

~Other Speakers S-Z: Robert Wurtz II:

CHAPTER 3

WHAT GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER LET NOT MAN PUT ASUNDER

For the Hardness of Your Hearts

The fact that divorce in the "Church" is statistically the same in terms of percentages as the heathen society in which we live- testifies that the Church is filled with carnality. Two equally yoked Christians walking together in the Spirit of God do not get divorced. Jesus points to the true reasoning for Moses allowing divorce in the first place as the "hardness of the peoples hearts" (Matthew 19:8). It is from this condition that we will discuss divorce- as the error of "hardness of heart" begets the error of divorce. The hearts of the people have to be dealt with- as the hardened hearts of stone are worthless to bring about the true design of marriage within society. Ezekiel 36:26-27 reads... A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. This is what it means to be born again according to John 3:3 and to have His "seed" remain in us since we have been born of God (I John 3:9). Without this process a person is not saved no matter what they profess or confess. Upon realizing the enormity of our sin in light of the true revelation of God's holiness- we see the great need for our sin to be purged and our hearts to be replaced. Until this happens the cross of Christ appears as foolishness to them that are perishing (I Corinthians 1:18).

Separation Begets Separation

People are not just sinners they are DEAD in trespasses and sins (Separated from God; Ephesians 2:1-5; Colossians 2:13). You can't put a Band-Aid on a dead person and send them home from the hospital- they need a transformation of the Spirit that results in their becoming a new creation in Christ that walks NOT after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Romans 8:1-4). The Gospel of humanism places the emphasis on the assurance of salvation and not the true process of the born again experience itself. The Gospel of humanism says, "be assured," but the bible clearly warns us repeatedly to "examine ourselves whether we be in the faith" (I Corinthians 11:28; II Corinthians 13:5). The fact that a person would even consider divorce ought to be a red flag to examine themselves- but assurance says, "There is forgiveness." At the LEAST a Christian seeking divorce is in a "prodigal" state of backsliding. And IF they are true prodigals they WILL "come to themselves."

Modern Christianity does not teach walking in the Spirit... but rather, is a perpetual "sin-repent-sin-repent-sin-repent" Christianity. This is NOT true Christianity- nor is it victory. It is CARNALITY. The foundation of Christianity is repentance- in which we are then Born Again after the personality of God and receive the witness and working of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16). As children of God we have His Holy Spirit- as the old man is dead and the new man is alive to live after Christ (Romans 6:6). We are to walk in the Spirit free from any conscious sin (Acts 23:1; II Corinthians 1:17; I Timothy 1:5; etc.). Without this foundation in place we may as well be trying to teach a pagan about God's true design for marriage. When Christians are separated from God there is no wonder they separate from their spouses in divorce.

Reconciliation is God's Plan in Times of Trouble

Remember in our previous study of adultery we learned that "adultery was the act whereby any married man was exposed to the risk of having a spurious (illegitimate) offspring imposed upon him." This is the great fear for men or woman alike when it comes to adultery. If a married man goes off and creates an illegitimate child with another woman- a grievous and troublesome wound has been thrust deep within the faithful spouse the likes of which are hard to imagine for a person who has never been there. It carries with it the greatest negative emotion in the human soul... betrayal. However, as gruesome a crime as this is it does NOT necessitate divorce. God never mandated divorce- except in the case of the intermarriage of the Jews with Pagans in Ezra 10. In this case the souls of the kids were damned to the extent that they couldn't even speak the Hebrew language anymore and only knew the language of paganism. In every other case of legitimate marriage- God's plan is reconciliation and restoration of the marriage. Only with the exception of fornication is divorce granted by God and we will assume that if divorce is granted by God- so to there is liberty for remarriage. Otherwise a whole quagmire of nonsensical issues surface which, God knowing the hearts of men, and women, would not allow to go undealt with. It is my argument that God understands the human need for cohabitation and would not grant a divorce to people and expect celibacy when He has already stated that

satan will tempt those for their incontinency (lack of self-control) who do not "join together again" with their mate after extended periods of fasting and prayer... so we can glean from this that God would not place man in a scenario where sin would be perpetually crouching at the door (I Corinthians 7:2-5).

Except it be for Fornication

As we mention previously, the liberty given to a man by the Mosaic law to put away his wife "because he found some uncleanness" or something offensive in her (Deuteronomy 24:1) was an accommodation to the hardness of the Jewish heart, and did not harmonize with God's original plan concerning the nature of marriage. The two schools of thought in Jesus day were based in the teachings of Hillel and Shammai. One believes divorce for any cause, the other believing only in the case of fornication. Jesus, being tested by the people answered this issue as follows: He, therefore, who puts away his wife, except on the ground of her fornication, and marries another, commits adultery (Matthew 19:9), and he who thus puts her away leads her to commit the same crime (Matthew 5:32). He who marries a woman that has been divorced commits adultery, and the woman who puts away her husband and marries another man (Mark 10:12) incurs the same transgression. This indicates that God did not acknowledge the divorce to begin with and still considers the originally parties married- otherwise the sin would not be adultery merely some lesser sexual crime. We may observe in regard to the passages pertaining to divorce (Matthew 5, 19, Mark 10, Luke 16), first, that Mark and Luke do not record the exception preserved in Matthew, "excepting for the cause of fornication." Hermeneutically, the plain reconciliation of the passages must be found in the principle that an exception in a fuller document must explain a briefer one.

Fornication for grounds of divorce is a sexual crime since the beginning of the betrothal period (see Matthew 1:19) committed by either of the parties with a third person. Fornication is a blanket term that covers all sexual crimes from adultery to homosexuality to bestiality to incest. The exception of fornication in Jesus' teaching is the SOLE exception as grounds for divorce- to add to or take away from this is to add to yourself the plagues of the Book of Revelation (Revelation 22:19). It cannot be said with any honesty that Christ, in saying "except it be for fornication," gives a sample of the causes which may dissolve the marriage union, as one of many which put an end to the state beautifully called "one flesh." Plainly but one cause of separation with remarriage is in his thoughts. Christ says, let not man put asunder. He gives a rule to his followers, who must follow it, whether the State allows larger liberty or not. To depart from this law of Christ is to set sail into a sea of confusion the likes of which there is no compass- nor map with which to navigate. Christ offered no contingencies for those who IGNORE this warning- to do so is to cast yourself into the hands of the Living God. (Some excerpts taken from McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia)

I Corinthians 7:10-15

But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

Pagan Marriage Laws

For 1500 years the teaching of Jesus we just studied kept divorce greatly at a minimum within the Church, because the Church and the State were one and the same and the Church would not act out of harmony with God in putting asunder what God joined together. The early American Colonial laws allowed the court to grant divorce for adultery, fraudulent contract, willful desertion for three years, or seven years providential absence without being heard of after due inquiry made and certified, and in all these cases the aggrieved party might marry again. This legislation remained almost unchanged for nearly two hundred years. In 1843 two new causes of divorce were added to the old, namely, "habitual intemperance" and "intolerable cruelty;" and five or six years afterwards the legislation on this subject reached its climax by the further addition to the causes of divorce of "imprisonment for life," "infamous crime," and any such "misconduct as permanently destroys the happiness of the petitioner, and defeats the purposes of the marriage relation." Now a vague subjective indeterminate cause was added to the determinate causes of former legislation. The law allowed immediate remarriage, does not forbid an adulterer or adulteress to be united after divorce to a partner in guilt, nor divorced persons to be remarried to one another. Divorces have, as might be expected, greatly increased with the new legislation. Now, society is suffering from a 50% or greater divorce rate and the Church is nearly the same. Without question, the family life and morals of a community once most religious, are being gradually

undermined and poisoned by such a social evil (excerpts from McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia).

God Hates Divorce

The question that must be asked is "What has strengthened the hand of those seeking divorce that they would sin against God with such wickedness?" It has no doubt come on three counts 1) A state that puts asunder what God joined together- not knowing God is not subject to the state 2) A church that allows people to feel they can now get forgiveness for putting away unlawfully since they couldn't get permission. 3) An impenitent and adulterous generation that will do what they will IN SPITE of what God says or the ministers of the Gospel say. This is a sin that will certainly require an answer before God for EVERYONE involved. Especially when you consider the untold numbers of lives destroyed by such a practice. David Wilkerson writes "The servant of God, the layman, who is untrue to his wife, who cheats on her and finally abandons her to remarry another, is even now under God's anathema (curse)- especially if children are involved. God says to them... You cursed (your) children (II Peter 2:14)." God doesn't accept any offering when we deal treacherously with the wife of our covenant (Malachi 2:14). In Jeremiah 23 God says... "I found their wickedness." Verse 14... "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah." Let a renewed fear of God give rise to a renewed sanctity of marriage. "For I hate divorce!" says the LORD, the God of Israel. "It is as cruel as putting on a victim's bloodstained coat," says the LORD Almighty. "So guard yourself; always remain loyal to your wife" (Malachi 2:16 NLT).