict justice one would have to argue that the only just thing is for the believer to be free from the marriage bond in 1 Corinthians 7:15. And this is exactly what Paul says, i.e., the believer is free.

Fifth, why did Christ hold the two believers to a higher law in 7:11 than he did the mixed marriage in 7:15? Even if I have no idea why, it does not change the fact that 7:11 and 7:15 differ in their instructions. In 7:11 neither is free and in 7:15 the marriage bond is broken. The answer is that the marriage of the two believers is under a higher law (Matt. 19:9) than is the marriage

of the believer and the unbeliever. If one does not think it is just for Christ to hold two believers to a higher standard than a mixed marriage, if they do not think it is right for Christ to require more of those who are in His covenant than those who are out of it (Lk. 12:48), they can discuss the matter with Christ and not with me for this is Christ's teaching. I am not the author of this teaching. I accept it for I am in Christ's covenant. I advise others to accept His teaching even though they do not see the justice of it in every instance. These brethren agree with me that we should accept what the Bible teaches and not just that part which measures up to our concept of justice. The issue is: What does the Bible teach? The issue is not: Am I at liberty to twist a passage of scripture in order to make it fit my concept of what is just? No Christian will affirm that it is right for him to force a passage to conform to his idea of justice. It surely is not scriptural for one to insist that we need the divine revelation in order to arrive at the full truth, and then to reject something in the divine revelation because it does not harmonize with our uninspired view of justice.

Wife Swapping?

Does my position encourage wife swapping in the world? Answer: *First*, people in the world knew it was wrong to swap wives or in any other way to have another man's wife. (Gen. 12:17-20; 20:1-18)

Second, it was wrong under the law of Moses even though there was a low standard for divorce and remarriage. (Deut. 24:1-4)

Third, it is wrong for those under the new covenant. (Heb. 13:4)

Fourth, these brethren, as a general rule, say that a woman should go back to her first husband if possible. Therefore, they would agree that these people could be married if they swapped their wives back to the original husbands. Are they therefore encouraging wife swapping? If they repented, would not their sins be forgiven and leave them free to return to the first mate?

Fifth, are these brethren encouraging living with mates without marriage? They say that such arrangements can be repented of and one is free to marry.

Herod and Herodias

Since I did not know his address, I sent some criticism of some things in Dick Sztanyo's chapter in Warren's *Your* to him via

Warren the end of May, 1978. Due to the pressure of his school work he did not get a response to me until January 22, 1979 within a few hours of my finishing the last of the galley proof for this book. Most of the proof had already been returned to the publisher with corrections. It is too late for me to deal in this book with everything said in his twenty page reply. However, I am including the following brief observations. *First*, I am grateful he was able to find time to criticize what I had said. I submitted material for criticism to over thirty people, but only three or four had time to make any criticisms.

Second, Sztanyo's response made clear to me what I did not understand from his chapter in Warren's book, i.e., that he does not believe God sanctioned in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 divorce and remarriage on various grounds. There was no law of Moses authorizing, with God's approval, divorce and remarriage on any ground other than fornication. Therefore, in the Mosaic covenant all divorces and remarriages on some ground other than fornication were sinful (adulterous) marriages which had to be repented of and broken up in order for a Jew to be saved; if he or she was in such a marriage. Sztanyo was not saying that two different laws (Deut. 24:1-4 and Matt. 19:9) for divorce and remarriage, with God's approval, were in operation in the law of Moses in the time of John the Baptist. Sztanyo's position is that the principle in Matthew 19:9 was the principle which was in force in all dispensations on all marriages; both Jews and Gentiles. The law stated in Matthew 19:9 is the one which has always been in force, and Christ simply accepted as His own the same law which God always required of man. In effect, when Jesus said: "And I say unto you" (Matt. 19:9) He was saying that He affirmed the same law which has *always* been in force and which the Pharisees did not understand. The fact that this position is held by a rare individual here and there (in so far as my knowledge goes and it may not go very far!) does not make it false. Some things in chapter VIII and more in chapter IX show that the law embodied in Matthew 19:9 is not the law to which God has always held His people.

Third, if God's marriage law, which He has permitted for His people, is rooted in God's nature and *cannot change*, this law would not be Matthew 19:9 which allows divorce and remarriage on the ground of fornication, or of the death of a spouse, but is Genesis 2:24 which makes it permanent without any exception.

He wrote: "Brother Bales says that: 'to be consistent he could not allow the exception because this would violate the law in Genesis 2:24, which makes no exception, and which on his logic is an eternal principle which even Christ could not change' (p. 12). Indeed, brother Bales, this passage does not even mention *divorce* at all, let alone the exception (neither you nor I are so foolish as to ignore additional revelation on the subject. The difference is that I hold that all further revelation is absolutely consistent with the original declaration in Genesis 2. Your position entails the idea of additional revelation declaring exceptions not included, implied, or intended by the original declaration.) But my logic is not so faulty since this is the *very passage* our Lord used to argue His case concerning the *one* allowable exception for divorce and remarriage." (manuscript, pp. 6-7) My answer is: (1) I agree that Genesis 2:24 does not mention divorce at all. Divorce was neither included in it nor implied in it. God's original marriage law did not mention divorce, and since it is as unchanging as God's nature no change could be permitted which allowed divorce on any ground. No exception is included, implied, or intended in Genesis 2:24. (2) My argument on Matthew 19:9 is based on the fact that we should accept additional revelation, and that the additional revelation in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,12-15 shows that Matthew 19:9 is covenant legislation. (3) Christ appealed to Genesis 2:24 not to find the exception He gave in Matthew 19:9 but to show His questioners that God's original marriage law was not the one given through Moses. (Deut. 24:1-4) Christ did not base the exception on what was said in Genesis, but on His own authority: "And I say unto you." (Matt. 19:9)

Fourth, all his discussion whether Herod was a Jew or a Gentile is irrelevant *if* Matthew 19:9 is the law binding on all marriages in all dispensations whether people were in or out of covenant relationship.

Fifth, a discussion of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 is unnecessary in order for one to know that Matthew 19:9 is limited by additional revelation. (1 Cor. 7:10-11,12-15)

Sixth, anything which I did not notice, in the long reply which I sent to Sztanyo (and which was greatly condensed in the chapter in this book), was due to the fact that it was irrelevant to my case, dealt with elsewhere, or simply overlooked by me. For example, it was useless for me to discuss the article he quoted from *The Catholic Encyclopedia* because my book shows that I

base my position on Paul's teaching, and not on that of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Lord willing, I hope to correspond with brother Sztanyo with the desire to teach and to be taught.

1 Corinthians 11:1

Paul teaches that we are to harmonize what he says with Jesus' teaching instead of harmonizing Jesus' teaching with Paul's. (1 Cor. 11:1) Answer: *First*, Paul is speaking of his conduct being in harmony with Jesus' when he sought not his own profit but the salvation of others. (10:32-11:1)

Second, the Bible does harmonize with itself, although we are not always in harmony with the Bible. However, Jesus does not teach us that we are to take what he taught in His personal ministry and make it the total standard which all teaching must fit in the sense that no other teaching can show that the teaching in the Gospels is a part of the incomplete revelation. To make everything fit the Gospels, by making the Gospels God's full revelation on every subject on which they teach, would be to contradict Jesus' statement that He gave an incomplete revelation but that after His ascension He would give the full revelation by the Spirit through the inspired men. (John 16:12-15)

Third, Jesus was sent only to the house of Israel. (Matt. 15:24) In His personal ministry "these twelve Jesus sent forth, and charged them, saying, Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5-6) Did Paul fail to follow Jesus when he went to the Gentiles? (Gal. 2:8-9) No, for additional information shows that the gospel was to be preached worldwide. (Matt. 28:18-20)

Jesus preached the kingdom was *at hand* (Matt. 4:17), and sent the twelve to do the same thing. (Matt. 10:7) Did Paul fail to follow Jesus when he preached the kingdom was *in hand*, i.e., Christ is now reigning? (Eph. 1:21-23; 1 Cor. 15:24-28)

Jesus instituted the Lord's supper on a week night and in connection with a meal (Matt. 26:17-29), but Paul observed it on the Lord's day (Acts 20:7) and legislated that a meal was not to be served in connection with the Lord's supper. (1 Cor. 11:20-22,33-34)

Fourth, Paul's imitation of Christ (1 Cor. 11:1) did not mean

that he did not receive additional revelations from Christ. He was following Christ when he accepted and recorded the teaching of the Spirit that Christ spoke to the marriage of two believers (1 Cor. 7:10-11) and that he, Paul, spoke by the Spirit to the mixed marriages on which Christ had not spoken in His personal ministry. (7:12-15)

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