



Scriptures and Doctrine :: A pastor, husband of one wife?

A pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/8 17:48

I wanted to see if I could get some opinions of some of you very gifted, knowledgeable people.

This is a very controversial question, but I have been studying Timothy and I thought I would bring it before the jury.

Is this passage of scripture in I Timothy chapter three saying that a pastor must be a man of one wife(having never been divorced), or(one wife at a time)?

What are your thoughts?

Personally I believe one wife(having never been divorced), but I am trying to keep an open mind.

your brother in Christ
J-bird

Re: A pastor, husband of one wife? - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/8 17:57

Quote:

----- Personally I believe one wife(having never been divorced).

I find it interesting how God sets standards, like he did in the old testament, and then he breaks his own "rules" - like using Rahab to save his nation, etc, etc, etc etc, and then making her an ancestor of Christ... and then making her a hero of the faith (in Hebrews).

And still today, God is using divorced people, (yes, EVEN divorced women) to bring about his New Covenant Promises. Perhaps it is because many of our divorced brothers and sisters have been on the bottom, broken, and restored. They make good leaders because they have learned that they cannot lean on themselves, and must lean on him. Perhaps God uses them because they have known pain and can identify with the pain of those going through broken relationships.

God calls some of the most unlikely people and gives them some of the most amazing roles (think of Matthew the tax collector)

Let's not try to overrule what God is doing.

Diane

Re: A pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/8 18:06

I believe there is an even more practical context here, that any man should have ONLY one wife - as opposed to several. If this was already established in the man's understanding, since he had become a Christian, it showed he was 'getting' God's heart on the matter. It was THIS that qualified him for leadership or formal 'service' within the church. I don't think it's about divorce. And I don't think it's saying that church leader has to be married, either; but if he IS married, then it should be to only ONE WOMAN.

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/8 19:53

Quote:
-----And still today, God is using divorced people, (yes, EVEN divorced women) to bring about his New Covenant Promises. Perhaps it is because many of our divorced brothers and sisters have been on the bottom, broken, and restored. They make good leaders because they have learned that they cannot lean on themselves, and must lean on him

Being divorced is still having only "one wife. The problem is not necessarily the divorce, it is concerning being in another marriage while one still has a living wife. In Him, Cindy

Re: A pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/8 21:01

J-bird, I have to take your word for this, that you are only asking because you are trying to keep an open mind.

I know we have all posted an opening thread with a question to promote conversation, even though we had a fixed belief, but just wanted to get a topic started. I can understand the many I've seen open that way, but this happens to be a hot topic on this Forum as you'd see if you did a search on "remarriage".

If you really want my opinion I will give it to you, but that's as far as I'm going with this.

IF a man's wife is found to be a non-repentant adultress - he is permitted to divorce her and free to marry again ... and serve The Lord.

God would not suffer a man to either live alone for the rest of his days on earth because his wife was an adultress and make him suffer for the rest of his life for her sin and neither would HE remove a man's calling because the man fell in love again, years after he had to leave a non-repentant woman.

I don't see this in His Word, and I've read every thread on here about this subject.

Many men get saved AFTER they got married and if this woman they are married to is running around on him, he does not have to sleep with her after she's slept with other men and won't stop. Neither is he forced to stay married to her and neither is he forced to stop serving God if he later finds a good Christian woman.

Are all sins under the blood or not, should be the question.
He has not sinned.

Re:, on: 2006/3/8 23:06

Thank you all for the comments so far. It will definitely give me something to think about.

The funny thing about this place(SI) is you can almost get a sense of a person's personality and character by the way they post. Anyone else think so?

Anyway, I actually had a pastor for about five years who had previously been divorced. Many people had a real problem with it. Like I said, I have my own personal beliefs, but I want to explore all options and try to keep an open mind about this. I've seen God use men greatly that had been divorced in the past in leadership positions in the church. So.....I don't know.

thanks again
J-bird

P.S. Would love to hear other opinions. :-D

Re: - posted by GaryE (), on: 2006/3/9 0:03

J-bird,

Are you divorced?

Re: - posted by jimbob, on: 2006/3/9 4:46

Jesus said if we deny Him he will deny us before the Father. Peter denied Him THREE times with curses, and yet He was forgiven AND restored. I don't think divorce is worse than denial, just my opinion....

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/3/9 6:08

No one can control a spouse. Only a spouse can control him or her self. If a spouse is not true to their spouse, is it the other persons fault and or responsibility?

If a husband is not a Christian and the wife uses this situation to seek another, she is wrong. Even if she stays and complains about it and carrying such a heavy cross, it is not a heavy cross but a mistake and she is just going to have to live with it, she can make it her ministry to love this husband and submit to Christ, and in the name of her marriage and pray always. Love and make Christ her life, but not by pushing her husband to Christ but by leading him in love and hope of her savior. The husband also the same.

"Be the husband of one wife." This is heart condition, not a divorce condition. Also not more than one wife in number.

In Christ: Phillip

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 7:16

Quote:

-----"Be the husband of one wife." This is heart condition, not a divorce condition.

I disagree... it's **BOTH**.

Y'all just knew I would jump in here... didnt ya!

Scripture interprets scripture, and Paul gave his reason why he wrote what he did. Just merely throwing that verse up in the air without the context that it is in doesn't explain why Paul wrote it, and opens it up to a lot of conjecture... which is what we have here.

So what was the context? It's this:

1Ti 3:2-5 A bishop then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; **One that ruleth well his own house**, having his children in subjection with all gravity; **(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)**

So why would Paul write "husband of one wife"? He was not addressing polygamy, altho it should be obvious by the phrase "husband of one wife" automatically eliminates that.

Paul was setting the standard high for someone who wishes to lead the church. Not just anyone is qualified to be a leader. Just because someone can speak well, or just because someone can teach well, does not mean they are qualified to be a church leader. Bill Clinton is a very talented public speaker... but he is hardly qualified to lead a church.

The standard is set so high because a person in leadership can very easily bring reproach upon the name of Christ.

The key part of this passage is in verse 5, which states: *(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)*

Thats just common sense, folks, but yet God knows that we run short on common sense all the time... so He spelled it out for us.

Divorce certainly is not always the man's fault, but as the saying says: It takes two to tango. If a divorce occurs, there has been a serious breakdown in that house no matter how you slice it. And if nothing else, a divorced pastor will have split loyalties, especially when their are children involved. And if the parents have joint custody, or visitation rights, then it is impossible for verse 4 to happen: having his children in subjection with all gravity.

Is Paul saying a pastor must have a perfect marriage, or perfect children? No. But he (and God, since He inspired the words) are setting the standards extremely for church leadership. **God** is saying "Look, not just anyone is going to be a shepherd of my flock!"

It was said on here that God has used divorced men and even divorced women as pastors. So is it being said that God contradicts His own Word? If thats the case then I'm going to throw my Bible away and spend my Sundays at the Lake because obviously I cant know what to trust in the Bible anymore.

Fortunately tho, God does not contradict His Word. Not one jot or tittle of it... praise the Lord.

So what are we to think of those who seem to be in these roles who scripture says are not qualified? Well, they are in direct violation of God's Word. They are in rebellion. They certainly are not in submission to the Word. We look at them and say "Look at all the people they are reaching..." and I say that it seems to me that a lot of these folks teach bad doctrine, set bad examples, and are not doing as much as we think they are. Big numbers means nothing.

Does God use them? No... He uses His Word. God's Word does not come back void. There are examples in the Bible of the most reprobate people speaking truth... but they were as lost as anyone else. There is a difference between God using the actions of someone to reach others, and God's anointing and blessings being on someone called to preach.

So... scripture is clear. Husband of one wife. This also eliminates women as pastors and elders. (dont confuse elders with deacons) We all agree here (I think) that the husband is the head of the wife, correct? *Eph 5:23 **For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body.***

So, how can a woman be the husband of one wife? How can a woman fulfill this part of scripture also: *For if a man know not how to **rule his own house**, how shall he take care of the church of God??*

How can the wife rule her own house (which would include her husband!) when scripture clearly says: *1Ti 2:12 **But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.***

How can a woman be a pastor if scripture forbids her to teach men and have authority over men? In other parts of scripture women are told to teach their children, and older women are to teach younger women... but they are not to hold positions of authority in the church, nor are they to teach men in a church setting.

Everyone brings up this passage: *Act 18:26 **And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.***

This was done in private, not in a church setting. Also, Priscilla did this **with her husband**. We dont know what role Priscilla played in this, but I believe she did it in a submission and honorable way. I do not think that she presumed a lead role in this. I believe her husband did. My wife and I have both expounded God's Word to many people over the years, and if there was a man involved we did it together. My wife's role in it was of a helpmate. She interjected at times to further explain what I was saying, but she did not assume an authoratative role.

The standard is set extremely high. Why? Purity. God wants a pure and spotless church. He's not asking for perfection... He's asking for purity.

It always amazes me how people can ignore the black and white clear directives of God on this issue. I dont know how Paul (or God) could have made this anymore plain.

Yet we muddy it up because we dont go to God's Word when it comes to this... we look at externals and decide whether

or not it's of God. Folks, that's how deception creeps in. Never judge by externals, but weigh all things according to scripture. Stop weighing according to emotions and appearances.

Krispy

Re: God's surprises - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/9 8:18

Hi, Krispy, you're doing a great job keeping us focused on God's holy and pure standards. We read in the OT that God said, "I HATE Divorce" (Malachi) I think he also said that if someone divorced they were even forbidden to return to their original spouse. And that is all because God's character is expressed through human relationships. God's judgments are final. He is no "softy". His standard is pure and holy, and there is absolutely no bending. We serve that kind of a God. And let's not forget it.

And then he says:

"Mercy triumphs over judgment".

This is, I think one of the hardest concepts to absorb. It puts our minds in a tailspin: "Wait a minute, how can black be white... no, no, God is just and he makes good on his threats to punish the evil doers, look at Israel's history - such horrible, brutal judgment. We cannot play with God's laws..... but yet.. mercy triumphs over judgment... can we trust that to be true? Or is it too scary. It doesn't wrap around our brains. Does it feel like permissiveness?

God called Hosea to do the forbidden thing. (BTW, no discussion on divorce is complete without considering the book of Hosea) Hosea had to go back and claim an adulterous wife. And that is the picture of divine mercy. God can reclaim the worst offender. And not only that, he can save them from their SIN, wipe out their sin, and make them into brand new people, with soft and obedient hearts.

Quote:
-----So what are we to think of those who seem to be in these roles who scripture says are not qualified? Well, they are in direct violation of God's Word. They are in rebellion.

What are God's qualifications? FIDELITY. FIDELITY FIDELITY. RIGHT NOW, regardless of the past. Human fidelity is a picture of God's requirements for all who follow Christ. Otherwise they are taking God's name in vain. They cannot expect God's protection while being unfaithful to his calling. However, past infidelity is not necessarily one's final verdict. Mercy triumphs over judgment. Unfaithful people become faithful people. That is the power of God's mercy.

When God cleans up a life, he sets them anew - and equips them with his Spirit.

To say that someone who was divorced some years back is still living in rebelliousness because they are leaders in the church is, I believe, not taking into account God's ability to purify a life, and do the impossible. And nowhere does it say in scripture that one who was once unfaithful in the past, who messed up, who divorced, may never be a leader in the church. Unless of course you prefer to study the letter of the law and miss the Spirit (the gnat vs the camel)

God's true leaders are not necessarily those elected by man. They are divinely prepared. And if you examine Jesus's disciples, you see that he chose the worst ones of society - not even on "pure" religious leader of the day.

So, before we make judgment calls on people out there whom we have never met or know nothing about, we have to first realize that God does what HE wants.

I know far too many divorced people who as a result of their pain and trials and repentance have been lifted up by God and serve him either in visible ministry (with labels) or in the relational context in their lives. (without labels - though elders, non-the-less.) It blows my mind away, but it is for real. One pastor is teaching pastors in a slavic country. (you don't do that in the flesh, it's very dangerous)

Having said that, there are no doubt countless divorcees who are merely walking in the flesh, justifying their carnal desire for power and status while never really being changed from within. They are hard in their hearts, and misunderstand God's mercy. God will eventually bring them to judgment for all their sins - including past sins.

Diane

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 8:27

I understand completely what you are saying about mercy and grace. And to be sure, there are a multitude of areas in which someone who has been thru divorce can serve God mightily... but not as a pastor or elder. The directives and qualifications are clear, and they are there for a reason. I don't think there is any wiggle room on this one. It couldn't be any more plain.

BTW... I'm not down on divorced people. And I think a lot of Christians that end up in divorce do so because the man has not taken the role as priest and king in his home. It's a heart wrenching thing to see a marriage break up. I'm very sympathetic toward those who have been thru this.

But God's Word is eternal, and final. And on this issue, it's black and white.

Krispy

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 8:35

To GaryE,

No sir, I am not divorced. Been married for ten years, by the grace of God. ;-)

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/9 10:52

Quote:

-----So what are we to think of those who seem to be in these roles who scripture says are not qualified? Well, they are in direct violation of God's Word. They are in rebellion. They certainly are not in submission to the Word. We look at them and say "Look at all the people they are reaching..." and I say that it seems to me that a lot of these folks teach bad doctrine, set bad examples, and are not doing as much as we think they are. Big numbers means nothing.

Does God use them? No... He uses His Word. God's Word does not come back void. There are examples in the Bible of the most reprobate people speaking truth... but they were as lost as anyone else. There is a difference between God using the actions of someone to reach others, and God's anger and blessings being on someone called to preach.

This is truth. In Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/3/9 11:29

This is a personal opinion post, so my opinion is to take the high road when in doubt. If I were building a church, I would look for a man who is married, neither him or his wife being divorced.

That said, I serve in a church that has women in leadership positions, not sure if any of them, men or women, have been divorced. I don't fight people about it, and I don't bring it up in casual conversation.

My wife was divorced before, and I was converted after we married. That brings a whole new set of questions as to what I am eligible for.

That is my thinking, though. If the decision were given to me, I would go the conservative route, but I don't consider it a matter that I would leave my church because my staff doesn't do what I would do.

There are some things worth leaving over, I don't consider this one of them.

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/9 11:48

I love when christians bring up this subject, because they always want to jump on this verse and OVERLOOK 1 Tim. 2:9 !! We make a BIG DEAL over one verse but seem to never mention 8 verses before 1 Tim. 3:2??? 1Tim 2:9 is before 1 Tim 3:2 isnt it?? Does my wife abide by this verse...NO! Does yours??? ;-)

We seem to want to take up 1Tim. 3:2 but never talk about what Paul said before this verse...maybe we should begin with the latter first before we jump on someone else??

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 12:26

Brent... this thread is concerning pastor/elder qualifications. Not sure why you're bringing up Paul's writing about modesty, but hey... start a thread about it. Modesty is hardly ever discussed anymore in the church.

But thats another topic, and I would really like it if we could stay focussed on this topic of "husband of one wife" please.

Thanx! ;-)

Krispy

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/9 12:45

Krisp, I am focussed on this post thats why I posted.

I was canidating at a church for pastor once and someone brings this text up. AGAIN, The church wants to focus on a qualification but fail in their own qualifications...they disqualify themselves by putting their finger on one verse BUT FAIL to put their finger 8 verses before and check themselves. I'm not in the least bit trying to bring up modesty but I am making a valid point here. How can I or someone else vote on a pastor on A verse when 8 verses before "I'm disqualified"???

Ok, Let me play the game for a minute.... Someone cant be a pastor if he's been divorced some of you are saying...BUT if someone has killed 30 people, raped, robbed, fornicated to the MAX, slept with 500 women....now they are qualified to be pastor as long as they havent divorced??

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2006/3/9 12:52

Quote:
-----Being divorced is still having only "one wife. The problem is not necessarily the divorce, it is concerning being in another marriage while one still has a living wife.

Most that believe what you stated say that if someone marries while the spouse is living (or what man calls marriage) is only an adultrous relationship and God does not 'see' it as a marriage. If that is the case then it is impossible to have more than one wife. Then if God does "see" it as a marriage, then are you bound to both?

Do you believe that God "sees" the 2nd marriage or its just an adultrous relationship?

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 13:18

Quote:
-----Someone cant be a pastor if he's been divorced some of you are saying...BUT if someone has killed 30 people, raped, robbed, fornicated to the MAX, slept with 500 women....now they are qualified to be pastor as long as they havent divorced??

No, and this passage of scripture covers every one of those things.

1Ti 3:2-5 A bishop then must be **blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;** One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to

o rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

Now, there are those who would contend with this... but if a man was divorced BEFORE he came to Christ, then I think that wisdom should be used in that situation, and much prayer. But Paul is obviously referring to men in their present state... saved. Are they living by the Spirit of God, or are they not.

I think this passage is very plain, and covers all the bases.

As to voting on pastors... I'm against voting in the church. The church is not "mob-rule", or majority rule. The majority of people rarely ever get it right... especially in the apostate condition of the church today.

Krispy

Re: - posted by GaryE (), on: 2006/3/9 13:22

Is a bishop a pastor? Why doesn't it say pastor instead of bishop? Is someone that prophesies a pastor? Why does it say your sons and daughters shall prophesy? Is the word shepherd only talking about a pastor's position? Weren't the government officials as responsible as the Levites for the care of the people?

Two things that I think are the work of a pastor are visiting the sick and visiting those in prison. I have noticed that many people who carry the title pastor don't do these things and many who don't carry the title of pastor do these things. The title pastor doesn't impress me at all, it is the person who will allow themselves to do the work of a pastor that bears a witness to me who they are in God's order.

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 13:33

Bishop mean elder, elder and pastor are interchangeable. They mean the same thing. In the new testament there is nothing that indicates that a person who has prophesied is a pastor.

A pastor/elder is a person who oversees the local church, cares for those in his flock, teaches the Word of God. He does not rule with an iron fist, or in a corporate CEO fashion... rather he is a servant leader. He serves those he oversees. He encourages. He loves and prays for those in his flock. At times he chases away wolves and bears and lions.

You can't just stick any ol' Joe Blow in that position. It has to be someone who really is walking closely w/God.

Krispy

Re: Pastors, the husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/9 13:54

With reference to the title of this thread, before it gets too long, it might be useful to remind ourselves of the scarcity of the word 'pastor' in the New Testament, and to link to the thread on pastors... who they are and what 'they' do.

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=9289&forum=35) https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=9289&forum=35

Really this does not need to turn into another long discussion on divorce and remarriage. There are two very long threads at least, which cover what most of us think or know.

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=5599&forum=36) https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=5599&forum=36

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=7148&forum=35) https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=7148&forum=35

Scripture has to set a standard, but, one only as to read a short way to find out that the Adamic nature is always at hand, and God is always having to forgive and restore mankind graciously, into fellowship with Himself.

I will resist the temptation to restate my views in full, but I'd like to say that the sense and meaning of Paul's teaching is entirely valid for anyone who has grown up as a follower of Christ.

The muddy water is when people come to Christ with sexual history.

Either you believe that His blood cleanses from ALL sin, or you *doubt it*.

The other thing I return to again and again is, that the picture of the Bride and Christ, is what marriage is about.

If love is missing, then it doesn't work as a marriage is supposed to, because that is the core component that makes it (and everything else) hold together.

Lastly, there is no sexuality or gender in the Spirit - in the Body - and it is only when a man and a woman seek to be in relationship to each other as spouses, that these differences matter.

There are many women on the mission field doing the jobs of men, because the men don't go. These women who are eldering and pastoring, casting out demons and healing the sick through the power of the Spirit... Is God using them by mistake? Doesn't He know they are female?

I think my main worry is that in a determined effort to know the word, and to stick to it for all the right reasons, some of you forget that the Old Testament is packed with examples of God breaking His own rules. Brethren, this is not our idea. It's HIS!

If He decides to carry on using a believer after their divorce, or their adultery, or their unspeakable criminal act, is He or is He not within His rights, after redeeming every one of us and the whole of mankind?

Who are you to tell someone who has made a new relationship after the image in scripture, that they are not forgiven for their former sins, their errors of judgement, or their attempts to rectify their life into an order which God can finally work with? Rather you than me.

In the end, each person has to hear from God for themselves and be obedient, or a worse fate awaits them than the censure of their fellow Christians for taking up a leadership position (after new birth), when their past involved a failed marriage....

Jesus said:

Matthew 19:12

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

Please forgive me if I sound tetchy. The kind of strictures which some of you are offering to place on me because I'm a divorced woman, go directly against what God is doing in my life and leading me through and towards. There is no way I could submit to anyone but Him, in these circumstances. I hope you understand I share this to illuminate my stance, because I have thought a great deal about what scripture seems to teach, and I find His word entirely compatible with my experience of Him.

While I was away I was sitting in a train beside a lecturer with a very broad remit, and in discussion, one little change he made to our well-known 'the exception *proves* the rule' was from history, when apparently it was said 'it is the exception which strengthens the rule'. I thought that was interesting, as it gives completely fresh meaning to the saying, and it also leaves *plenty* of room for exceptions.

I don't intend to contribute much more to this thread unless I'm asked specific questions, which I will answer.

Re: - posted by groh_frog, on: 2006/3/9 14:25

It's more than just the event that must be considered.

Like Dorcas said, the Lord redeems and changes people. Look at murdering Moses, etc. I don't have to expand. The problem when it comes to a "pastor", "deacon", or "elder" is that if a sexual sin happens while that leader is in office, it shows the character of that leader's heart. And because they are a leader, they betray those that they lead when they turn away from the Lord in such a huge and important way that they should no longer be considered fit to teach.

Divorce is something harder to measure in itself. What happened? Maybe the wife of a pastor in question committed adultery and left him? Can he be condemned for that? I would hope not. It's a two-sided coin, though.

On my recent deployment, I met a man who was currently living in an adulterous relationship with a woman married to another man. She had kids, a husband, and yet was happily in adultery with this man (she was an unbeliever, he a Christian). He justified this relationship because his pastor had told him that it was alright. His pastor felt that it was alright, because he had done the same thing himself. As a pastor, he committed adultery with another married woman, divorced his wife to marry that woman, and claimed that it was all God's will, evident by the fact that they were now happy together.

And there was no accountability.

I believe that that pastor has no place in being a pastor. Not only did he himself turn his back on God, he's leading others to do the same. And that is what you risk by allowing that man to continue in leadership.

Now, I know people who got divorced before they came to Christ. They are eligible to teach someday. I know "baby Christians" who have fallen in huge ways, and I believe that with repentance, they can "get past it" in their walk. But when an elder, deacon, or pastor is willing to sin like that, no matter their ability to "move on", repent, be forgiven... They have no place in leadership anymore.

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 14:47

Quote:
-----Please forgive me if I sound tetchy. The kind of strictures which some of you are offering to place on me because I'm a divorced woman, go directly against what God is doing in my life and leading me through and towards. There is no way I could submit to anyone but Him, in these circumstances. I hope you understand I share this to illuminate my stance, because I have thought a great deal about what scripture seems to teach, and I find His word entirely compatible with my experience of Him.

I will not sit in judgement over what someone says God is doing in their life. Dorcas, I know you just a little from this forum... so I don't want you to think I am.

But all I can do is look in God's Word. If it isn't in God's Word, then I will side with God's Word everytime.

I do not believe God calls women to be pastors/elders. I do not believe God calls women to hold positions over men **in the church**. (This does not apply to the secular world)

I believe this because this is what His Word plainly says.

And I believe the same thing about men who are divorced and/or have out of control children.

Krispy

Re: A pastor, husband of one wife? - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/9 15:04

Quote:

Is this passage of scripture in I Timothy chapter three saying that a pastor must be a man of one wife(having never been divorced), or(one wife at a time)?

1 Timothy teaches that the man is to be literally (in the greek) "a one woman man." Or in other words, to have only one wife. Polygamy was not legal in Rome, so, knowing this automatically rules out that possible interpretation.

The only thing this passage could mean is that a pastor can only be the husband of one wife. This would allow for Biblical divorces/remarriage (e.g. because of an unfaithful spouse), but if one entered into an unbiblical remarriage, one would be disqualified from being a pastor in the church of God until the ex-spouse died, as an unbiblical remarriage is looked at as adultery in Matthew 19.

This is not to say though, that such individuals cannot be used in other ministries within the church. Just not pastor.

Re: A pastor, husband of one wife, on: 2006/3/9 15:13

(NKJV) 1 Timothy 1
3 **As I urged you** when I went into Macedonia -- **remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,**

Ephesus, the centre of Diana worship, where the people were **so** sick the Lord had done special miracles of healing through Paul.

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/9 15:30

I firmly believe if someone was divorced before Christ then he is not bound by 1 Tim. 3:2.
But if a christian got divorced and tried to be a pastor...THEN the biblical guidelines apply!! Let me throw in a twist...I believe if a christian divorces for any UNbiblical reason they are not christians any longer.

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 16:09

Quote:
-----I firmly believe if someone was divorced before Christ then he is not bound by 1 Tim. 3:2.

I agree under most circumstances. I think mature wisdom and much seeking of God would need to go into it. If someone was divorced because their wife discovered they were molesting children... even after salvation it would be stupid to put that person in a leadership role. It would be unsafe for the church, and it would be putting that person in spiritual danger as well.

I think it's a case to case situation under those circumstances.

Quote:
-----I believe if a christian divorces for any UNbiblical reason they are not christians any longer.

This I can't go along with... Scripture says:

Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which

h is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Notice Paul did not end that passage with... "Well, now that I think about it... un-Biblical divorce can actually separate us from the love of God!"

Krispy

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/9 16:17

Quote:

-----Do you believe that God "sees" the 2nd marriage or its just an adultrous relationship?

Well, since you asked I will expound. This subject has been talked and talked here many times before and I have share d my views. Yes, I believe scripture teaches if any person divorces and marries again(while having a living spouse, Ro m. 7:2-3, I Cor. 7:39) they are in a STATE of adultery. Entering into a new marriage Jesus says is committing adultery (Mt. 5:32, Mt. 19:9, Mk. 10:12, Lk. 16:16-18). By it's very definition (unlawful relations with one who is NOT your spouse), it cannot be a sanctioned marriage in the sight of God.

Now, if he were to put away the unlawful wife, I believe he would fit the requirements for an elder, as he is now truly the husband of one wife----if the other character traits were true of him as well. Blessings in Jesus, Cindy

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/9 16:23

Quote:

-----I believe if a christian divorces for any UNbiblical reason they are not chrisians any longer.

I completely disagree with this as well. I DO believe Christians can sin by divorcing a spouse. Paul when speaking of a woman who departs from her husband (I Cor. 7:10-11), doesn't specify WHY she departs. Maybe it is for sexual infidelit y, maybe for abuse. However, he is clearly addressing Jesus commands here to BELIEVERS. A believer CAN divorce, yet if they do, they must obey the Lord in what they choose to do next: They must either "remain UNMARRIED or be rec onciled". Paul did not say they MUST reconcile or face eternal condemnation. Sometimes reconciliation will be impossi ble. In Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by MSeaman (), on: 2006/3/9 16:26

very good post, Krispy.

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 16:27

Quote:

-----I believe if a christian divorces for any UNbiblical reason they are no longer a christian

This is the reason there are many who are in the bondage of an abusive marriage and will not file for divorce because th ey think they will lose their salvation.

I'm sorry, but I've seen marriages that were so terrible that it endangered the lives of the family, but the spouse was so i n fear of losing their salvation that they would not even think of getting a divorce.

On another note, I think many pastors become controlling, and Lord over their familys in an attempt to keep them under submission so they remain 'biblical' in the eyes of the church. If a man can't rule their house in love than they will probabl y miss the whole meaning of ministry also. Everything should be done out of love, even discipline.

:-)

Re: A Pastor, Husband of one wife - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/9 17:29

As Krispy has well stated, Scripture could not be clearer in regards to some minimum requirements for those who would hold leadership positions in the Church. There was a time, not too long ago (less than a hundred years) that some Evangelical Churches strove to return to the Apostolic standards set forth in scripture concerning minimum qualifications for it's Ministers.

My guess is, these denominations may be "more enlightened" now, and the requirements no doubt have changed. And as the qualifications have been changed, so have our lives, our families, and our Churches.

A couple such examples are as follows:

1) From the Christian and Missionary Alliance:

- a. that divorced people who are remarried should not be used in public service in our work.
- b. that divorced persons who are remarried shall not be elected or appointed to national offices or be given Christian and Missionary Alliance Credentials or Christian Workers Certificates.
- c. that Pastors of the Christian and Missionary Alliance should not perform the marriage ceremony for divorced persons.

(Manual of the Christian and Missionary Alliance 1955)

2) The Assemblies of God:

- a. we disapprove of any General Council minister performing a marriage ceremony for anyone who has been divorced and whose former companion is still living.
- b. low standards on marriage and divorce are very hurtful to individuals, to the family and to the cause of Christ, therefore we discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. We positively disapprove of Christians getting divorce for any cause except for fornication and adultery; and recommend the remaining single of all divorced Christians, and that they pray God to keep them in purity and peace.
- c. Since it is generally accepted among us that such persons are not to serve in official capacities in our Churches, we recommend that this standard be upheld by all our assemblies.

(Minutes and Constitution of the Assemblies of God)

3) The Pilgrim Holiness Church:

- a. Let no one be elected as a leader who is careless of our Covenant and the obligations imposed therein. A leader should be an example to the flock of Christ. If it be known that an individual has been divorced from one companion and has married another without the former having died, or is married to one who has another living companion... let the local Church board see that he is not elected to any Church office, or if elected that he be speedily removed.
- b. In these days of multiplied divorces and great laxity relative to the marriage question, it is fully agreed that no Minister shall unite in Holy wedlock any who had been divorced.
- c. Credentials of ministers who have been divorced from one companion and have married another without the former having died are not recognized.

(Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, 1956)

tonys

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/9 17:41

Krisp...You said "its a case by case"...I dont think we can measure this and to me thats what your saying. Before Christ I 'm a sinner. Look at Paul a muderer before Christ and then made an Apostle!?? James 1:10..." and yet offend in ONE point, he is guilty of ALL." Krisp...You and I were Adulterers before Christ!! We we re sinners to the very extent of it!!

#2) "This I cat go along with"?? I dont believe once saved always first off...and I believe we can sin but I dont believe we can live like hell and go to heaven either. Divorce is no little process sometimes it can take months...this is know little sli p up...theres time to decide truth and sin. This isnt a quick emotional fleshly reaction.... If nothing can seperate us I guess all those who are christians and committ suicide go to heaven???

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 17:59

Quote:
-----If nothing can seperate us I guess all those that commit suicide go to heaven???

Having seen many suicides and suicide attempts working in the health profession, many times,not all the time, but many times it is a result of mental illness that has plagued this person. If this person takes their life as a result of mental illness , than I don't believe God will hold them accountable, if their a christian.

Although sometimes I do believe it is an end result of sin and rebellion against God. And I do think that demon possessi on plays into some of these.

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/9 18:29

Jbird...There is no bondage where there is none. An abusive situation is a bad one but no one is keeping them living in t he same house!! It would be ignorant to stay in a corner and keep getting beaten... IF an unbeliever wants to depart Paul says let them go...

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/9 18:32

Tonys...

Missionary Alliance has changed...you can be a pastor if divorced before Christ.

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/9 18:55

Quote:
-----Tonys...Missionary Alliance has changed...you can be a pastor if divorced before Christ.

Yes, I know this to be true. It's quite the shame. Dr. Arnold Cook, president of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada and president of The Alliance World Fellowship, was a speaker of the Marriages for Life conference <http://www.marriagesforlife.com/page/page/2440201.htm> I attended in late January, which I hope to get around to writing about soo n here. Anyways, he is extremely grieved at how the church has allowed the present culture to determine it's course inst ead of remaining faithful to the scriptures. He believes as I do, in the permanency of lawful marriages until death---no e xceptions. In Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2006/3/9 20:16

Quote:

-----it cannot be a sanctioned marriage in the sight of God.

I guess what I don't understand is that if God doesn't see it as a marriage, then why do you call them "unlawful wife"? Wouldn't it just be an "adulterer"? If God doesn't see it as a marriage then why would there even be mention of being a one wife man? Why would Jesus tell a woman she had 5 husbands, if God only seen the first one as a husband? Just honest questions..

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/9 20:40

Sidenote:

Notice Romans 8 says "nothing shall separate us from the love of God." It doesn't say, "nothing shall cause us to be unsaved." This statement is grounded in the fact that God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son, that while we were still yet sinners, Christ died for the us. Nothing shall separate us from the love of God because God has forever demonstrated His love towards humanity in the sacrificial life of Christ. But as Isaiah 59:2 clearly says, sin will cause a separation between you and God.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/9 20:44

Are unbiblical remarriages still sanctioned in the Scriptures as legitimate marriages? In the eyes of Christ they are. Notice in John 4 when Jesus came in contact with the Samaritan woman. He told her, "you have had 5 husbands, and the man you are with now is not your husband." Thus, even though they were unbiblical, Christ still recognized the legitimacy of those marriages as being actual marriages by the fact he called these men "husbands."

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/9 21:25

Brethern, We were ALL adulterers before we got saved...James 1:10 tells us we were guilty of ALL sins. This is getting a little legalistic. ALL SINS is put under the blood of Christ that means He doesn't remember them any longer.

We're saying how we lived BEFORE we were Christians could disqualify us from leadership??

Since we're so fixed on 3 words of a verse...I wonder how many of our wives or girl friends abide by 1 Tim. 2:9?

Since we take this so literal and these verses are not separated...it's all in one breath.

Ok, those of you who are so strong on 'husband of one wife'...is your pastor wife abiding by 1Tim.2:9??? If we make sure he lives by 1Tim.3:2 then we better make sure he lives 8 verses before that or else how could he take care of the church of God. UH,OH

;-)

Re: - posted by 1956Ford (), on: 2006/3/9 21:53

Cindy, (Lastblast)

I attended the marriages for life conference. Dr. Cook was a wonderful speaker.

I too believe in the permanency of lawful marriages until death---no exceptions.

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/9 22:29

Hi PreachParsly,

I guess I use the term "unlawful wife" because Jesus does acknowledge that a marriage takes place, but in that He also says that a sin is being committed in the marriage (adultery). Concerning that particular passage in Jn, many seem to believe that Jesus was acknowledging every husband she had as "lawful". However, none of us can say with certainty what her particular situation was, except to say that her present relationship WAS sin. We have to also remember the Mosaic law did allow divorce---which DID dissolve the marriage (or appears so). It appears from the Text of Deut. 24 that the woman WAS allowed to marry again. She was not called an adulteress for doing so.

Not so in the NT teachings of Jesus and Paul. Both taught that marriage is a permanent institution, intended from the beginning to be so, but divorce had been permitted for a time due to the hardness of heart of man. Paul clearly let men know

w that what God once "winked at" would no longer be tolerated. Blessings, Cindy

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/9 22:34

Quote:
-----Brethern, We were ALL adulterers before we got saved...James 1:10 tells us we were guilty of ALL sins. This is getting a little legalistic. ALL SINS is put under the blood of Christ that means He doesn't remember them any longer.

When a "married" homosexual comes to Christ, would it be ok with the Lord, if he confessed his sinfulness, yet stayed in his "unbiblical" marriage?

I agree that when one comes to faith in Jesus and they TRULY become born again, He remembers our sins no more, yet t.....we are called to forsake any sin that is made known to us as such, no? In Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/9 22:35

Was the Apostle Paul disqualified because according to our verse he was??? He WAS a murderer.

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/9 22:39

Quote:
-----Are unbiblical remarriages still sanctioned in the Scriptures as legitimate marriages? In the eyes of Christ they are

I will ask the same thing I asked Brent: are homosexual marriages legitimate marriages in the eyes of the Lord? What is the difference if one type is called "homosexual marriage" and one type is called "adulterous marriage"? Are either type sanctioned by the Lord and joined by Him as ONE? In Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/9 22:42

Quote:
-----Was the Apostle Paul disqualified because according to our verse he was??? He WAS a murderer.

WAS.....see, if someone is guilty of adultery and in sorrow and repentance they put away from themselves their partner in adultery, they are no longer guilty of adultery.....they WERE adulterers. Any type of sinner could be in leadership..IF they turn from their sin and that sin is no longer holding them bondage. In Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/9 22:53

Cindy,
He who confess and forsakes finds mercy. A homosexual was never married there's no such thing as a gay marriage! You were an Adulterer and many other sins before you got saved, RIGHT?!

Are you saying if we get divorced before Christ and get remarried before Christ and then become a Christian after we are remarried....and then also with possible kids...that this marriage is "unbiblical"????

Re:, on: 2006/3/9 23:10

Quote:
-----Jbird...There is no bondage where there is none. An abusive situation is a bad one but no one is keeping them living in the same house!! It would be ignorant to stay in a corner and keep getting beaten...

Hi brentw..... I think many women have went to their grave trying to run from their husband. My wife came from an abusive upbringing and at times I can be hard and say "Well, she should have just trusted God and prayed for him" but when your own husband is holding a gun to your head and beating you in front of the children and hoarding all the money so that you can't even purchase what is needed for the family, I can't find the heart to say "she was wrong", even if deep inside I think she really should have stayed married to him. I ask myself, "would I stay?" and I can't quite answer, because I have not experienced anything like that. I just can't imagine God holding her accountable for that, and blotting her out of the book of life.

Can you give scripture for this?

Re: some questions - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/9 23:21

Cindy said,

Quote:
-----Not so in the NT teachings of Jesus and Paul. Both taught that marriage is a permanent institution, intended from the beginning to be so, but divorce had been permitted for a time due to the hardness of heart of man. Paul clearly let men know that what God once "winked at" would no longer be tolerated.

So true! This is taught by one who demanded perfection, who also said: If you are angry at your brother you are guilty of murder, and if you look lustfully at a woman you

How do you work around that? Do you put that in a separate category?

I'm wondering why no one mentioned anything about the book of Hosea. Does it not fit in? ... Well, actually, it does NOT fit in to the Old covenant Law. It only applies to the New Covenant Law. Which covenant law should we be following?

Am I slow, or what, but as of yet, I have not seen one verse which commands that a divorced person cannot be a pastor or elder (or prophet, or apostle, or evangelist for that matter).

Regarding a person getting divorced BEFORE he got saved:
Where is there any mention of a waiver for past sins committed before a person was saved, as opposed to after he was "saved."? Does not ALL sin require the same treatment: the blood.

Is one's disqualification for leadership a lingering judgment on past sin? Or is it because a divorced person could never lead well again because he "messed up" in the past, and would be a bad example?

Where in scripture do we see that God holds a person's PAST sins against him, or let those sins restrict His plan for their life - AFTER he made them a new creation?

The old has gone, the new has come".... What does that imply in this issue of divorce and church leadership?
Diane

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/10 0:02

Quote:
-----He who confess and forsakes finds mercy. A homosexual was never married there's no such thing as a gay marriage!

Homosexual marriage IS legal in some states already and in a few countries around the world. Does God acknowledge it as a "lawful" marriage in His sight? No, I don't believe so. However, many will say that because our secular government

ent approves of "legalizes" marriages contracted after a divorce, then God approves of those as well. That is where we need to go to the Word of God for clarification. The only word we have is that of our Lord and Paul declaring that any marriage that takes place after a divorce is adultery. We also have the word that the bond of marriage endures until the death of one of the spouses---neither divorce, nor adultery, nor remarriage will break/dissolve that original marriage bond. In Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/10 0:11

Quote:
-----So true! This is taught by one who demanded perfection, who also said: If you are angry at your brother you are guilty of murder, and if you look lustfully at a woman you

Exactly.....I do believe that ALL NT teachings apply to us. We are called as believers to crucify those areas of sin as they are revealed to us.

Concerning the divorced, as I said, that is really not so much the issue as a remarriage is. For those of us who see the original marriage bond as still in tact, we cannot see how someone who is guilty of adultery---as defined by the Lord, not us---can serve in a leadership position or any position within the church for that matter. I am very much in line with the doctrinal statements TonyS posted, believing them to align with the Lord's standards according to His Word and the heart behind the Word. in Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/10 0:57

I suspect very soon, if it is not already happening there will be countless lawsuits making their way through the court systems filed by single and married homosexuals who are being rejected from acceptance in leadership roles in Evangelical Fundamentalists Churches.

As there always is, there will be eager sympathetic attorneys willing and ready to take these cases, and one of the arguments for these cases will be the apparent hypocrisy of some Churches that have placed adulterers into leadership positions, Pastors, Elders, Deacons, Teachers etc.... Placement, Ordination and recognition that even fifty years ago would have never happened.

There will be those who will claim this to be an attack from Satan upon the Church, but I believe the Church will find itself fighting God. When Scripture is reinterpreted to fit with Christian Pop Culture, in order to be more accommodating to the "seeker", yes I believe the Church finds itself fighting against God

And make no mistake, the funds to defend itself in Court will come out of our pockets from the tithes and offerings. Church finances used for out of court settlements, skyrocketing insurance premiums, attorney fees, punitive damages.

This whole mess is coming full circle, and it is coming with fury.

Jeremiah 6:16

16 *Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein*

tonys

Re: Elders, Deacons, Pastors., on: 2006/3/10 2:49

We as members may be split on this, but who are we compared to some of our greatest expositors ?

If they can disagree amongst themselves on this and other teachings ... should we carve our own thoughts in stone just yet ?

For example, just a few here

1Co 7:15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

Vincent's Word Studies:

1Co 7:15 -

Is not under bondage (οὐ

δεδούλωται)

A strong word, indicating that Christianity has not made marriage a state of slavery to believers. Compare δέδεται is bound, 1Co_7:39, a milder word. The meaning clearly is that willful desertion on the part of the unbelieving husband or wife sets the other party free. Such cases are not comprehended in Christ's words.

Hath called us to peace (ἐν εἰρήνηκέκληκεν ἡμᾶς)

Rev., correctly, in peace. Compare Gal_1:6, "into the grace" (ἐν

χάριτι, Rev., in); Eph_4:4, in one hope (ἐν

μιᾷ ἐλπίδι); 1Th_4:7, in

sanctification (ἐν ἁγιασμῷ). Denoting the sphere or element of the divine calling. Enslavement in the marriage relation between the believer and the unbeliever is contrary to the spirit and intent of this calling.

John Gill:

a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. The Ethiopic version reads it, "to such an one"; one that is called by grace a church member, and so a brother or sister in Christ, is not to be subject to an unbeliever in matters of conscience, in things appertaining to the worship of God, and the service and glory of Christ; nor, being in such circumstances, that either Christ must be forsaken, or the unbeliever will depart, are they obliged to yield to such an one, but rather suffer a departure; nor are they bound to remain unmarried, but are free to marry another person, after all proper methods have been tried for a reconciliation, and that appears to be impracticable; desertion in such a case, and attended with such circumstances, is a breach of the marriage contract, and a dissolution of the bond, and the deserted person may lawfully marry again; otherwise a brother, or a sister in such a case, would be in subjection and bondage to such a person.

Matthew Henry:1Co 7:15 -

But, though a believing wife or husband should not separate from an unbelieving mate, yet if the unbelieving relative desert the believer, and no means can reconcile to a cohabitation, in such a case a brother or sister is not in bondage (1Co_7:15), not tied up to the unreasonable humour, and bound servilely to follow or cleave to the malicious deserter, or not bound to live unmarried after all proper means for reconciliation have been tried, at least of the deserter contract another marriage or be guilty of adultery, which was a very easy supposition, because a very common instance among the heathen inhabitants of Corinth. In such a case the deserted person must be free to marry again, and it is granted on all hands. And some think that such a malicious desertion is as much a dissolution of the marriage-covenant as death itself. For how is it possible that the two shall be one flesh when the one is maliciously bent to part from or put away the other? Indeed, the deserter seems still bound by the matrimonial contract; and therefore the apostle says (1Co_7:11), If the woman depart from her husband upon the account of his infidelity, let her remain unmarried. But the deserted party seems to be left more at liberty (I mean supposing all the proper means have been used to reclaim the deserter, and other circumstances make it necessary) to marry another person. It does not seem reasonable that they should be still bound, when it is rendered impossible to perform conjugal duties or enjoy conjugal comforts, through the mere fault of their mate: in such a case marriage would be a state of servitude indeed.

A.T. Robertson:

Is not under bondage (ou dedoulōtai). Perfect passive indicative of douloō, 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. Wilful desertion of the unbeliever sets the other free, a case not contemplated in Christ's words in Mat_5:32; Mat_19:9. Luther argued that the Christian partner, thus released, may marry again. But that is by no means clear, unless the unbeliever marries first.

1Ti 3:12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

Wesley:

1Ti 3:2 - Therefore - That he may be capable of it. A bishop - Or pastor of a congregation. Must be blameless - Without fault or just suspicion. The husband of one wife - This neither means that a bishop must be married, nor that he may not marry a second wife; which it is just as lawful for him to do as to marry a first, and may in some cases be his bounden duty. But whereas polygamy and divorce on slight occasions were common both among the Jews and heathens, it teaches us that ministers, of all others, ought to stand clear of those sins. Vigilant, prudent - Lively and zealous, yet calm and wise. Of good behaviour - Naturally flowing from that vigilance and prudence.

Vincent's Word Studies:

The opposition to second marriage became very strong in the latter part of the second century. It was elevated into an article of faith by the Montanists, and was emphasized by Tertullian, and by Athenagoras, who called second marriage "a specious adultery" (εὐπρεπής μοιχεία)

A.T. Robertson's

Of one wife (mias gunaikos). One at a time, clearly.

Of Denominations: Most all except Annulments for Pastors or for the Pastor's potential wife.
AoG and most all else.

Re:, on: 2006/3/10 6:24

Quote:

-----I suspect very soon, if it is not already happening there will be countless lawsuits making there way through the court systems filed by single and married homosexuals who are being rejected from acceptance in leadership roles in Evangelical Fundamentalists Churches.

It's already happening, and has been for some time. But I will tell ya what... they can throw me in jail. When the Bible and Biblical Commands are outlawed, I'll be an outlaw. I will not compromise my stand for the Word of God for anyone... including Uncle Sam.

Here's how I look at these issues... divorced pastors, women pastors... I'd rather err in being too conservative than too liberal when it comes to God's Word.

Krispy

Re: pastor troubles - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/10 6:29

Quote:

----- An abusive situation is a bad one but no one is keeping them living in the same house!! It would be ignorant to stay in a corner and keep getting beaten...

It is easy to say this. But you have to look a bit deeper. It is NOT easy to just walk away from your only source of security, especially when you have been weakened already emotionally through constant put downs, threats etc. I know a lady in such a situation who was so bashed for so long that she just curled up in a corner. Thankfully her family found her and took her out of the situation. She is now divorced and the director of a mission - full of the radiance of Christ. She is a role model to me - a picture of the power of God to heal.

It is good to comb the Bible for all of the laws and be zealous for God's righteous standards. The problem is, because of our blind spots, we miss a lot of laws that apply to us regarding our response to sinners. Also we end up stuck in legal thinking as is the case here:

Quote:

----- We also have the word that the bond of marriage endures until the death of one of the spouses---neither divorce, nor adultery, nor remarriage will break/dissolve that original marriage bond

How does one conduct their relationships with "sinners" when one does not move from the ideal perfect standard of righteousness to what is REALITY. How does one treat someone who has never "cut off their right hand" (in their opinion). How does one treat remarried divorcees if one views them as living in sin? Does one refuse to allow them into their homes? What about looking for FRUIT in their PRESENT lives, as we are called to do? Is one able to do that?

The Old Testament (and NT) gives many strong rebukes to spiritual leaders. Let's face it, they messed up badly. And it is no different today. Do we stay stuck there? Thankfully God did not stay stuck there. He gave us hope, and a way to move on. Why do we so often get stuck in the legal matters and fail to move on and apply God's wonderful solutions? We are called to be instruments of mercy, and would do far better for the kingdom of God if we bring out our bandages and medicines and help those who are damaged by the effects of sin in our society.

I once read a statistical report about pastors: They exhibit a high percentage of troubles - messed up kids, financial problems, illness, marital tensions, burnout...disillusionment. In fact, the report troubled me so much that I felt ill after reading it. I suspect that these symptoms are natural consequences of our fallen society, and also symptoms of the church's failure to apply Scripture properly. Call it divine judgment, if you will. Here's one possible reason; the very role of the pastor as we practice it, is not Biblical, so it shouldn't surprise us that it can't work in the long run. It is a set up for failure. It also contributes to this all-to-common problem:

Quote:
----- "Many pastors become controlling, and lord over their families in an attempt to keep them under submission so they remain 'biblical' in the eyes of the church. If a man can't rule their house in love then they will probably miss the whole meaning of ministry also..."

Diane

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/10 9:20

Quote:
-----It is good to comb the Bible for all of the laws and be zealous for God's righteous standards. The problem is, because of our blind spots, we miss a lot of laws that apply to us regarding our response to sinners. Also we end up stuck in legal thinking as is the case here:

Diane, we are speaking about those who call themselves "brethren" and desire to be in Church leadership. Are you saying that the standards of God should be lowered? When those words were spoken (with heart and purpose behind those words), was it spoken to us as just "good advice" or are those things what the Lord EXPECTS us to uphold?

Quote:
-----How does one conduct their relationships with "sinners" when one does not move from the ideal perfect standard of righteousness to what is REALITY. How does one treat someone who has never "cut off their right hand" (in their opinion). How does one treat remarried divorcees if one views them as living in sin? Does one refuse to allow them into their homes? What about looking for FRUIT in their PRESENT lives, as we are called to do? Is one able to do that?

Again, it seems to me that you are minimizing what God has declared and are using CIRCUMSTANCE and REALITY to determine what a believer should do. Are we not to be guided by the Word of God in our everyday actions and interactions---forgiving others(the "nice" commands) as well as rebuking some (the "hard" commands)? We are called not to judge the OUTWARD appearance, but to judge righteous judgment. To me, that means I cannot base what is right on what I see in the person's personality, acts of service, etc, but by what the Word of God states is right. I see the "blessings" of God upon the unsaved.....does that lead me to believe that they are living right? Of course not.

I posted an article here quite a long time ago written by a Pastor in the Episcopal church. In that article he spoke of how the church used not to marry ANYONE who was divorced.....Now that has changed. He says He has married MANY divorced couples himself. He then asks the question: "What Changed? Did the Word of God change? No, culture changed and we changed along with it." He believes the change was "loving" and due to the fact they grew in understanding of God's Grace.

The point of that article was that he was making a comparison between adultery (remarriages)vs homosexuality---- speaking on how he believes the church will someday embrace homosexual couples into the church----actively serving within those bodies, just as they have accepted remarried people who were once considered adulterers. I disagree that the "church" should EVER lower the standards of God to "fit" the current culture or "reality". Must we LOVE those who fall in those areas? Yes, but we must call them from their sin, not allow them to remain comfortable in it. Loving them THROUGH the stages of repentance WOULD be bringing healing.....but I don't see that happening in much of the church. Either they "cast out" without a heart of restoration, or in the other extreme, they allow every manner of sin to remain "within the camp".....believing themselves to be "loving".

Here's the article if you're interested in reading it: <http://newark.rutgers.edu/~lcrew/assay49.html>

Blessings in Jesus, Cindy

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2006/3/10 10:50

Quote:
-----When a "married" homosexual comes to Christ, would it be ok with the Lord, if he confessed his sinfulness, yet stayed in his "unbiblical" marriage?

I've not seen anywhere in scripture that says that a homo can marry someone of the same sex or that God recognizes it as such. I do see male-female relationships that are called marriage, even after the first marriage.

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/10 11:30

Quote:
-----When those words were spoken

Would anyone care to interpret the following verse for me?

John 15:3

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. (KJV)

How does a person know they are forgiven? Do they 'feel' forgiven, or do they have to take it on trust because the Bible says so?

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 11:44

Quote:
-----I've not seen anywhere in scripture that says that a homo can marry someone of the same sex or that God recognizes it as such. I do see male-female relationships that are called marriage, even after the first marriage.

AMEN!! AMEN!!

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 11:52

TO ALL those here who say that when a person gets divorced before Christ and gets married before Christ and become s a leader after they get saved is sin...

Does your pastors' wife wear jewelry, make-up, short hair, tight clothing???????

If yes to any of these...then how can your pastor take care of the church of God????????? If we are strict on one verse then we must be strict on ALL others!!

Re: - posted by GaryE (), on: 2006/3/10 11:54

I know of a group of Christians that have been taught this teaching about divorce and remarriage along with a bunch of other legalistic ideas about dress etc. They profess holiness as a group and for the most part appear to be Godly people. Among these people there are men that cheat on there wives. Some have lived this secret sin for years and with many instances of adultery. These men are able to preach, teach, and be board members because they have only been married once.

Diane and Annie, those were good posts.

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 12:01

meagain,

Great post!! :-)

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/10 12:07

Diane said

Quote:
-----Am I slow, or what, but as of yet, I have not seen one verse which commands that a divorced person cannot be a pastor or elder (or prophet, or appostle, or evangelist for that matter).

Amen to this too! Thank you, Diane, for joining this discussion.

This past summer I was relieved of the huge burden of wondering if my salvation was in doubt because I had been divorced. I realised I had been mourning having to leave the arrangement society calls marriage - even though I had ample reason to do so (regardless of my own shortcomings which did not/had not caused my marriage to fail previously). The happy ending to this realisation was that God removed *all* that anxiety and healed the damage it had done, and I have been a changed woman because of it.

The reason I brought out the verse in my last post, is because the Lord had already, 10 years earlier, told me (through a verse in scripture) that He sees me as a widow not as Cindy would like to think, a 'spiritual widow' who is to be married only to Christ, but as a widow in the natural sense of the word - one whose 'husband' is dead. I received that from Him then, and I still believe it today. I do not hang on it. I have no idea if I will marry again, but I firmly believe God Himself has set me free to do so, especially now that I am freed from the guilt I had been harbouring. Now THAT was a SIN....

The Lord has also recently made me understand REDEMPTION, and if ever anyone was in a state when they were originally purchased, I was. But He is restoring me, as I have said elsewhere, and I am going to walk with Him. Let me add that I've been single for so long now, I have no idea whether I want to be married (...properly, for the first time). It seems like I'd be giving up a lot. I would want to be free to continue serving **Him** as much as possible, as part of the deal...

Last evening, this thread made me feel really inferior and like I am a second rate Christian; I was in tears; but today, I am restored to equilibrium in the Spirit, partly by the affirmation of saints who know me in person, and partly by the word in John 1:17

For the law was given through Moses, **grace** and truth **came through Jesus Christ**.

Amen.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/10 12:51

Jesus said the weightier matters of the law are justice, mercy, and faithfulness. Even though Jesus specifically only talked about infidelity for being a legitimate reason for divorce/remarriage, I believe in keeping with the principle of "mercy" that it would be wrong for a woman (especially with children) to stay in a physically abusive relationship, since her life and the life of her children are at risk. It would be unmerciful to insist that she is obligated to stay in such a relationship.

With that said though, if she does leave her husband for reasons of abuse, she is required by Scripture to stay single until he dies, or else be one day hopefully reconciled to him when he is clearly over being abusive.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/10 13:14

Quote:

-----Matthew 19:3 Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?" 4 And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, 5 and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? 6 "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

7 They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND her AWAY?" 8 He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. 9 "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, **except** for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

10 The disciples said to Him, "If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry." 11 But He said to them, "Not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given. 12 "For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this, let him accept it."

In verse 3, Jesus is asked if divorce is permissible for any reason at all. In Verse 9 Jesus clearly responds that it is permissible for divorce and remarriage to occur on grounds of adultery, thus the word "except." But Jesus teaches that remarriage is not permissible on any other grounds except adultery.

The disciples had a hard time with this statement, like some of you perhaps, and said some to them that some have been born eunuchs, and there are others who were mutilated physically and became eunuchs- but then there are those who for the sake of the kingdom of God have become eunuchs... that is, not sexual active.

This calling is on all of our lives, no matter when a divorce occurred (prior or after becoming a Christian).

Getting saved cleanses one of the guilt of their sin. However, it does not cleanse one from responsibility for past actions. Thus, even though David sinned with Bethsheba, and was forgiven for it (repenting immediately when called on it at that time!), he still suffered the consequences of his actions. Likewise, when John Mark abandoned his apostolic mission with Paul and Barnabas in one city, though forgiven of his sin no doubt, Paul recognized he was no longer trustworthy, and until he proved himself otherwise, was not allowed to come with him on that trip (and notice the text later says that it was Paul that was commissioned with the grace of God when he started up another trip, no mention of grace given to Barnabas and John Mark for their trip).

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 13:23

KingJimmy,

Can you answer my post about the pastor wife????

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/10 13:36

Quote:

Can you answer my post about the pastor wife????

I'm not sure of which post you are talking about. Could you please draw my attention to it again. I am having a hard time keeping up in this thread because I don't have much time to devote to reading all the messages as quickly as this thread is expanding.

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 13:37

kingjimmy,

its my second post on this page. page 7

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/10 13:53

Quote:

TO ALL those here who say that when a person gets divorced before Christ and gets married before Christ and becomes a leader after they get saved is sin...

Does your pastors' wife wear jewelry, make-up, short hair, tight clothing???????

If yes to any of these...then how can your pastor take care of the church of God??????? If we are strict on one verse then we must be strict on ALL others!!

I assume you mean this question brent? If so, just because people neglect one area of Scriptures does not mean they are free to neglect other areas of Scripture. The pastor and his wife should obviously be modest individuals, as Scripture plainly teaches.

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 14:07

kingjimmy,

Does YOUR pastor & wife abide by it???

Re: - posted by GaryE (), on: 2006/3/10 14:32

Mat 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Come=believe or have faith in Christ.

All ye that labor=those loaded up with guilt. Those loaded up with traditions. These are people trying to live by the law to be righteous, laboring for peace and rest but without trusting in Christ's offering.

Come and I will give you rest from your useless and fleshly strivings to be righteous without trusting in Jesus.

{Who is to come.} 1. The sinner who is weary of his sins. 2. The person who is burdened by sorrows of past sins. 3. The believer that is tempted with sin or who is bothered by his current shortcomings.

Everyone is invited to come to Jesus and lay there burden at his feet. TAKE YOUR BURDEN TO THE LORD AND LEAVE IT THERE.

Re: question - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/3/10 15:00

Cautiously wading into the fray here...I have a great empathy and respect for those who believe remarriage is adultery. Clearly their motivation to stay resolute is out of obedience to their conscience before the Lord and to what they conclude is the testimony of scripture. However, I still remain unconvinced that "one wife" is, without question, a requirement higher than monogamy.

As such I feel we might be straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel over this debatable interpretation of "one wife, and curiously highlighting a few laws out of many to inflict life-long wounds on brothers and sisters.

Like I said, I respect the reasoning, and understand it is equated with nothing less than scripture itself. Still, I can't help but question what I perceive to be a faulty foundation for the argument.

Quote:
-----To me, that means I cannot base what is right on what I see in the person's personality, acts of service, etc, but by what the Word of God states is right.

This seems paradoxical, because behavior indicates character. I would not know how to overlook one's actions and service. I've heard the reasoning before that we can't judge someone by their behavior because even atheists can be good people. This just goes to show how little character and fruit we have come to expect from leaders who meet our semi-legalistic standards.

Personally I am exasperated by pastors and elders who manage to hold their religious exteriors together so that we have to overlook their "personality, acts of service". (Consider the well quaffed holiness preacher who dresses like Donald Trump but treats his wife like the Taliban...) I would be willing to cash in many of the outward qualifications, or even the coveted gifts of the spirit to purchase a little more authentic fruit in leadership.

Indeed I think most of our concerns about this divorce issue are a reaction against the flagrant sexual abuse of grace we see in our modern Christianity. Sadly, some leaders commit adultery with impunity simply by moving to another church and we want to close this loop hole. Yet I do not think this wave of sensuality can be stopped by banning second monogamous marriages...it will only be challenged when we stop prizing outward adherence to the law, and start expecting the Fruit of the Spirit in our leadership. This is really the qualifications for leadership we should be fussing over.

It may seem circumstantial but some of the most qualified leaders I know, at least in substance, are divorced men. I know at least one divorcee who has taught me as much or more about the nature of our Lord than any "pastor" I know.

In light of our need for substance over form, perhaps one way to move forward is to not meet in churches, preferring to pray and learn in our homes with those who demonstrate maturity in the Lord...while being careful to refrain from bestowing titles like "pastor" upon them. This way we satisfy the outward needs of the law, while satisfying our inward need for authentic examples to the flock and mature bible instruction.

MC

Re: - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/10 15:11

Dorcas wrote:

Quote:
-----Last evening, this thread made me feel really inferior and like I am a second rate Christian

Sister Dorcas, I am sorry to hear of this. I can only say for me personally my salvation is based not on what I have or have not done, but squarely on what Christ has done for me.

Again speaking only for myself, from that glorious moment set in eternity when I came to faith in Christ I have never one time questioned or doubted my salvation. Even in the darkest moments of the last five years when I had alienated friends and family and did not know the sweetness of fellowship with Christ I had once known I was still very aware that He held me in the tight grip of His hand and even from childhood knew that Christ had given eternal life and I would not perish and that His promise to me was that no man was capable of plucking me out of His hand. The promise to me was and is that the Father is greater than any man, any plot and any coup will not prevail and no man is able to pluck me out of my Father's hand. I came to myself because I was in Christ, I found my way back to the Father's house because He was my Father.

It is very similar I suppose when God calls upon His ministers to speak on abortion, intuitively you are aware there will be some in the audience that have committed this evil and our words will no doubt replay their past.

We must not dumb down the Gospel so as to make it more palatable, and I am left only to pray God help me to tell the entire Gospel story of redemption, of forgiveness, of repentance, of judgment, of holiness, of justification, of restoration and in the words of the song Lord help me to tell it...A.....

Tell me the story of Jesus, write on my heart every word
Tell me the story most precious, sweetest that ever was heard
Tell how the angels in chorus, sang as they welcomed His birth,
'Glory to God in the highest, peace and good tidings to earth'

Tell of the cross where they nailed Him, writhing in anguish and pain,
Tell of the grave where they laid Him, tell how He liveth again,
Love in that story so tender, clearer than ever I see,
Stay, let me weep while you whisper, Love paid the ransom for me.

tonys

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 15:36

A while back I did a big teaching on qualified leaders in churches...with help of a very biblical book called elders qualifications...a very big book. WE as the church all agreed after the series was over, that we haven't known any pastor or leader to meet ALL the qualifications according to the bible. A saint said to me in public 'who could meet these standards'..??

It's interesting I never meet a christian who lived & obeyed the entire bible....I never meet a christian who knew another christian who lived & obeyed the entire bible... BUT I have met hypocrites....
I have met christians who over eat and pick on other christians sins. Those of you who can't put the fork down...WHY pick on someone else's faults or sins??

I guess to end this discussion for me..."He who is without sin cast the first stone." "I am what I am by the grace of God"
PRAISE THE NAME OF JESUS..GLORY TO HIS NAME FOREVER EVER!!!!

Re:, on: 2006/3/10 15:56

Wow....You guys are amazing. Compton, Krispy and many others, Well...all of you are brilliant. I'm amazed at the amount of knowledge on this sight from individual brothers and sisters. This is truly a gold mine of wisdom and knowledge. I have so much to meditate on and search out. Thank you for your posts and comments on this topic. I know it is a controversial subject but this is something I've been struggling with for a long time.

I like to give those who are SINCERE the benefit of the doubt and just let God work in people's lives. I find a lot of times if I would just get out of the way, God would have much more liberty to work, than to try and work around me. :-)

Re: - posted by Abide, on: 2006/3/10 16:07

Come to me all who are heavy laden and I will give you REST. I always interpreted that as one who is in ministry. It is the presence of the Lord that will strengthen you with a Supernatural Strength and Anointing to continue the race set before you.

To continue to have some ones sin, transgression smeared in there faces is not of the Lord

Come to me ALL who are heavy laden and I will give you rest what you are implying is both believer and unbeliever, Great. Then that means that the Adulator, or Adulteress, the Murder, the Thief, the Molester, or Abuser, the Criminal, the Gang banker, the Drug and Alcohol Addict, the Liar ect, ect, ect. Correct?

Eze 18: 31 Â– Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies, says the Lord of God. Therefore turn and LIVE!!!

It is the heart beat of God for us to Turn and to Live. There is no greater feeling if you will for a retched sinner that I am, then to know that I have access, that I can BODILY enter in, that his scepter is extended toward me, and to know that I am forgiven.

There is not GREATER feeling/experience that I have ever felt then to know that God is at work in my life, rather I understand what he is doing or not. There is no greater assurance then to know, that he is leading me.

We all want to be led by the Spirit of Lord and if it's towards the altar in repentance, or just to dance in his glory it is of the Lord, and not because one feels forced into it.

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2006/3/10 16:08

Quote:

-----Wow....You guys are amazing.

Here is a very good thread about the same topic. This is an amazing place. Just think about all the "history with God" there is here... speakers and the members...

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?mode=viewtopic&topic_id=3334&forum=36&start=0&viewmode=flat&order=1) https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?mode=viewtopic&topic_id=3334&forum=36&start=0&viewmode=flat&order=1

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/10 16:16

You believe (and I believe rightly so) that God does not recognize homosexual marriages, though they may be "legally" married. Do you believe then that God recognizes ANY illicit relationship as lawful that He has prohibited?

When Jesus said that if a persons divorces his/her spouse and marries another they commit adultery, what does that mean for you? Is the adultery a one-time act? If so, and the act of marriage itself was sin (taking a person to oneself who is NOT your spouse), how does that person then become a spouse? If Jesus does not recognize the divorce as dissolving the covenant marriage, doesn't it appear that He sees the second union as nothing more than an adulterous relationship---being involved with another person's spouse or committing adultery against one's own spouse?

Can you find anything in scripture that shows that the original bond of marriage is dissolved either by the act of adultery or through a divorce (NT scripture)? Blessings in Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/10 16:43

Quote:
-----Yet I do not think this wave of sensuality can be stopped by banning second monogamous marriages...it will only be challenged when we stop prizing outward adherence to the law, and start expecting the Fruit of the Spirit in our leadership. This is really the qualifications for leadership we should be fussing over.

Hi Compton,

I understand your concern, but when reading this portion above, I couldn't help but see a very contradictory statement. Because I see marriage as lifelong (not intended to be by God, but REALLY is lifelong (Rom. 7:2-3, I Cor. 7:39), having a second monogamous marriage seems an odd thing to say/hear----unless you are referring to those remarriages that have taken place after a spouse has passed away. By definition, if a person divorces and remarries (commits adultery), how are they being monogamous----adultery and monogamy do not go hand in hand.

I know this topic is painful because so many are divorced and remarried, but it seems it must be an important topic to work out as it seems to rear its head quite frequently among Christians. I don't think that one can adequately deal with the "husband of one wife" requirement until they understand what Paul is speaking of and if it is applicable to those marriages where he and Jesus both called adultery.

Also, you seem to set "out of adherence" and Fruit of the Spirit at opposite ends of the spectrum. They are not. They go hand in hand. If one IS walking in the fruit of the Spirit, they WILL be adhering to the commands of the Lord.....and their eyes WILL be fixed on the good of the Body of Christ---even to their own "seeming" detriment.

When I went to this marriage conference in January, there was one particular point that really came alive and hit me hard.....it was concerning the responsibility the Lord gives to a MAN to love his wife (the wife of his youth). Men are called to LOVE their wives as Christ loves the Church.....giving himself for her.....(listen, here is the big revelation for me: that he might SANCTIFY and CLEANSE her with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present her to himself.not having spot or wrinkle.....)

You see, the husband is RESPONSIBLE for his wife. Nowadays, in the church, husbands chuck their wives away because they are "unclean".....a Gomer.....yet what responsibility does the Lord give to husbands? Eph. 5:25-29 speaks volumes. Are the men in the church loving their wives in such a life-sacrificing manner or are they demanding that they be able to have what they want IN THIS LIFE?

This is not about lawkeeping (focusing on the outward acts).....the problem of divorce and remarriage is a HUGE spiritual problem.....sprung forth from the heart of man/woman who only wants to walk part way with God. Sure, lots of people "say" they are praying for their first spouses, but are they really willing to sacrifice their lives for their sakes? In Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 16:51

meagain, I feel like saying that about me...its me-again.

Cindy,

You keep saying adultery, but you have yet to give a clear view of a second marriage. You interpret adultery as never able to marry again.

Biblical expositor J.E. Huther: "Nowhere in the N.T. is there the slightest trace of any ordinance against second marriages."

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/10 16:56

Quote:
-----The promise to me was and is that the Father is greater than any man, any plot and any coup will not prevail and no man is able to pluck me out of my Father's hand. I came to myself because I was in Christ, I found my way back to the Father's house because He was my Father.

Amen Tony.....that is very comforting. Those who belong to Jesus, He will in no wise lose any of them, but raise them up on the last day. When we stumble and fall into sin----sometimes with our eyes wide open, He is faithful not to leave us there, but woos us back to Himself. When we forsake our sins and return to Him, there is no sweeter peace.....

Quote:
-----We must not dumb down the Gospel so as to make it more palatable, and I am left only to pray God help me to tell the entire Gospel story of redemption, of forgiveness, of repentance, of judgment, of holiness, of justification, of restoration and in the words of the song Lord help me to tell it...

Another amen.....but this is the "hard" part, to speak the Truth in totality. May the Lord give all of us the strength and boldness to walk in HIS perfect AGAPE love towards the brethren as well as towards the Lost.....Blessings, Cindy

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/10 16:57

MC said

Quote:
-----'.perhaps one way to move forward is to not meet in churches, preferring to pray and learn in our homes with those who demonstrate maturity in the Lord...**while being careful to refrain from betowing titles like "pastor" upon them.** This way we satisfy the outward needs of the law, while satisfying our inward need for authentic examples to the flock and mature bible instruction.

The Lord is my Shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He makes me walk in the path of righteousness, for His Name's sake. Yes, though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me. Your rod and staff comfort me. My table You have laid in the presence of my enemies. My head You anoint with oil and my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord FOR EVER.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/10 17:06

Quote:

Can you find anything in scripture that shows that the original bond of marriage is dissolved either by the act of adultery or through a divorce

The marriage is dissolved on the basis that the adulterer actually breaks the union with the other spouse, and are now united to another. Therefore, the innocent spouse is no longer bound to the marriage, and should that spouse choose to leave the guilty party, and get married again, they are free to do so. Thus Jesus said that unless one's previous marriage ended on grounds of adultery, they are actually guilty of committing adultery should they remarry.

Matthew 19 makes no sense whatsoever if this is not the case. Everybody was quite overwhelmed at this statement, and the weight of this statement caused them to exclaim that if you couldn't just flippantly divorce and remarry as you please, then you are better off not getting married at all.

Again, Matthew 19 clearly puts Jesus at odds with the Pharisees. The Pharisees said you can divorce for any reason, and then remarry. Jesus said God's original design for marriage did not include a divorce option, and that such was for life. Don't separate what God put together. He said Moses permitted it because of the hardness of your hearts. However, if a divorce must happen Christ says, remarriage is only permissible if the other party was guilty of adultery.

To Christ, just because a union was legally terminated doesn't mean it was spiritual terminated. To the Pharisees, it was terminated strictly on legality.

The danger in this is that, and what often happens a lot today, is that somebody in the relationship "falls out of love." Then they divorce. And whaddaya know, a short time thereafter, they are magically married to somebody else. Or in other words, they had another relationship going on all along, but because they didn't want to be guilty of "adultery," so they sought for a divorce in order to now have a legitimate marriage.

Such persons are actually guilty of legalism! They took the Law at the letter, and did not abide by the spirit of that Law. Attempting to find loop-holes in the Law is the greatest legalism of them all!

People can try to dance around this all they want and talk about unions, legalism, Hoshea, hypocrisy, etc., but when it comes down to it, this is the most explicit statement on divorce and remarriage in the entirety of Scripture. Explain it away all you want, but this is what this passage teaches.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/10 17:08

Quote:

Does YOUR pastor & wife abide by it???

My pastor and wife are godly individuals who love the Lord. They are very modest, and abide fully by teachings of Biblical modesty.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/10 17:12

Quote:

However, I still remain unconvinced that "one wife" is, without question, a requirement higher than monogamy.

There would have been no need of Paul to write to Timothy about choosing elders who were the husband's of one wife if the issue was about monogamy v. polygamy. For in the Roman world, polygamy was not permitted. It was illegal. However, divorce though originally a rare thing, became much like it is today, if not more so. This only leaves one possible option for 1 Tim 3, and that Paul was dealing with the issue of remarriage.

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 17:30

kingjimmy,

Quote:

-----My pastor and wife are godly individuals who love the Lord. They are very modest, and abide fully by teachings of Biblical modesty.

kingjimmy,

You didn't answer the question...you just beat around the bush. Your strict with scripture so why not 1Tim.2:9 & 1Peter 3:3???? This is a yes or no answer...I'm not being a legalist am I? ;-)

Does your pastor wife abide by these scriptures??

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/10 17:36

Hi King Jimmy,

The Word Jesus actually used for permission to divorce was actually "porneia", not "moichea". Moichea is adultery. Many people have differing opinions as to why Jesus chose that term. Some believe Jesus was only allowing for divorce for those who broke betrothal (by fornication before the marriage bed---Mt. 1:18-24). Some believe Porneia was speaking to ILLICIT relationships(marriages) that could be put away.

Whatever it was, the disciples as you said, were SHOCKED!! I don't believe Jesus was essentially agreeing with Sham mai (putting away a spouse for adultery). The disciples would have known that position quite well and I don't believe would have been shocked, had this been what Jesus was talking about.

Also, to consider, if Jesus WAS speaking of adultery and that adultery dissolved a marriage, then what Paul spoke in Rom. 7:2-3 would not make any sense. Paul used as an example a woman who had remarried (committed adultery), and that adultery did not dissolve the bond with her husband. It remains intact until he dies. Death dissolves a marriage joined by God. This passage cannot be said to "stand alone" as Paul taught a different group of believers the same teaching on the permanency of marriage (1 Cor. 7:39). In none of his teachings will you find an "exception clause" that speaks of adultery dissolving the bond of marriage which was joined by God. He had every opportunity to teach an "exception", yet he did not. So unless he and Jesus are opposed in their teachings (which I do not believe) the exception clause cannot be speaking about adultery that occurs after a lawful marriage has been joined by God. Blessings, Cindy

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 17:47

We keep going round & round of sin or no sin??

Who here is without sin?? Who here knows any leader who abides by ALL the qualifications??

Who here abides by ALL scripture??

No one is bold enough here yet to take up 1Tim.2:9 or 1Peter 3:3. 1Tim.2:9 is BEFORE 1Tim.3:2 but we better make sure the leader is husband of one wife but his wife can have jewelry, make-up etc...or is that being a legalist?? Too strict?? ;-)

Re:, on: 2006/3/10 17:48

When we get old, we tend to repeat ourselves. ha.

I think I see too much being set in stone based solely on **personal experience(s)**.

I like how the Greek shows the "slavery" of 1Co 7:15, posted on page 6.

To abuse our freedom in Christ, to sin and break up a marriage AGAINST HIS WILL is to sin indeed, but this one sin is not worse than all the rest listed with adultery....

Gal 5:18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

Gal 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Gal 5:18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

Gal 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Gal 5:20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

Gal 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Gal 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

If we make "marriage" more than these above, then we are contrary to scripture and neglecting of other Scriptures

1Co 7:12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

1Co 7:15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage {slavery} in such cases : but God hath called us to peace.

Luk 14:26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters , yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Mat 19:29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Mar 10:29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,³⁰ But he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

Luk 14:20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

Luk 18:29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,³⁰ Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

We're called to Liberty, but not to use our liberty as an occasion to the flesh nor to lean more toward the law.

One could take the verses above as an excuse to leave their wife or one can go the complete opposite extreme with the marriage verses and lose the balance and make marriage more than what these verses above combined, makes of marriage.

There is one other verse that I can't find, but in essence stated something like 'you who have a wife ... as living as though you don't have one'.

So Balance seems to be in order here and not putting our own fears of rejection ahead of the balance of the Scriptures.

Re:, on: 2006/3/10 18:07

The Correct definition of "fornication" (Mat 5:32) from the Greek is

G4202

πορνεία

porneia

por-ni'-ah

From G4203; harlotry (including adultery and incest); figuratively idolatry: - fornication.

G4202

πορνεία

porneia

Thayer Definition:

1) illicit sexual intercourse

1a) adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals etc.

1b) sexual intercourse with close relatives; Lev. 18

1c) sexual intercourse with a divorced man or woman; Mar_10:11,Mar_10:12

2) metaphorically the worship of idols

2a) of the defilement of idolatry, as incurred by eating the sacrifices offered to idols

Part of Speech: noun feminine

A Related Word by Thayer's/Strong's Number: from G4203

Citing in TDNT: 6:579, 918

And is where we get our word "Pornography".

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/10 18:16

Quote:
-----I firmly believe if someone was divorced before Christ then he is not bound by 1 Tim. 3:2. But if a christian got divorced and tried to be a pastor THEN the biblical guidelines apply!!

Let me throw in a twist...I believe if a christian divorces for any UNbiblical reason they are not chrisians any longer.

Didn't you say the above Brent? It seems strange to me that you say someone who gets divorced as a believer has lost their salvation (to me a VERY harsh stance which cannot be supported biblically), yet now you seem to have a whole different tone.....basically saying we shouldn't judge. I'm confused on your stance..... :-o In Him, Cindy

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/3/10 19:15

Thanks Lastblast and KingJimmy for your thoughtful responses to my questions. I read them, as well as the other posts thoughtfully myself.

Cindy, you rightly observed that I was speaking in contradictions. Yet it's worth noting this it is this contradiction that is being practiced all the time. Outward adherence is often preferred to inward authenticity, and that's okay in many of the churches I've been in. Marriage is just one of the areas where the law is set at odds with the Fruit of the Spirit. We may have great esteem for a life-long marriage, but it is not always the moral and spiritual achievement we make it out to be. Some marriages provide cultural, if not legal covering for adulterous and abusive behavior.

One sin doesn't justify another sin, but perhaps we could take a few moments to acknowledge the lonely life-long sacrifice that we are asking some people to make for our firm interpretation of scripture.

Quote:
-----Sure, lots of people "say" they are praying for their first spouses, but are they really willing to sacrifice their lives for their sakes?

It's perhaps nothing that Christ himself would not do for us...but the scope and length of such sacrifices should at least be understood. I dare imagine, that it's easier to die in an instant for Christ then to live through a life time of grief for the Church. At least it's more meaningful. We must console ourselves not to be distracted from our cause by those few tragic cases that can't be helped as we insist that justice triumph over mercy. There are casualties we are willing to live with for the greater good, as we unintentionally protect abusive behavior under the well-intentioned banner "God's Standard."

To be clear, I am not implying anyone who against remarriage is wanting divorcees to be hurt, or is indifferent to their hurts. I am implying that people who are against all remarriage are willing to accept, for the sake of their personal convictions, that some people will be hurt.

Discussions like this remind me how fortunate a man I am. My wife of 15 years is a profound joy who is very easy to be married to. I suppose I could feel good about that...but in reality it makes me feel unworthy of some brothers and sisters more noble than I, who have profound testimonies of the Lord bringing them through shocking and villainous treatment from their spouses.

Of course I realize the standard we are talking about is not concerned with my feelings, or sentimentality. I guess I'm just waxing foolishly here...it's a difficult thing to have to deny grace for the former sins of divorced people, while providing grace for the present sins of "married" people as long as they remain under the institutional covering.

Marriage is quite a sacrament of grace!

MC

Re: unequally yoked - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/10 19:57

Quote:
-----1Co 7:12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away

It would seem that the scripture contradicts itself, because it also says, "Be not unequally yoked." If at some point one spouse is saved and the other is not, they are living in sin in light of this verse. Why is the believing spouse then not encouraged to separate? Are their exception clauses to that command "be not unequally yoked" somewhere in Scripture?

Diane

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/10 20:26

Believe me Compton, I completely understand that even though a marriage may not have divorce in it, it surely can contain MUCH sin. The Lord surely desires to heal such marriages. I do think though there's something to be said for those who "stick it out" even though they may seem to have much more right to "chuck" their spouse aside. Why do such marriages stay together? I think some do out of fear of loneliness, fear of financial security, social rejection, etc.....all WRONG reasons to be sure. But there is something.....some inner knowledge with most people that divorce is wrong. Many who are not saved cannot tell why, they just know it is. I believe because the Lord put it in us. Several people have told me when discussing the issue of divorce remarriage with unbelievers, the unbelievers have stated that they do believe it adultery to marry again after a divorce. It's interesting that the unsaved can see this, yet many in the church argue against it, minimize it, or deflect the topic off to another topic to avoid discussing it. It's quite puzzling to me really.

When George Barna did a poll on divorce within the confessing Christian community, it was interesting to note that divorce appears to be higher with confessed believers than with those who are professed atheists. To be perfectly honest, when I first read that, I was shocked. I can understand the divorce rate in the secular world rising and rising, but in the Christian community where we have the Lord's Word on the topic and "say" we are followers of His and walk in forgiveness towards others? I believe due to the growing numbers of divorced and remarrieds, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find men who fit the biblical requirements for leadership. That's why the standards are being lowered, but that's just my opinion. Thanks for the nice, respectful conversation Compton. It's always a pleasure to read your posts, even when I disagree with you at times (not many):-) Blessings in Him, Cindy

Re:, on: 2006/3/10 20:58

Quote:

roadsign wrote:

Quote:
-----1Co 7:12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away

It would seem that the scripture contradicts itself, because it also says, "Be not unequally yoked." If at some point one spouse is saved and the other is not, they are living in sin in light of this verse. Why is the believing spouse then not encouraged to separate? Are their exception clauses to that command "be not unequally yoked" somewhere in Scripture?

Diane

Having taken this from my post, I presume you may be addressing this question also to me.

The verses are self-explanatory and I don't feel I need to "add to the word of God".

1Co 7:12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

1Co 7:13 And the woman which hath a husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

1Co 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

1Co 7:15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

When I look at the page numbers above, I am immediately reminded as it shows 1 through 10 - that that is the general way in which most people judge on issues ... 1 being liberal and 10 being legalistic.

I see Jesus and Paul hitting harder on those near the "#10" group ... so I am trying very hard here to be compassionate more with the 10's then to give any time at all to those in the "#1" group; of slack and liberal folks, who have the nerve to call themselves Christians.

Those who at their own whim, decide that marriage is not sacred and can be tossed for adultery or divorce or separation whenever they fancy. That group I will not address, as the Word is clear enough on that.

But with those who come closer to the 10 ... I would have to say, be careful.

I also like to give folks, the benefit of the doubt, that some inward insecurity of sorts may be working through them, for them to risk going too hard toward that #10 category.

If one cares enough ... when it comes to bordering on legalism and going "beyond what is written" on any subject ... if one can, they should try to see what internal workings are causing this imbalance or Scriptural Imbalance.

I see Jesus and Paul getting very angry at the legalists and Paul having to write most of his books about them and Both could be rather sharp on those who use His Words to put extra weights on others without having the balanced scales of Mercy with their judgment. Also viewed in a possible scale of 1 to 10.

I don't want to be more merciful than Jesus or Paul was neither and lean toward psychology of 'why' we have people leaning too close to the 10s ... just as I don't want to use it for those "liberal 1s".

I feel that if I look at it purely from Scripture ... the 10s are self-righteous and dangerously lacking in mercy but if I look at it from a human perspective ... they are afraid of Losing Something.

Look at any particular legalistic stance and you may just see "the fear of loss".

Fear of rejection is also a big one in Fellowships and relationships.

So, I'm trying to be merciful and trying to factor all of the above into this equation.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/10 22:06

Quote:

kingjimmy,
You didnt answer the question...you just beat around the bush. Your strict with scripture so why not 1Tim.2:9 & 1Peter 3:3???? This is a yes or no answer...I'm not being a legalist am I?
Does your pastor wife abide by these scriptures??

I did answer the question. It was no dodge. If you want it more plain than I've already stated then I will state it more plainly: Yes, they do.

I fear this discussion is starting to become an run-away train where we are more interested in "gotcha's" than discovering and obeying the truth.

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/10 22:27

Quote:
-----I fear this discussion is starting to become an run-away train where we are more interested in "gotcha's" than discovering and obeying the truth.

kingjimmy,
My point was to say we could all find verses about other christians who have faults or sins.
Diane & meagain came out with the best post I believe...WE all fall short but its by grace we stand. We dont live by law but grace. We need to seek the face of God for revival-together! God bless you brother.
I'm done with this topic. 8-)

Re: law and grace - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/10 23:22

Earlier I asked if someone would let me know where in the Bible it says that a divorced person cannot be a spiritual leader. Since it seems not to exist, I have to come to one conclusion: It must be man's law added to God's law. That is something that has been going on since Eden. Eve made one slight addition to God's law: "AND you must not touch it."

Adding to God's law has negative consequences:

It leads to sin.

It drives people away from God.

It tempts them to make their own path in life, and chuck out God's laws (assuming that all God's laws are unreasonable).

It lays yokes on people that they are unable to bear.

It leaves people in bondage to condemnation that God never put on them. Ex: If Eve merely touched the fruit, she would have experienced guilt, which would then have distanced her from God - just what Satan wanted.

Christ did not die for violations to man-made laws - only for violation to God's laws.

Therefore God cannot extend forgiveness for what is not sin against his laws.

Those who are divorced and are leaders may be condemned in man's court. However those very judges do not offer the "offender" any way out, any mercy - only life-long condemnation. Consider how Jesus must view this.

I often feel that the most misunderstood word in the entire Bible is this one: Mercy

Many seem to equate mercy with permissiveness. But the two are opposite.

Mercy, is God's solution for sin against God's laws. There has to be a perfect holy divine law before there would be any need for mercy. So why do those who say "We need to have Mercy" get accused of "lowering God's standards?" Mercy keeps God's standards where they should be - very high.

I saw a post pointing out that there are MORE divorces in the church than in secular society. This should not be surprising. It is the outcome of adding to God's laws, and also of failing to practice mercy. (among many other things) This is why psychiatrists say that the church keeps them in business. These troubled people break under a yoke of guilt and condemnation laid on them and they can't find the way out (mercy). What a sad commentary of the church: our inability to promote healing of the heart, soul and spirit that Christ offers. We stay stuck in the laws - and that leads to condemnation and destruction.

I see that Romans 7 was used to underline the importance of marital fidelity. However, those scriptures are illustrating our relationship to law and Christ. We may use them to uphold marital faithfulness, but at the same time they may be condemning us for spiritual infidelity - trying to have two husbands at once - law and grace.

Re: - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/10 23:56

Diane, to go along with your post:

An aspect that I have not read in all these posts are the children?

Michelle Gauthier, founder of Defending Holy Matrimony said this *“All it takes is one confused spouse who thinks that divorce will solve their unhappiness, and when that one spouse visits a lawyer, they place the entire family in the hands of a hostile court system. Children become wards of the state, and all marital assets are controlled by the courts. It is truly a tragedy.”*

Judith Wallerstein in her book *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce* writes *“National studies show that children from divorced and remarried families experience more depression, have more learning difficulties, and suffer from more problems with peers than children from intact families.”*

And it gets worse, besides the more obvious results of rampant divorce, such as the massive growth in single-parent homes, Judith Wallerstein continues *“virtually every major personal and social pathology can be traced to fatherlessness more than to any other single factor.”*

Equally alarming, although largely unrecognized by most people is the expansion of government power to which rampant divorce has given rise. Howard University professor of political science Stephen Baskerville has reported *“the result of three decades of unrestrained divorce is that huge numbers of people, many of them government officials now have vested professional and financial interest in encouraging the break up of the family. Divorce today is not simply a phenomenon; it is a regime, a vast bureaucratic empire that permeates national and local government. In the United States, divorce and custody comprise over half of civil litigation constituting the cash cow of the judiciary and bringing employment and earnings to a host of public and private officials including lawyers, psychotherapists, mediators, counselors, social workers, child support enforcement agencies and others. This growth industry derives from the impact of divorce on children.”*

I can attest to this, the only winners when one decides to go to the courts to solve their marital problems are the attorneys. Glenn Stanton from Focus on the family summarized it best *“Looking back at America’s decades-long divorce experiment, while adults suffered terribly, children fared even worse. Many saw the innocence of childhood evaporate the day their parents announced the divorce. Children crippled by anxiety, possessed by anger, immobilized by fear, they were different children. In fact they didn’t see themselves as children any longer. Divorce forced them to become adults, even before they became teens.”*

Is it any wonder God says He hates divorce? And as well, with children in the mix we come back to the qualities of a Church Leader, one who rules his own house well, for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God? (I Timothy)

tonys

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/3/11 1:08

Quote: ""I believe due to the growing numbers of divorced and remarrieds, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find men who fit the biblical requirements for leadership.""

I don't think anything has changed, was Moses, Abraham, David, or any of the other's in the bible except Christ, that deserved leadership?

Moses, a murderer, and one that disobeyed God directly by hitting the Rock which is a picture of Christ and the Living Water we are born again in spirit unto regeneration and salvation. Abraham, adultery with his own wife's handmaiden. David, murder and adultery with another man's wife, and on and on.

There is only one that is perfect enough to be considered for service and that is Christ. This is the One that any of us need to depend on to consider any of ourselves to be as even Paul considered in Timothy and Titus. All of Paul's whole Gospel is, has this premise and that premise is Christ in us the Hope of Glory. The more we understand The Christ in us as our life and the whole being as our life in Christ to be our pattern and ability of having any ability to claim any leadership role in the Church, it is Christ in you the hope of Glory, and most especially nothing we can accomplish in anything we do. 2 Timothy 1:7-12 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

This is the simple climax to any person in the Christ that has any capacity to be in any position of authority or leadership, it is The Christ that is in us that is the Head of The Church that must lead us, not men of good reputation that can fail at any time unless they are filled with the Spirit of Christ and The Holy Spirit is guiding them in all truth. This is who we should put our leadership roles upon, Christ, Not men.

Yes, I will catch all kinds of hell for making this declaration, the first one will be, yes that is a beautiful picture of what the Church should be but we are just sinful men saved by grace and we will sin just like anyone else and we must show by our works that we can lead in the Church. Wrong! We can only lead by the Christ that is in us. This is the only way. 1Cr 11:3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman the man; and the head of Christ God.

Eph 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, Christ:

This is the knowledge we need in the Church. We need to quit quizzing each other about should we do this or should we not to that or is he or she capable or do they meet the qualification of what man has conceived that a person should be to be able to serve Christ in His Church. It is Christ not us. Colossians 2:2-8 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

This all takes place in our mind by submitting to the Mind of Christ that is in us. That we know. That we know. That we know. 1Jo 2:5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby (know) we that we are in him.

1Jo 2:29 If ye (know) that he is righteous, ye (know) that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

1Jo 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we (know) that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

1Jo 3:5 And ye (know) that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

1Jo 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye (know) that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

1Jo 3:19 And hereby we (know) that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.

1Jo 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we (know) that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.

1Jo 4:13 Hereby (know) we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.

1Jo 5:15 And if we (know) that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we (know) that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.

Who are we to know, This is just John's words of God. Wait till you hear Paul's, I could list them but it would take up to much. 146 times we are in Christ, just a few, just in Col 2:

Col 2:6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk ye in him:

Col 2:7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Col 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Col 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Col 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Col 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

So many, many times in Christ, this is our qualifications for serving in His Church, it is IN HIM. Paul always tells us how to live and what to do in the Church, but he never leaves out the power and the strength of doing it. IT IS IN CHRIST, CHRIST IN US, PAUL NEVER LEAVES IT TO US TO ACCOMPLISH, IT ALWAYS CHRIST IN US THAT GIVES US LIFE AND HE ALSO SAYS IT CAME DIRECT FROM JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BY DIRECT REVELATION.

PAUL IS THE ONLY ONE EXCEPT JOHN THAT LEFT THIS EARTH AND ALSO SPOKE DIRECTLY TO JESUS, WHETHER IN THE SPIRIT OR ON THIS EARTH DOES NOT MATTER.

JESUS IS OUR LIFE.

Colossians 1:26-28 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Is this not the whole purpose of the Church? We are to be perfect in Him. Us in Him, Him in us, this is the Body of Christ the Church.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: Know in theory or in reality - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/11 6:54

Quote:

-----"virtually every major personal and social pathology can be traced to fatherlessness more than to any other single factor."

This is true. I've heard it too.

Also it is said that divorce is the most traumatic experience a child can receive. The damage is incalculable to them as individuals and to society in general.

This is why we need to be facilitators of relational and spiritual healing. It is abundantly clear in the Bible that applying law - and embellishing law with man's "wisdom" DOES NOT WORK. It never did. God has a far better way and he announced in the OT.

Scriptures and Doctrine :: A pastor, husband of one wife?

Consider the final verse of the OT: "He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of their children to their fathers..." Mal. 4:6

We are called to cooperate with God's solution if we are to effect change. Sadly many in the Body only know ABOUT the solution. They can tell you all about it. But it is not part of their own reality. I have seen some of that even here in this thread. They feel very justified in wounding others in their defence of the law. They have eyes but cannot see, ears but cannot hear, and a mind but cannot understand. They need to have their own Damascus Road Experience.

I address all who fear I may be implying an accusation against them. That is not my job, it is the job of the Spirit. Please ask him if you are guilty, and be willing to receive whatever he reveals to you, no matter how painful or humiliating it feels - it is the path to spiritual awakening - to revival for you! Any urge to defend your righteousness may possibly be an indication that your conscience is being pricked by the Spirit.

I don't like to inflict wounds on anyone, but as has been said here, Jesus and Paul sometimes inflicted wounds (to the conscience) but it was towards those who were hardened in their hearts, who had trouble feeling pain (guilt for their sin, or empathy for sinners)- those who insisted on their spiritual righteousness. On the contrary the oil of gladness, the balm of healing, and the joy of the Lord was administered to the broken and contrite sinners. They were set FREE FREE FREE!!!!

What is the Spirit saying to you? I'm not convinced that any of us are ever fully "off the hook", for legalism can exist in very insidious ways. It takes a continual work of the Spirit to crucify it.

Diane

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/11 11:37

Quote:
-----To be clear, I am not implying anyone who against remarriage is wanting divorcees to be hurt, or is indifferent to their hurts. **I am implying that people who are against all remarriage are willing to accept, for the sake of their personal convictions, that some people will be hurt.**

Discussions like this remind me how fortunate a man I am. My wife of 15 years is a profound joy who is very easy to be married to. I suppose I could feel good about that...but in reality it makes me feel unworthy of some brothers and sisters more noble than I, who have profound testimonies of the Lord bringing them through shocking and villainous treatment from their spouses.

Compton,

Your clear thinking head is always a blessing to me. I appreciated this post very much, especially the sentence I have put in bold. My experience of the Lord is that He wants to heal all hurts... that He can and that He does if we allow Him close enough.

It grieves me to have to accept your statement. I think in the past, I would have been one who qualified in that category, because I wanted doctrine and the outward appearance of the church to be neat and tidy for the world to see. It was not till I left my own husband, that I found out how little help there is within the church for people who have *good reason* (as you say) to separate first, and then come to terms with divorce - which is the practical way to sort out financial support with some ex-spouses.

So you try not to feel any guilt about enjoying a good marriage. You're doing the right thing if it is a true picture of the love within the Godhead. Amen.

Quote:
-----Is this not the whole purpose of the Church? We are to be perfect in Him. Us in Him, Him in us, this is the Body of Christ the Church.

Phillip,

I was edified by your post. Thank you. It truly reminded me of where our strength lies - in Him - and where we are to hide

e our souls.

Quote:
-----What is the Spirit saying to you? I'm not convinced that any of us are ever fully "off the hook", for legalism can exist in very insidious ways. It takes a continual work of the Spirit to crucify it.

Diane,

Thank you for the challenge and the reminder. I had so much to say about other people's marriages when they were threatening to fail, it left me completely silent when I had to leave my own.

Re: the vanishing accusers - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/11 12:54

Dorcas said,

Quote:
-----I had so much to say about other people's marriages when they were threatening to fail, it left me completely silent when I had to leave my own.

I see a crowd of stern-looking accusers standing around Jesus. I see a woman in the center of them, huddled on the ground, in total humiliation, crying. She has just been dragged there - onto center stage. All eyes are on her and on Jesus...

then..... (and we all know the story) later..... Jesus asks her a question:

"Where have they gone?

And indeed they have all vanished...

... dispersed into thin air.

Now only SILENCE can be heard.

That is the blessing of meeting Christ. He sends all the accusers away. We don't hear their voices any more. Because now we hear the voice of the true Shepherd.

... ..Now I see the woman walking back home, dancing, feeling like she is walking on air. One man had come into her life and now she sees herself in a new light. Why would she ever want to go back to her former ways again!

PS Dorcas, Can you "hear" the SILENCE?....

I think I can!

No one is left to condemn you.

Diane

Re: - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/11 13:16

Yes, indeed I hear the silence and as the billboards all around Kansas City right now read "The silence is killing us" referring to violence on the streets and our citizens not coming forward exposing the evil, giving a hand to lift up the down-trodden, not willing to shine the light, but rather remaining silent in our homes behind barred windows and doors, the home alarm set and just getting used to the dark. And my opinion this holds true in the Church of Jesus Christ, remaining silent yet our marriages, families, the innocence of children are being destroyed. And having said that, Diane I do understand your comments concerning Jesus and this woman.

I live in the United States and was born in the late 60's, and thus would like to take a look at how my country in such a short time (my lifetime) has crippled civilizations primary institution marriage, which has ushered in no-fault divorce with amazing speed.

Breaking a marriage contract today is nearly easier than firing an employee or getting out of a cell phone contract. And in regards to contract, how can we even say it is a contract when either party has the power to end the contract at any time, for any reason, whether or not the other party agrees.

What should be the binding, hard to break nature of the marriage contract inherently protects both spouses especially in those times when there is difficulty and conflicts and one is contemplating ending the marriage. But no-fault divorce destroys that protection.

Again, in my lifetime during my childhood and beyond listen to some of the extreme views that were being espoused, which found its way into public policy in my country and Christian thinking and behavior.

"We have to abolish and reform the institution of marriage... By the year 2000 we will, I hope, raise our children to believe in human potential, not God.... We must understand what we are attempting is a revolution, not a public relations movement."

-- Gloria Steinem, quoted in the Saturday Review of Education, March 1973

"Being a housewife is an illegitimate profession... the choice to serve and be protected and plan towards being a family maker is a choice that shouldn't be. The heart of radical feminism is to change that."

-- Vivian Gornick, professor University of Arizona, Daily Illini April 1981

"The legal rights of access that married partners have to each other's persons, property, and lives makes it all but impossible for a spouse to defend herself (or himself), or to be protected against torture, rape, battery, stalking, and mayhem by the other spouse... Legal marriage thus enlists state support for conditions conducive to murder and mayhem."

--Claudia Card, professor University of Wisconsin-Madison 1996

Some will remember much of this from that era, my point in posting these radical statements is, when these views left the front pages of main stream consciousness along with the Beatles, LSD and the whole 60's scene America did not just snap back to "normal" we had been transformed. Yes these ideas in my opinion are radical, but the core agenda has seemingly become our reality and today a generation later, here we are debating issues like cohabitation, divorce, same-sex marriage, civil unions, polygamy and the redefinition of marriage almost oblivious that our homes, Christian or non-Christian have been very systematically crippled by the advent of no-fault divorce.

This post has become rather lengthy, and from experience are not often read when too long so I will continue later.

If this has departed from the theme of this thread I will be happy posting to another thread.

tonys

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/11 13:22

Quote:
-----Several people have told me when discussing the issue of divorce remarriage with unbelievers, the unbelievers have stated that they do believe it adultery to marry again after a divorce.

Cindy,

Over several threads now, I have read your posts, and I am *slowly* coming to the conclusion that you have no experience of the kind of scenarios in which God Himself leads people out of their marriages. Mostly, you show no understanding of the reality that there are people who give up their faith in Christ, or, who were nominal Christians when they got married, and finding themselves married to a real Christian, decide against going through with God personally. At this point, no matter what it was before, it is not a 'Christian marriage'. The believer is no longer bound by the terms of a marriage in which both partners are Christians.... no matter how much they wish they still were ... The fact is, the believer cannot (and should not try to) *control* their spouse.

But, there is another world, in which wicked and evil people take delight - and I MEAN 'delight' - in setting out to destroy the human being who has unknowingly proceeded into marriage with them. These are men (usually, but women too), if their 'sins' were brought before a Court of law, would be locked away in the psychiatric wing of a prison, or the locked wards of psychiatric hospitals. I'm not saying there is no hope for these people, but the Holy Spirit does not hang around them on their *insides*, even if He hovers right over them all the time.

Whether they ever professed a faith in Christ has become irrelevant. When Jesus mentioned 'porneia', He was talking about those who still had enough sanity and sexual desire to seek illicit relationships and find them. He understood the pain of rejection which the abandoned party would feel, and said that was sufficient justification to divorce (and remarriage).

Forgiveness becomes an issue when a brother or a sister is genuinely trying to reform, who 'turns' round and says 'I repent' seven times a day. Jesus says we are to forgive them. Jesus does not say we *have* to go to bed with them, though, if we are married to them and they are hurting us. In a marriage, it very much depends what is the matter being asked for forgiveness, whether that has anything to do with holding the marriage together.

Unless EVERY DAY, individuals BELIEVE IN JESUS, they may, by John's standards, not actually 'be' Christians any more. God does not desert them immediately; of course He doesn't; but when mean and intentionally cruel behaviour becomes the way of life of one (or both) spouses, no-one who can see what is going on (as God can) would call it a *Christian* marriage any more. This is what I want you to take on board in your thinking. Women (and men) whose 'other half' have manifestly ceased **loving** them, are freed from the strictures they took on in the marriage ceremony.

They do have to go through a legal process to undo those legal strictures, but, they are not SINNING, to admit to themselves and the world, that they are no longer **married** to the person with whom they are living, in the spirit of that covenant.

Additionally, please bear in mind that those mean and cruel people who thought it would be convenient to have a legal spouse to keep house for them, and chose a Christian because they expected fidelity, even if they did not expect to *give* fidelity, are not going to move out first. They are going to put on the screws until the other person loses their mind, rather than 'leave' in a decent way, because of the believer.

Your continual desire for Christian spouses to be forbidden a second marriage, is deeply disturbing, unless you really do believe that God would prefer they never know the love of a real spouse, the relief of emotional security, and the help and friendship of a safe partner for living (and often too, for helping to bring up children).

There is one last thought, which may apply less to you than some others... this. It may be that the desire to condemn second marriages which brings a warm glow of satisfaction within (you/them, and those who have divorced a second spouse believing it to please God), are really giving satisfaction to a *religious* spirit, and not to the Holy Ghost at all. I'll justify that statement with this scripture:

John 3:8

"The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. S

o is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

There is liberty in Christ. I know the scriptures you use to justify your position, but, they are not a comprehensive overview of marriage in scripture as GOD HIMSELF allowed it. The very first instruction to mankind, was to multiply. God has not forgotten that, even though Jesus said it is ok for people to remain single for the kingdom's sake.... Even Jesus left that open.

People whose unreasonable behaviour is not a temporary blip on occasional days, (who with a bit of serious work under God's guidance, can change), or who set out to control others, are not Christians.

There should be no way they can end up *leading a church*, no matter how smooth-talking they are, how complete their doctrine, how first rate their education or business skills, or how good their camouflage. The Holy Spirit should expose them, and we should be *expecting* them to be irreproachable, long before they get into leadership.

As I've been writing, (and editing this), I've been thinking.... Why didn't Paul just mention directly, that second marriages constitute adultery? Could it be that's because not all second marriages constitute adultery? Might he have felt that as 'chief of sinners' he could leave this to the Lord's discretion? I mean, he could have given a whole chapter to ironing out the details, in 1 Corinthians, or he could have added the kinds of second marriage that constitute adultery to some of the lists of sins of which he is so capable. Or just maybe, the words of Jesus such as 'Let the dead bury their dead' and to the woman of Samaria 'You have had five husbands', made it impossible for him to improve the message of God's love, forgiveness and healing.

Lastly, isn't it clutching at straws to quote *unbelievers* on the matter of a second marriage constituting adultery? Aren't they merely repeating what they think you want to hear?

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/3/11 13:33

Cindy,

As you mentioned, respectful and earnest conversation is always appreciated. Thank you as well!

When I read the thoughts, concerns, and the value placed on marriage, I find I'm more in agreement than not. Certainly the statistics of epidemic divorce, including the slightly higher rate within church circles, makes it clear that the institution of marriage is in crisis.

Quote:
-----I believe due to the growing numbers of divorced and remarrieds, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find men who fit the biblical requirements for leadership.

We might even take this a step further. I think it's becoming difficult to find people qualified for marriage. With the lower standards of our age, it is increasingly difficult to find people with the character, family background, and good old-fashioned proper examples from mom and dad to properly understand their roles as spouse and parent...in other words failure is breeding failure. As such, it's highly more likely that a woman, (or man) will marry into a dysfunctional situation...although it can be hard to detect during courtship.

For me there is a dilemma here...part of me wants to save society from moral decay, and the other part of me wants to save the individual from having to be married to the decay. (I'm certainly not talking about some yuppie couple, whose careers or lusts have taken them apart from one another, or people who simply want to leave a marriage to "find themselves.")

Quote:
-----...I completely understand that even though a marriage may not have divorce in it, it surely can contain MUCH sin. The Lord surely desires to heal such marriages. I do think though there's something to be said for those who "stick it out" even though they may seem to have much more right to "chuck" their spouse aside. Why do such marriages stay together? I think some do out of fear of loneliness, fear of financial security, social rejection, etc.....all WRONG reasons to be sure. But there is something.....some inner knowledge with most people that divorce is wrong.

For my own part, this is really my single point of controversy on this issue. It's very difficult for me to give marriage the ultimate spiritual and moral priority over all other considerations. While it's painfully clear that we westerners live in an age of convenience and selfishness, I don't think all divorce situations can be described as "chucking a spouse." I realize my situational or circumstantial approach makes the discussion of divorce very messy and perhaps subjective. Yet, I can't escape the thought that the reality is messy, getting messier, and that perhaps we are trying to make it neater than it can be.

Perhaps this discussion is really two different ones blending together. The thread started on a simple premise...marriage status in leadership. That can be a controversial but relatively contained conversation. Honestly, I can appreciate the virtue in upholding standards for leadership...what seems legalistic to one is actually grace on behalf of others. I believe all of God's law was originally conceived in His heart as mercy...He doesn't want His people to be liberated from bondage only to destroy themselves through sin.

However, sometimes it feels this topic broadens into whether or not divorcees and remarried people are spiritual damaged goods. It's at this juncture I polarize, because I know I was purchased from the scratch and dent sale of humanity. (I'm sure many of us feel the same way.)

Like I said, I believe we should indeed uphold standards. And I'm not interested in condescending divorced people with emotional pity...I'm interested in them having access to the same restoration and forgiveness I so freely received. For if we preach the law, then let's be sure to preach the whole law including the Promise. That's a nice idea, but I feel some churches, perhaps through fear that things are out of control, do not uphold that particular standard. Sadly, there are some brethren in our midst who can identify with this Christ-like verse in Psalms.

I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.

Blessings,

MC

Re: silence -God's peace - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/11 13:44

Quote:

-----Yes, indeed I hear the silence and as the billboards all around Kansas City right now read "The silence is killing us."

Sorry, Tony, but you are talking about something completely different than I was (or Dorcas).

I speak about the silence that proclaims God's solution for the sin problem of the world. Do you understand it? Do you "hear" it?

Diane

Re: - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/11 14:10

To Diane and Dorcas,

Romans 5:5

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Ezekiel 11:19

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:

I know of no other answer to the sin problem than this.

And I too hold to a permanency of marriage type belief as you might know, but my question to you is this: holding to this view or any other view for that matter where there is disagreement, and beyond asking God that I might speak and write

from a place of brokenness, how does one listen to God, speak as you believe He would have you speak and yet all the while try and avoid bringing condemnation down upon those who may have already suffered so much? It seems this topic is particularly hard to discuss and still juggle all this I have mentioned.

I am well aware I can present what I determine to be sound doctrine but with a wrong Spirit, as I can present false doctrine yet with a right spirit. Sound doctrine with a gentle, teachable Spirit now that is what I desire.

tonys

Re: Pastor, the husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/11 16:06

Tony,

Because of the picture of marriage in the Godhead - perfect love - and of the Bride of Christ for whom He died, I have no doubt that one lifelong partner is the ideal. And many, both Christians and non-Christians not only aspire to it and achieve it.

Here's a quote:

Quote:
-----It seems strange how the institution of marriage changes the nature of people's sins....**single people can** do some things that married people can't and **be forgiven. Yet on the other hand, married people.... can live out abusive behavior, and enjoy relative protection from the church** against their spouses' better interest.

This is what this discussion has become about. We have got stuck on the question of why marriages end and whether it is ever ok to marry again.

What we have barely touched on, is that many in leadership positions who have committed sexual sin, and *because it's their livelihood* have been allowed to step down for a season only, and are later re-instated to positions of authority in the church - *despite this past sin which is held against so many others who are not seeking leadership, or, when they do, it comes up as a disqualifying factor*.

The hypocrisy of this, the hypocrisy of double standards, the legalism of it all, which seems to deny the power of God to cleanse, is one of the most upsetting factors, to me.

That there seems to be no latitude for a person to realise they are 'married' to the wrong person, and to admit they are wrong, to get out, to marry the 'right' person, without this becoming an unforgivable sin in some people's eyes. It stinks..... not the mistake the first person made, but the misery some Christians think they are entitled to pour on people who are already living in a most unhappy situation.

For all Jesus' condemnation of sin, and hypocrisy, I don't find Him being anything other than critical of those who lay burdens on others, especially in the light of Matthew 11:28 - 30.

Marriage can only be permanent AND MEANINGFUL when BOTH people feel the same way about it. Otherwise, one of them is lying. And my reading of Revelation 22:15 makes that as serious as adultery, in eternal terms.

I think we forget that we are made in God's image, sometimes, and the attractiveness between men and women is there not just to produce children, but to produce healthy marriages. If this bit of the equation falls apart, then I believe God knows men and women will find it hard not to gravitate towards another partner, if there can be one.... unless they feel called to celibacy.

All this is to say that 1 Cor 7 is about *continence*, primarily, because that's what glorifies God. The matter of temperance is for each individual who knows the Lord, yet Paul still *recommends* marriage, for the avoidance of fornication (v 2). I don't think that applies only to people who have never been married before.

Re: Tony - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/11 16:57

I identify with the challenge that you express (I think) I see God's holy righteous standards, which include marital fidelity and permanence.

However I also see man's utter failure to maintain ANY godly standard. I feel so helpless. I think of a friend who is 350 pounds. To tell her that she is fat because she is eating wrong, or to remind her that she is soon to experience horrible health problems seems to be unhelpful. She knows it all too well, and that reality is so painful for her and scary that she pushes it aside, hiding behind denial. Her conscience remains under condemnation because she won't accept God's mercy for stuff in her past. (She can't face it)

It is no different with social problems. Putting billboards up about the wrongs of abortion or drunk driving just doesn't solve the problem. If anything it encourages violators to further harden their conscience so that they don't feel the guilt.

When Jesus stood up in the temple to announce his messiahship, he quoted the OT: "I have come to set the captives free, to heal, etc. He did not read the Ten Commandments. And when he performed miracles in people's lives he did not first give a lecture about law. He seemed to avoid the "condemnation" stage. So why can't we do what he did? Why are his way so unreasonable to us? They certainly are not too difficult. In fact, it is we who make the path too difficult by laying on people yokes that they can't bear, and then not knowing how to lift the yokes off them, or even believing that those very yokes are just what they need.

And that is where I squawk. It is not a squabble over the law (other than laws added to God's law), but the issue of presenting the solution to sinners. It is a case of ignoring God's higher laws (love, ex Good Samaritan, Prodigal Son) which point the way to salvation. And, having said that, I would be quick to say that I believe that I have failed far more than I can ever realize.

I wonder if I'm thinking right, but it seems that nothing violates God's righteous standards more than the Good News. The Good Samaritan was NOT good. The Prodigal son should never have been FULLY reinstated, Matthew the tax collector should never have been one chosen to write holy scripture.

And what about Paul - we have grown accustomed to his calling, but think how ludicrous it really is - we should be shocked!

And so about remarriage after divorce... well, why should we not accept that? A new partner could very well be an expression of God's mercy.

If God gives his Spirit to those he forgives, then should we not trust the Spirit to help one obey God.

I fear I have said nothing new here, or I am not really tracking with your question, Tony. Let me know.

Diane

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/11 18:36

Tony, I've been forgetting all day to acknowledge your very kind and encouraging post to me. In particular, this sentence stood out:

I came to myself because I was in Christ, I found my way back to the Father's house because He was my Father.

I identify with it completely. The thing I remembered when I was feeling low that evening, was how I'd been taught that if I divorced, I could never marry again, no matter how right and reasonable my behaviour before God. It is this false doctrine which contributed to my inner malaise, and which the Lord Himself addressed with me this past summer.

This was just a little test, for me to be reminded of what I'd been delivered from... I feel I won't fall for it the next time.

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife, on: 2006/3/11 19:13

Diane,

You asked me something, I've just discovered a page or two back....

'PS Dorcas, Can you "hear" the SILENCE?.... '

YES, praise the Lord! And it's VERY loud.

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/11 22:25

Quote:
-----And so about remarriage after divorce... well, why should we not accept that? A new partner could very well be an expression of God's mercy.

Diane, this is the crux of the disagreements with many on the topic of a divorced AND remarried man being in leadership. Many Christians believe the scriptures teach remarriage when one has a living spouse is entering into a STATE of adultery (meaning someone is joining themselves with another who does not belong to them--- Rom. 7:2-3, I Cor. 7:39, Mt. 5:32, Mt. 19:9, Mk. 10:12, Lk. 16:18). It is not viewed as a "one time" sin which can be repented of--- unless the adulterous relationship is forsaken---as that would be the fruit of repentance concerning ANY adulterous relationship. The person/people are married to other people in the eyes of the Lord, not to each other.

If someone repented of adultery in THAT manner, truly becoming once again---the husband of ONE wife---then yes, being appointed to a leadership role or being restored is completely possible. God's grace and mercy is there for the repentant and his previous sin is remembered NO more. Just as the woman caught in adultery was told to go and sin no more (stop her adulterous relationship), so Jesus calls those who follow Him to do the same---whatever sin it is, not just adultery.

You need to understand Diane, those who believe the scriptures teach the permanency of marriage (in reality, not idealism), would see such appointments as condoning sin "in the camp". Many who get angry at those of us who believe and speak of the permanency of marriage would not think to join a church which had an actively practicing homosexual as Pastor or one who blessed homosexual unions. Sexual immorality is sexual immorality, yet it seems we condone one type in the pulpit and/or other leadership positions, but we wouldn't think to darken the doorway of another church where immoral acts of homosexuality are lifted up as "good" and honorable in the sight of God. Many of us are asking ourselves, "what is the difference?" Our judgement of sexual sin in the "church" seems very hypocritical.

See, as you have witnessed on this board in the past, many have decried the growing acceptance of homosexual relationships in the "church" today. Yet, when we have adulterous relationships (defined by Jesus as such), people are now saying "Hey, God can bless that relationship and use it for good".....If this is true, and God is using adulterous relationships for "good", blessing and honoring them, why are we coming against homosexual relationships? Why not have the same "grace and mercy" towards those and instead of appealing to them to depart from their sin, tell them it's ok to stay in those relationships because the blood of Jesus covers them?

Paul gave the LORD'S requirements, and personally, I do not feel following those requirements is "legalistic". They have a purpose.

I know you believe I am very "legalistic" and unmerciful in my stance and I know the internet is not a very good avenue sometimes to express oneself, but I think if you met me in person, you would see that I am far from legalistic.....What I am convinced in what I believe the Lord showed me in the last few years---not only showing me the written Word, but His heart behind that Word. I fully recognize that I'm FAR from where I want to be in the Lord, so I am not speaking out of "self-righteousness" because I fully believe that whatever "good" is in me is only from above. Those who are truly born

n again are not yet "completed", nor will we be, until the Lord comes. It is THEN, when we see Him, that we shall be LIKE HIM. Until then, we are ALL a work in progress---even elders/deacons/pastors. Even so, as we undergo the necessary transformation, we must not lighten up those things the Lord has spoken and make concessions for sin that the Lord did not make. Blessings in Him, Cindy

Re:, on: 2006/3/11 23:21

Quote:
-----Those who are born again are not yet "completed", nor will we be, until the Lord comes. It is THEN, when we shall be LIKE HIM. Until then, we are ALL a work in progress---even elders/deacons/pastors. Even so, as we undergo the necessary transformation, we must not lighten up those things the Lord has spoken and make concession for sin that the Lord did not make.

Amen sister!!!!

I need lots of work myself.

Oh that I could become more like HIM!!!

Re: - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/12 19:33

Hello Cindy,

With:

1 Corinthians 6:1-8

*1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?
2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?
3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?
4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.
5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?
6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.
7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?
8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.*

in mind, on what basis would a "Christian" couple, go before a divorce court?

I do not recall reading this passage discussed in regards to the topic should it be applicable.

Blessings,
tony

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/3/12 20:22

Quote:
----- But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

Tony,

You have touched on a real fault line in our modern church. I think there is much to discuss here. Measuring the modern church against these verses shows why convictions against remarriage seem like so much convenience.

The verses you brought to attention are hardly obeyed anymore. We all know plenty of Christians who avail themselves

of the court systems...with both the saved and unsaved. It's difficult to imagine not doing so in this world. In fact, when we are seeking an attorney to represent us in court, many of us want a Christian to represent us.

It is the litigious world as we have made it. I have a good lawyer friend who consults with churches making sure they are non-profit compliant and well positioned against frivolous or unexpected suits. This is what we have come to in Christian America. What happens if a kid chokes on a prize given at a youth event? What happens if a teen makes claims that her youth pastor was improper towards her? What about improper financial management?

Let's discuss the relevancy of these scriptures to the topic of suing for divorce.

If these scriptures only apply between brothers, that is it's permissible to sue the unsaved, then this particular scripture has little relevance in those cases where a believer is unequally contracted to unbelieving spouses.

Obviously these scriptures say that suits between brethren is wrong. In fact it seems that even outside arbitration between brethren is shameful. Now, these verses don't seem to be cast as strict law, but make it clear that those who resort to outside courts to seek "judgments of things pertaining to this life" are 'shameful'. Still, many are simply not willing to live according to these scriptures. Goodness gracious, most of our churches and ministries are secular legal entities filed according to state and local non-profit regulations and subject to the legal system therein. Our church buildings are financed by secular banks who hold our deeds with the power to foreclose for non-payment according to termsheets we gladly sign and shake hands on. The legal status of our Christian organizations is bestowed by the courts and financial institutions of this world!

Now, in light of this obvious unwillingness for most of us to forego our legal rights, to suffer even momentary legal injustice...or even inconvenience at the hand of another...can we imagine how hard it is for women in continuous abusive situations to hear that they have to turn the other cheek? Most Christian business men wouldn't endure a single incident of wrongful financial loss, but women (and men) in harmful marriages are made to choose between spiritual, emotional and physical degradation for a lifetime or shame. What's good for the goose doesn't seem applicable to the gander.

I've said it before...one sin doesn't justify another. However, these verses demonstrate far we have slipped from the ideal in scripture...not just divorced people but the body as a whole.

MC

Re: - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/12 21:04

Mc,

Yes, I look forward to reading comments on this passage of scripture. I believe we would make a proper distinction between the rather benign filing of proper documents as it relates to non-profit organizations and the issue at hand of settling disputes between brethren? And in my estimation that is the real key (brethren).

There are so many facets to this entire thread that perhaps we normally do not consider, the governments involvement in one-flesh unions comes to mind as well.

tonys

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/3/12 22:36

Thanks Tony,

Quote:
-----I believe we would make a proper distinction between the rather benign filing of proper documents as it relates to non-profit organizations and the issue at hand of settling disputes between brethren?

Certainly we have the best intentions when we sign papers. We aren't intending on entering into disputes. My point is that we accept the legal authority of the secular courts for much of our daily Church based activities...including marriage, b

ut also employment law, money borrowing ect. All of these things can lead to conflicts. What that means is that the state has the final authority to resolve conflicts...including marriage.

Quote:
-----There are so many facets to this entire thread that perhaps we normally do not consider, the governments involvement in one-flesh unions comes to mind as well.

I agree. What else would marriage licenses be for? So this is the simple reason why divorce ends up in secular courts... we have to address the legal status of the marriage licenses! of course, if we ignored the system we might find ourselves illegally married to two people!

My real point is to observe that regardless of the scripture you raised, Christians use the courts to protect themselves all the time...not just divorcees.

Quote:
-----...the issue at hand of settling disputes between brethren?And in my estimation that is the real key (brethren).

If this is really the case, then these verses only apply to Christians in contract. The Christian who is being defrauded or who is failed in some aspect of the contract by the unbeliever would be permitted to defend their rights in the secular courts. As applies to marriage covenants, these verses would then only speak to marriages between two Christians.

I'll sit back now and see what others have to say!

MC

Re: the church's responsibilities - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/12 22:58

I'm trying to wrap my brain around this rather jolting new thought presented here. My mind races on.....

Can we really expect the struggling couples, those burdened down with all kinds of baggage from their past, stuck in impossible relational turmoil, those who lack understanding of how a good marriage functions, to live by higher Biblical standards than the church itself as an institution?

Wow! That's a heavy!

It's like big corporate businesses who take advantage of cheap labor in poor countries (failing to pay them what their worth) laying charges against Joe Employee who robs a few bucks from the cash register.

Also, I believe that a lot of marriages could be saved if the church did its job - if troubled couples got the help they needed early on. How can we expect young married couples to know how to be married and maintain their marriage? Scripture tells older men to come along side of younger men to teach them and model for them how to love their wives, and older women are to come along side of younger women, teaching and modeling in a relational context how to love their husbands. If the church is so sick that it can no longer carry out these functions, then how in the world can anyone expect the less mature young married couples to act better!

I've seen all too often, as Dorcas explained, where the church boards cover over sins that threaten marriages by pretending it isn't happening. In this way it is the church hierarchy that actually destroys many marriages, or enables them to fall apart simply by failing to deal with sin Biblically.

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

The issue gets thicker as we keep on thinking...Â...

You can't even volunteer in the nursery without having a police check, taking a course, and following a "prevention" protocol. Oh, I almost forgot, you can't teach a Sunday School class without two adults present at all times. ALL TO PROTECT THE CHURCH. Yet our clergy marry all kinds of couples who are totally ill equipped to maintain a marriage. And then when their relationship turns to hell, and they can't keep it together.... they get told it is sinful to divorce. They need much more than that from the church.

Quote:

-----of course, if we ignored the system we might find ourselves illegally married to two people!

Without the state's legal approval can any union be viewed as such by God? Have we made the state the highest authority? "What the state has joined together, let no man "

I wonder how this applies to the issue at hand....

Diane

Re: - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/12 23:22

Hello Diane,

Perhaps there would be little reason for this thread if we would take seriously Peter's admonition to husbands, when he said:

1 Peter 3:7

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

And what is the state of a believer's life, when our prayers become hindered?

Haggai 1:6

Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

Yes the context here in Haggai concerned the building of the Temple, and I also believe it describes well a believer's life when prayers are being hindered because of ignorance in our marital relationships. In other words we toil, we struggle, we labor incessantly but yet have so little to show for it. It seems there is so much riding on our Christian Marriages that maybe we take a fresh look at ways we might nourish our covenants.

tonys

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/12 23:27

Quote:

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

Oh yes, Tony, I think that is SO applicable concerning Christian divorces.....and if we are to look at LEADERS conducting their lives in such a manner, I just do not see that as acceptable. Paul was saying that we are to "take the wrong", yet in many "Christian" marriages, we see many who justify taking their spouse (sister) to the law to obtain a divorce and not "taking a wrong" done against them.

I have at times struggled with the "no divorce" issue, but I think going by the scriptures you provided, that any Christian initiating or willingly taking part in a divorce is completely against the Will of the Lord. Blessings, Cindy

Re: covenant - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/12 23:36

Quote:
-----In other words we toil, we struggle, we labor incessantly but yet have so little to show for it. It seems there is so much riding on our Christian Marriages that maybe we take a fresh look at ways we might nourish our covenants.

We've done all the toiling, the struggling, the marriage courses, the parenting courses, the self-help books, etc etc. And we didn't fix it.

Perhaps the first covenant that needs to be restored is our covenant with God.
Diane

Re: courts - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/12 23:40

Quote:
-----we see many who justify taking their spouse (sister) to the law to obtain a divorce and not "taking a wrong" done against them.

I heard a marriage counselor say, "I could help so many couples if they would only let go of their need to be "right".

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/12 23:48

Quote:
-----Perhaps the first covenant that needs to be restored is our covenant with God.

Ah, you've hit the nail on the head Diane..... :-)

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/3/13 0:00

Diane,

Quote:
-----Can we really expect the struggling couples, to live by higher Biblical standards than the church itself as an institution?

Yes. Marriage is apparently in it's own compartment with a unique set of spiritual, moral, and legal standards...this is what is being said. What is not being said is that everything is forgivable and enduring in Marriage. It gives new meaning to the idea of "Marriage License!"

Quote:
-----Paul was saying that we are to "take the wrong", yet in many "Christian" marriages, we see many who justify taking their spouse (sister) to the law to obtain a divorce and not "taking a wrong" done against them.

Can we say this "taking the wrong" between brothers and sisters has no limits? For instance, if a lay worker, or even a youth pastor, behaves improperly with my children can I reserve the right to respond in whatever legal way I might...up to and including prosecution? Or should I be content to settle the matter internally among a court of fellow Christians?

In my reading of this scripture, the phrase "take the wrong" is a preferred prerogative but not an absolute command. In many cases, taking a wrong might be an honorable thing, but in other cases it is unwarranted.

After all, even Paul appealed to Caesar!

Blessings,

MC

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/13 6:30

Dear Cindy,

I think it's wonderful that you understand God wants a marriage to be a once in a lifetime affair between the same two people. That's what He's been trying to do with mankind since the beginning. But we know it did not work out like that, and Jesus had to come and fix things so that at least some people could be accepted into the Bride, that He should be married.

I know you have difficulty believing that God has, nevertheless, made an allowance for each individual who has ever lived, to mess up their relationships abominably, and still have an opportunity to be put right with God for ever, or you would understand that messed up marriages cannot be excluded from this picture. As the single most common relationship apart from parent-child, it is incredible to me that you would attempt to exclude it, especially as the Lord did not.

How do you square this

Quote:

-----Many Christians believe the scriptures teach remarriage when one has a living spouse is entering into a STATE of adultery

with what Jesus said here?

Matthew 19:9 (KJV)

Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery:

I want to stick with the wronged party. Jesus said he could put away his wife and remarry in this circumstance. It seems you have a problem with that; because if anyone is supposed to be left without a spouse, it is *the one who departed from marriage in the first place*.

Further, since we know Jesus took upon Himself the keeping of the law for us for many punishments - such as stoning for fornication and adultery - are you really saying that He is countermanding the abomination mentioned here?

Deuteronomy 24:4

Her former husband, which sent her away, **may not take her again to be his wife**, after that she is defiled; **for that is abomination before the LORD**: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

If so, on what authority? We know that the Lord died for other abominations. Why not for this one, (in your understanding)?

In the context of Old Covenant law in which Jesus was teaching, it doesn't make any sense to have Him overrule Deuteronomy 24:4, unless He made it very clear, like He did when He countermanded the OC's teaching on hating enemies... because it would be a complete reversal of God's heart, wouldn't it?

Later, from the way Paul writes about fornication and adultery as sins of the flesh which should be put away, he believes it is something a person can stop and start again - presumably, simply by cheating on their spouse and going home again to that spouse more than once - possibly with more than one other partner. **Surely this is the commonest kind of adultery, and the one which Paul was addressing...** the kind where there is no obvious single second adulterous relationship. In this situation, Jesus says the original couple can divorce AND the wronged party (who did not cheat on the cheater) CAN REMARRY. That is the end of the first marriage FOR EVER. No-one can return to it after that.

Quote:

-----Those who are truly born again are not yet "completed", nor will we be, until the Lord comes. It is THEN, when we see Him, that we shall be LIKE HIM. Until then, we are ALL a work in progress---even elders/deacons/pastors. Even so, as we undergo the necessary transformation, w

e must not lighten up those things the Lord has spoken and **make concessions for sin that the Lord did not make**.

You are now going against other scriptures, to fortify your stance. Not only does Paul say we ARE complete in Him,

Coloss 2:10

and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

but so does the writer to the Hebrews (ch 10);

14 For by one offering He has perfected **forever** those who are sanctified. (KJV)

and I would add John's first epistle at least, to that thesis, especially 1:7 and 2:1.

Finally,

'make concessions for sin that the Lord did not make'

The Lord did not make any concessions for sin. This is faulty thinking. He DIED for sin and sins, that any who have committed sins, and any who want to be set free from the sinful nature, may do so by acknowledging and accepting His death on their behalf. THAT'S the GOSPEL. It is not about being made to go back to living with the first husband (or wife). THE WHOLE POINT of Romans 7:1 - 3 is that we SHOULD be married TO ANOTHER!

Romans 7:4

Therefore, my brethren, you *also* have become dead to the law **through the body of Christ**, that you may be married to another -- to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

If there is a link with marriage in the above verse, it is the body of Christ. Marriage is about being one flesh **only**, which God blesses. It is not a spiritual condition.

The *spiritual* condition is that of being free from sin, despite being in a relationship of 'the flesh'. Praise the Lord that this is possible, and the Eph 5 verses can be brought to bear on the relationship.

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/13 6:53

On reading what Jesus said about divorce and adultery, it is clear that most of it is angled at males. This ties in with Leviticus 18, which is entirely towards males in all but part of v 23. That is, a man is not to approach a woman because - and the reason is, that woman is one flesh with A MAN.

This puts a perspective on 'let not man put asunder' which has nothing to do with divorce or the agreement of Courts of law. It is a specific exhortation to males, not to interfere with another man's marriage.

If we add all the times a man may have looked on a woman improperly, which Jesus introduces to the definition of adultery, it is much more than an outsider can judge. It becomes a heart matter between that person and God. This is much more in keeping with the high standard Jesus brought to our understanding, and (imho) keeps the pressure where it should be psychologically. Not only does it help a man keep his eyes on his own wife, (and therefore off another man's wife or wife-to-be), it lifts the concept of adultery out of the act completely.

On thinking about the woman in John 8, the absence of the man must have been glaringly obvious to Jesus, (a Man), and the hypocrisy of those who brought the woman must have been stark. According to Lev 18, the male is credited with making the first move. Certainly, he is charged with not making the last move.

For my understanding, this is all helpful perspective.

With regard to the foregoing discussion about going to Court for a divorce, that in Paul's day, the marriage certificate had not been invented. It is a product of the Council of Trent in the 16th century, I believe. And I don't think Paul was prophesying about a time to come! I believe his comments were in regard to people not paying debts or making good on other financial agreements.... but not to do with matrimony. I'd be glad to hear evidence to the contrary.

Re: my testimony - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/13 9:35

I see that I have a tendency to do a lot of "sounding off" here, and realize that my perceptions and beliefs have arisen from my own life-experiences. Perhaps it is fitting at this time to share some of my own story as it relates to marriage and the church.

When we got married I was very naïve. I thought that my husband was saved because he "asked Jesus into his heart". But it didn't take long for me to see that I had really married into an entire deeply-engrained value system that was the opposite of "Christian". My parents-in-law fought all the time and reminded me that their only reason they never divorced was for the "sake of the kids". My father-in-law was an alcoholic, though the implications of that were quite concealed from me. Two brothers-in-law are divorced. For years that same curse has been pulling on our relationship - like a concealed undercurrent - very subtle.

Of course the values that arose from this family system clashed with my strict Reformed upbringing, and later my evangelical beliefs. So I was in a horrible dilemma for years. I wanted to raise our four children to be Christian but was seeing a stronger non-Christian/dysfunctional influence shaping them. I thought I could steer the ship in the right direction and tried very hard. For years I read every marriage and family book I could find. I tried to get my husband to read them but he wouldn't. I signed up for counseling, but it was a waste of time. It was all good stuff, but it only made my misery deeper as I saw God's standards more and more clearly, along with my own total inability to bring that about. I suffered from a sense of condemnation as a result of failure to meet God's holy standards, and there was no way out. That is like living in an emotional hell. Marriage enrichment seminars, and exhortations from the pulpit only deepened the pit. No one knew the depth of my pain, or helped to lift me out.

And all the while, we were good church people, good missionaries, deacon, music leader, Bible study leaders etc.... We hid our pain behind our church roles. We were ideal models. We knew how to have a form of godliness, but it was without power. And we joined the voices of the church that looked down on all those divorced people "out there". We felt self-righteous.

Then I got sick with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, and at the same time two children got Diabetes, and three of our kids had ADD, and also there was giftedness, school troubles and other exceptionalities. At one point during this mess, our 11 yo wanted to end her life, and tried to OD on insulin. Our family ended up in complete breakdown. My husband was not there to help, and couldn't handle it. He coped by escaping into his job (thankfully- as that was far better than alcohol). I had great difficulty getting anyone to believe the seriousness of our condition, as people saw us as a "good" family. The school principal said that my daughter's troubles were the result of all the religious mythology I was shoving at her.

We ended up as a family at a hospital under the care of a psychiatrist. (who made the statement I earlier quoted).

I remember one day, when I was too sick even to feed my children, I yelled at God: "God, if you want any good to come into this situation, you are going to have to do it yourself because I CAN'T. And then I was surrounded with an indescribable peace.

My church could not help. My pastor advised me that I was sinning by seeking the counsel of the "ungodly". Actually, I'll never forget the day he said that. I jumped for joy because for the first time I did NOT feel guilty. I knew God was leading and protecting us. I was on the path to trusting in God. And he never failed me, though the medical/social/educational /religious/family systems did. God brought me into a GENUINE faith, and now, I say, I do not regret a thing.

Well, I never divorced, but I can understand that remaining in a marriage is no magic answer. None of our children at this time are in church, and they seem to have adopted many of the ways of those ungodly family value systems. However, they are deep thinkers, and I see that God is working.

I have had to realize that my journey with God is personal, and I do not need my husband to join me in that. I am equally yoked to God - my true husband. I do not need to change my earthly husband. In fact, the more I grow in Christ-likeness, the more he is free to have his own journey. And I see faint glimmers of light.

And amazingly, God has given me a leadership position in the church - one that I was not seeking.

Diane

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/13 9:55

Quote:

-----On reading what Jesus said about divorce and adultery, it is clear that most of it is angled at males

Believe me Dorcas, I DO believe most of the responsibility is aimed at men----that is most obvious in Eph. 5 because the husband was likened to Christ in role. However, Jesus in Mk. 10 did acknowledge a woman putting away her husband. Paul also in Rom. 7:2-3 used the example of a woman marrying another man while she still had a living husband. He also references a woman who "departs" in I Cor. 7:10-11. So not all "putting asunder" is seen scripturally as something a man does. We see spoken throughout the Proverbs of the "Adulteress" and her devices to take what does not belong to her. SHE is the initiator. SHE is the seducer. So in that, we must be honest that scripture does not lay all the blame on man when things go bad and adultery takes place. A man couldn't commit adultery OUTWARDLY if a woman didn't give him the occasion to do so.

I agree with you that adultery is an inward condition. Sometimes it manifest outwardly (through an affair or 2nd marriage), but many times it remains "hidden" in the heart. That type of adultery we cannot see nor judge. We can only judge what comes forth. The Lord will deal with the hidden things which man (other men) cannot see. That doesn't mean that we should not deal with the outward though---minimizing it because many are guilty too of the same type of "inward" sins. The church IS called to deal with the outward manifestation of sin within the Body of Christ (I Cor. 5). Blessings in Him, Cindy

Ps. I will address your other post point by point when I have more time to do it justice. peace sister.

Re:, on: 2006/3/13 10:05

A lot of debate (and civility! :-)) about this topic.

But I just keep coming back to what the Word of God says very plainly... probably more plainly than on any other topic. There is no debate about this in my mind. The Word of God says what it says.

Krispy

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2006/3/13 10:36

I guess what I don't understand from the camp that says remarriage is always adultery is they say it's not "seen" as a marriage in God's eyes, but merely an adulterous relationship. If that is correct then why did Jesus tell the woman she had 5 husbands, if according to God's perception that is impossible. Note He said had and not have, so it wasn't a polygamous relationship. (I haven't looked it up in the Greek so the have/had comment may be mute... I don't know)

I would like to at least understand an explanation of that, even if I don't agree.

Re: - posted by GaryE (), on: 2006/3/13 11:28

{quote} Diane

I remember one day, when I was too sick even to feed my children, I yelled at God: "God, if you want any good to come into this situation, you are going to have to do it yourself because I CAN'T. And then I was surrounded with an inexpressible peace.

.....
We CAN'T but God CAN and will.

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/13 12:23

Quote:

-----We CAN'T but God CAN and will.

It's this which makes us righteous in His sight.

Re: A pastor, husband of one wife? - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2006/3/13 14:04

Quote:

-----Is this passage of scripture in I Timothy chapter three saying that a pastor must be a man of one wife(having never been divorced), or(one wife at a time)?

I am not sure where this comes from, In my Bible it does not say anything about "pastors" but elders and deacons. The office of the "pastor" is not mentioned.

Why do we take what the Apostles directs concerning elders and deacons and apply that to "pastors"? Is an elder a "pastor" in the modern sense of the word?

Is there even such an office of "pastor" in the New Testament?. I can find only elders and deacons. I cannot find any one in the New Testament who was a "pastor".

And whenever elders are mentioned, it is always in the plural, never a single "elder" or a "pastor" in charge of a church. This has nothing to do with the New Testament. It is just protestant tradition carried over from the Roman Catholic clergy/laity system of the "priesthood".

Oh Lord Jesus, deliver your church from the doctrine and teaching of the Nicolaitans. Deliver us from those who seek to establish a "clergy/laity" system and suppress the functioning of the body of Christ and who seek to lord over your flock. Deliver us from ordained "pastors" and the system of religion and build up your body by the joints of the rich supply and the measure of each one part.

Graftedbranch

Re:, on: 2006/3/13 14:17

Quote:

-----And whenever elders are mentioned, it is always in the plural, never a single "elder" or a "pastor" in charge of a church. This has nothing to do with the New Testament. It is just protestant tradition carried over from the Roman Catholic clergy/laity system of the "priesthood".

Oooo... sounds like you've been reading Frank Viola's books! I like you already!

What you say is correct. The Greek word for pastor and elder is the same. Pastor means elder, elder means pastor. And you are correct... always plural. More than one elder (pastor).

I didn't really feel the need myself to bring out what you did because it really wasn't something that I felt needed to be addressed here. I felt it would lead to more rabbit trails and before long we would have lost focus on the topic.

But I'm glad you did!

Krispy

Re: wrong assumption - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/14 7:20

Quote:
----- Lord Jesus, deliver your church from the doctrine and teaching of the Nicolaitans. Deliver us from those who seek to establish a "clergy/laity" system and suppress the functioning of the body of Christ and who seek to Lord over your flock. Deliver us from ordained "pastors" and the system of religion and build up your body by the joints of the rich supply and the measure of each one part.

I add my "Amen!"

Some issues can never be resolved because we are operating from a non-biblical assumption in the first place. We are trying to interpret the Bible through our cultural biases or perhaps an Old Covenant mindset (old wine skin). When we base a belief and practice on a sandy foundation it will fall apart eventually.

Quote:
-----the Greek word for pastor and elder is the same

Krispy, I will have to check this out, as I somehow got the impression that they were different - the elder was more like an overseer of the local church, and a pastor had more of an itinerant role. I wonder if I got that from Philologos.... I must be careful when I read- make sure I remember it right.
Diane

Re:, on: 2006/3/14 8:49

Quote:
-----pastor had more of an itinerant role

That would be an evangelist, in my understanding of the word "itinerant".

Krispy

Re: pastors - posted by h2oboy (), on: 2006/3/14 10:34

Eph 4:11-12

11 And he gave some (to be) apostles ; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: ASV

Were these 'offices' in the church or service gifts to the Body? Were they not all itinerant?

Could it be that this gift of pastor/shepherd was a gift to the local elders to provide protection and 'meat' that they might mature and shepherd the flock?

Jeff

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/14 10:49

The word "pastor" and "elder" in the Greek are different words. It is assumed these terms are simply synonymous. One term is presbuteros in the greek (elder/overseer), the other is poimeon (pastor/shepherd). The connection of the terms is largely made in Acts where Paul gives his farewell speech to the Ephesian elders, telling them to shepherd the flock given to their charge. The term used in Acts is simply the verbal form of the noun used for shepherd.

Thus, though you don't get an exact statement that equates them in the NT, there does seem to be a strong relationship.

Re: - posted by Graftedbranch, on: 2006/3/14 13:35

Quote:
-----What you say is correct. The Greek word for pastor and elder is the same. Pastor means elder, elder means pastor. And you are correct... always plural. More than one elder (pastor).

I appreciate your "Amen" but I would submit that the word for pastor in the New Testament is the word "shepherd" and in the context of Ephesians 5, it is a "shepherd/teacher". But in the context it is not an elder or even an office, but one who is gifted and given to the church along with Apostles, Evangelists, for the perfecting of the Saints for the work of the ministry.

In the New Testament, a "pastor/teacher" is never "the presiding minister" but rather one who perfects the saints for the work of the ministry. The ministry is not carried out directly by the gifted ones but indirectly by perfecting the saints for the work of the ministry.

In the New Testament Paul instructs Timothy (a co-worker, not a pastor of any church) to appoint elders (plural) in every city showing two things, the church was synonymous with the city (i.e. The church in Ephesus, the church in Corinth, etc. and there was never a "reigning pastor". and there is never an epistle written to a pastor but only to churches.

There is absolutely no Clergy/laity in the New Testament. There is absolutely never a single "minister" who does the spiritual work and a laity who sits and listens to sermons and tithes to pay his salary. This is as foreign to the New Testament as statues of Mary and Cathedrals.

Sure there are those who are gifted in preaching and teaching and shepherding others to Christ, but as long as those 3 talent members of Christ rise up to suppress the functioning of the one talent members and don't allow them to function in the "ministry" the body of Christ will never be built up in reality.

As long as the clergy/pastoral system is in place, the body of Christ will never function according to God's desire and intention because according to Ephesians, the body of Christ is built up by the "joints of the rich supply and the measure of each one part". As long as one man does the "ministry" there will never be the growth in substance and the saints will never be 'perfected for the work of the ministry.' They will be silent pew members who sit and listen to sermons and say, 'what a wonderful sermon' and "what a great man of God"

Graftedbranch

Re: God breaks through our faulty structures - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/14 16:34

Quote:
-----As long as one man does the "ministry" there will never be the growth in substance and the saints will never be 'perfected for the work of the ministry.'

Yet I know pastors who are very godly leaders, who claim to have been called by God into their positions, and seem to be

e following him closely. God has been using those kind to build his people, even along side the many who are not godly leaders.

Now why would God call them to something that was NOT his design, but MAN'S design. Do we discount the possibility that they heard from God? I don't think we have that right.

Could it be that God works in spite of man's faulty structures - all because he wishes to break through with his GRACE? Better some light than none.

If that is so, then could it not be equally possible that God can indeed call divorcees to do his work - even as spiritual leaders - whether pastors, elders, or whatever (assuming that he did NOT design divorcees to be leaders, just as he did not design pastors to have a single church).
Diane

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/15 17:39

Quote:
-----Could it be that God works in spite of man's faulty structures - all because he wishes to break through with his GRACE? Better some light than none.

I've often thought along these lines.... and I've also wondered that there is a lack of internal leadership by the Holy Ghost in many lives. It cuts both ways.

Locally, there is an evangelical Anglican church where the Holy Spirit is given as much room to move as possible - but, this is through the very well-prayer-prepared and guidance-sought-for stage-managed services. In response, God takes every opportunity to break through into people's lives and *many* are saved, as the simplicity of Christ is faithfully presented week after week.

I wish some people would see that divorce is sometimes necessary to bring conflict to an end, or, to get a financial arrangement so the children have food regularly. It's not all about adultery or remarriage. It is sheer practicality, in many cases.

Does God use people who have sinned in the past? Yes He does.

Which reminds me of something I said in an early post in this thread.... Isn't it His *right* to use His purchased possession as He finds fit?

Re: - posted by deltadom (), on: 2006/3/15 20:29

I so want a godly life and to be a man of one wife and to be pure even though I fail and witness in those places that no one wants to go and have all godly relationships, I haven't got a relationship now!!!
Jesus help me

Re:, on: 2006/3/15 20:55

This morning I heard a very good sermon on the radio about King David's abominable sins.
Adultery and murder.

THEN - Looking at Jesus' Genealogy is a trip too, to speak of who He chose to have in HIS "Family Tree" ... you'd think He would merit or command all of the 'righteous' only.

Abraham was a pagan when God called him. Yet by faith alone, he is the father of the Jews and us.

And what's puzzled me also for years, is that if we Pastored a Church, and we got word that one in our congregation was sleeping with their father's wife ... would we wait till Chapter Five of our letter to them to bring it up or would we make a cord into a whip (symbolically only) and hurry down there?

Never could figure out how he could wait till chpt 5 to address that stuff. :-?

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/3/15 22:22

And what happened after David did that abominable thing - committing adultery (I say he raped her..don't matter, it was still sin)? and then had her DH killed?

ginnyrose

Re:, on: 2006/3/15 22:29

The sermon I referred to that I heard on Billy Graham's station, I'd have to research who preached it this morning that you've asked about, covered all the "consequences" of David's adultery and murder ... if that's what you're worried about.

Very good sermon. Very nicely balanced I'd say.

Re: Pastor, the husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/16 8:26

Quote:

-----And what happened after David did that abominable thing - committing adultery (I say he raped her..

Ginnyrose,

When you think of all the other times in scripture that rape is specifically mentioned, I think it is *adding to scripture* to attribute this sin to David. The cultural norms were different, and David LIKED Bathsheba. Why would he want to hurt her? I don't think he needed to.

Perhaps it offends some people that Bathsheba complied. That's a different discussion too. I have often thought about Esther in this context, being lined up to share the king's bed after so many other women had been with him.

Christianity has changed our attitude to these things. Now we bring a completely different culture to our thinking.

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/16 8:44

Annie,

The fact remains that although David was a man after God's own heart, and this is seen in his writings extensively.. which makes us think of him as closer than many other figures - to say nothing of being a physical forebear to the Lord Himself - David was not allowed to build the temple. And Paul was a tentmaker ... which one has to think is also close to God's heart.

I was thinking/reasoning in my mind this morning, before I read your post, that 'what if God is against divorced people being in 'leadership' positions'? *Let* those who have not 'sinned' in certain ways in the flesh receive their calling to 'church leadership' and *let* them bear the burden with God's help. And *let* the divorcees obey God in everything He puts in their hearts, and *let* them enjoy being **free** of the burden of 'church leadership'.

Those who need their church leaders to be apart (and above?) other members of the Body because they have not committed certain sins in the past, are missing out on vital understanding about God's grace. And they are also missing completely what it is that gives 'authority' to a person under God. But that's ok. We all get the leaders we 'deserve'... as is so often said.

(Here again, I remember how David shored up in the Cave of Adullam, and all those that were in trouble with the law, gathered themselves to him, till he had a company of four hundred men who were also in hiding. This, later, was the basis of his 'army' of 'mighty men'. Did some people forget that?)

But, and I mean this.... as a female divorcee, far be it from me to judge. I find God's heart open to me at a raw and primitive level - which is where I need Him - and I have enough on my plate just facing and tackling the challenges He brings me, without aspiring to formal 'office' in the church, which will bring any more *pressure*. It is all my desire to obey Him in

whatever He calls me to and has called me, and I look to Him only, for the strength to 'be' that obedient servant. I have a 'way to go'.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/3/16 9:04

Dorcas,

Males will rape people they like, also. Have you never heard of date rape? I have talked to girls who were raped by people they knew and will refuse to press charges....I know the Bible does not call this rape, but when you look at the entire scenario of how David got Bathsheba, it looks like rape to me. Perhaps you have to work in the gutter with people in the gutter to know what some of these sins look like...?

The Bible does not say Bathsheba had any say in the matter. And neither was it consensual. When David saw Bathsheba, he had to ask who she was. After being identified, and told she was married, he told his servants to go get her.

In any case, to bring David's sin into this discussion as a basis for allowing a pastor to continue functioning as a leader after having committed this sin of adultery, misses the mark completely. When David was confronted by Nathan about this sin, he repented, and God forgave him - which is now referred to as the 'sure mercies of David' in the NT - BUT his rule as a king was severely marred and hampered. It disgraced God..read the entire story in 2 Samuel 11 on. Even after God forgave him, the consequences still followed him. Now if a pastor is committing adultery he should be defrocked because it will become a snare to him and the others. You must remember we are talking about the work of God and not defending a person's right to continue as a CEO of a company.

God is holy and he calls his people to be holy who are to be led by holy people as well and that is why the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3 are given. These qualifications are to be present in its entirety in a leader. God said so, not ginnyrose.

Divorced people can serve God but not in a position of leadership, like pastors. I know there are many in the pulpit who have been divorced, but that will not negate God's Word. If people would concentrate on being servants instead of reaching for an exalted position, this question would become moot. Divorce, BTW, is not a modern day phenomenon: it existed back then, too. The lack of its mention here is no accident. God knew what people will do years hence.

ginnyrose

Re: Pastor, the husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/16 9:19

ginnyrose,

I hear you. And I understand your reasoning.

But why then, did God not insist that one of David's sons who was born from one of his other wives, became king?

Let me apologise in advance if this is an ignorant question, but it's one I've wondered for a loooooong time.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/3/16 9:36

Dorcas,

Good question and that is why I believe Bathsheba was raped.

Notice, how Nathan reprimanded David: he put ALL the blame on him and none on Bathsheba. David shamed her; she was beloved by her DH. Now here she is pregnant by this king and man who had her DH killed. She was in a severe predicament. Visualize what that woman was going through, if you can, and it will make you mad. God saw all this and it is in his nature to defend the defenceless which is what I think he did when he called her son to be the heir to David's throne.

Makes a lot of sense to me. What do you think?

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/3/16 13:56

I've scanned this thread but not read every posting. Did anyone refer to "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man," (1Tim 5:9 KJVS) This is *gegonuia enos andros gunE*? "being of one man a wife". The 1 Tim 3:2 reference has *mias gunaikos andra* "of one woman a man". It is the exact equivalent of the later reference. So we have 'a one woman man' and a 'one man woman'. The 'one man woman', however, is a widow so there is no question of multiple husbands. What relevance might this have to the prospective elder?

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/3/16 14:03

Quote:
-----But why then, did God not insist that one of David's sons who was born from one of his other wives, became king?

There was no law of primogeniture in Israel. The king chose the man to succeed him. I have been looking at David's genealogy... currently I have 8 legitimate wives, 21 legitimate sons and 1 legitimate daughter. Not counting concubines and their offspring!

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/16 14:45

Quote:
-----There was no law of primogeniture in Israel. The king chose the man to succeed him.

Ahhh! And thank you.

Quote:

I have been looking at David's genealogy... currently I have 8 legitimate wives, 21 legitimate sons and 1 legitimate daughter. Not counting concubines and their offspring!

That's interesting. We were discussing David because of his adultery....

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2006/3/16 14:55

Hi Ron,

Quote:
-----The 'one man woman', however, is a widow so there is no question of multiple husbands. What relevance might this have to the prospective elder?

It would indicate that a man having been married before because of the death of spouse or divorce is *not* qualified to be an elder.

The thing that has always puzzled me is; why would Paul then exhort the Church to refuse to take into the number younger widows (1 Timothy 5:11) and rather instruct them to marry, have children and guide the house (v 14) if marrying the second time was ultimately going to disqualify them from being taken in if they were to fall in need (no husband or children, etc.) when they got older?

Any thoughts?

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/16 15:03

Quote:
-----It would indicate that a man having been married before because of the death of spouse or divorce is not qualified to be an elder.

I don't see it that way, Robert...

Isn't the question: does a widowerer qualify because he has now no wife...

or,

does a widower who *remarried* but is now a widower *again* (however many times), qualify?

According to Krispy, even when the man is the wronged party, and is divorced - whether remarried (as Jesus said he could) or not - he is automatically disqualified *by the divorce*.

(Krispy, that's what I think you've been saying. Please correct me if I've misunderstood you.)

Re: - posted by PassingThru, on: 2006/3/16 15:08

It was suggested in this thread that perhaps God saw a second wife as being only an adulterous relationship (and not a genuine marriage).

1 Corinthians 6:15-16 seems to indicate the oppose :-

Quote:

Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid .
1Co 6:16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to a harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

The "two becoming one flesh" is exactly God's description of a marriage (to which Paul is referring to), so it appears fornication could be included as a form of marriage.

If the interpretation that a elder must not be divorced is correct, then surely it needs to be extended to include "neither have been a fornicator" ? Surely the fact that a man was legally married and divorced, shouldn't disqualify him when compared to a man that lived with a girlfriend out of wedlock and later split up?

PassingThru.

Edit - changed should to read shouldn't in my last sentence!

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2006/3/16 15:58

Hi Dorcas,

Quote:
-----I don't see it that way, Robert...

Isn't the question: does a widower qualify because he has now no wife...

I was not saying I necessarily believed that, I was just saying that it was the logical deduction drawn from the two corresponding texts. There is a large gap between deduction and revelation. ;-)

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/3/16 18:26

Quote:
-----The thing that has always puzzled me is; why would Paul then exhort the Church to refuse to take into the number younger widows (I Timothy 5:11) and rather instruct them to marry, have children and guide the house (v 14) if marrying the second time was ultimately going to disqualify them from being taken in if they were to fall in need (no husband or children, etc.) when they got older?

We might also ask why Paul would encourage this when elsewhere he has encouraged folks to 'abide in their calling'? I think the simple answer is 'circumstances change cases'. In the Corinthian era he advised one course of action and by the era of the pastoral letters another. His Corinthian counsel is determined by 'this present distress' (1 Cor 7:26) whereas the counsel in the pastorals is not addressed to those in a 'present distress'.

The provision for 'true widows' is for those without any others to support them. If a younger widow married there might well be a family to support her in her later years. The 'preventative' cure would be for younger widows to marry etc while the 'remedial' cure would be for the saints to make provision for the older widows.

As to what would happen with twice married widows with no supporting family... I am sure some provision would have been made but we really have so little data to create a scenario here with this single reference to an 'order' of 'widows given to prayer'.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/3/16 18:30

Have we asked the question "why should this particular criterion be applied only to those joining the 'oversight'?"

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/3/16 22:01

Quote:
-----Have we asked the question "why should this particular criterion be applied only to those joining the 'oversight'?"

To my recollection, if the issue has been raised, it passed by without serious consideration. It does beg the question, if divorced and remarried people are damaged goods as far as leadership is concerned...how are they not also lesser qualified (edit: diminished) for other areas of influence such as helping in the Church Body or as working in the "harvest field", witnessing to friends or co-workers?

Can a remarried person play a guitar in music ministry? Can a remarried person testify of Christ in the workplace? Those are also areas of "leadership"...that is they are areas of influence for Christ.

MC

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/3/17 4:53

MC's
Quote:
-----Can a remarried person play a guitar in music ministry? Can a remarried person testify of Christ in the workplace? Those are also areas of "leadership"...that is they are areas of influence for Christ.

I'm going to be pedantic again. My apologies.

While 'leadership' is a clear aspect of 'eldership/oversight' I think they are not coterminous. 'leadership' can be both an event and a role but 'eldership/oversight' is a whole-of-life mission.

I think it is important to understand that this list of qualities is not a 'qualification' criteria in the sense that anyone having these qualities would thereby be a candidate for 'eldership/oversight'. I think it is important to see this as a series of 'cha

characteristics'; the kind of answer you might get to the question 'what kind of person should an elder be?'. There is no concentration here on gift or ability (even 'apt to teach' doesn't mean quite what many think) but rather on character and disposition. This is the 'kind' of person who might be considered for eldership/oversight.

There is an interesting feature in this list in that the prospective 'elder/overseer' has to have a good reputation outside the fellowship. "Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (1Tim 3:7 NKJV) I have gone for the NKJV here because it draws attention to the word 'testimony'. The prospective elder/overseer must have a good testimony 'outside'. Did you ever hear of a church who invited the neighbours to comment on the church 'leaders'?;-) (I do know of one church which had an interview with a man's workmates before recognising the man in eldership/oversight.) In the light of..."Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." (1John 3:13 KJVS)...what are we to make of this stipulation that the world outside the church must hold the church's 'leaders' in high esteem?

In our thread on pastors I have made the point that if we examine the data regarding the OT use of the word 'elder' we discover that the 'elders' often acted in a representative role towards the 'outside world'. This should interest you Americans ;-) the word elder in Latin is Senator. In your system, if I understand it correctly, the Senator is the elected 'representative' of the people. There is something of this sense in the OT use of the word 'elder' and consequently some of this sense is present in the NT term 'elder' too.

On occasion the 'eldership/overseers' of the local church might be called upon to 'represent' the local church in their dealing with outside authorities. Because the 'local' church has an outwards looking face it is essential that the character of its representatives is above suspicion or to use the biblical phrase are "blameless". There is an old saying that 'Caesar's wife must be above suspicion'. The public representative's of the local expression of the Lamb's Bride ie the local church, must also be above suspicion.

It is important to observe that this list is not aspirational; it is not the goal towards which the elder/overseer is moving. The list is 'now'. The character and disposition of the 'elder/overseer' must be above reproach and in a world blighted by sexual irregularities a man's sexual behaviour must be taken into account.

Perhaps there is a symbolic issue here too. The Lamb will only ever have one Bride. So many of the God-given institutions which were designed to speak to us of God's character have been vandalised by the Accuser; marriage is one of them. As far as it lies within his power the prospective elder/overseer must be one in whose life the 'truth' is visible in its undamaged state.

This is why I always want to distinguish, not between the persons, but between the 'roles' of pastor-teacher and 'elder/overseer'. The first is dependent upon gift, the second upon character. There is no essential biblical connection between the 'elder/overseer' and the 'pastor-teacher'. One man may indeed be both but not necessarily so.

Re: fidelity - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/17 6:47

Quote:

I have been looking at David's genealogy... currently I have 8 legitimate wives, 21 legitimate sons and 1 legitimate daughter. Not counting concubines and their offspring!

That's interesting. We were discussing David because of his adultery....

Dorcas, If I understand correctly, David's sin was not so much that he took another woman into his life, but that he took one who BELONGED TO ANOTHER. That was the sin - as clearly illustrated in Nathan's parable, and the Ten Commandments. "Thou shalt not take thy neighbors....."

In God's reprimand to him afterwards, David was told by God: "I gave your master's house to you and your master's wives into your arms. ...And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more..." What, more wives????

David was straying away from his close walk with God and his reliance on God as his provider: David did not ask God first. David had coveted, and had allowed his desires to carry him away, he WAS NOT CONTENT. His sin occurred BEFORE the actual adultery. We need to grasp the seriousness of the sin of the heart because it applies today.

I find that our Christian practise has some serious inconsistencies: For example, a common-law couple would be considered living in sin, fornicating, because they are not LEGALLY married - even if they are faithful to one another.

Now, if a LEGALLY divorced man takes a new wife, no matter how tender and faithful he is, he is tossed into the same sin bracket as a married man who cheats on his wife.

Are we tossing around civic law here? One moment it is the only thing that counts, and in another situation it counts for nothing. What is the outsider supposed to think of our religion when they see this inconsistency. Even they have an understanding of fidelity. Just ask a teenage girl who is "going out" with a guy. That fellow is not fair game for any rival female. And they aren't even married!!

"Thou shalt not take thy neighbors....." nor thy friend's dating partner....

It amazes me that a far bigger crime is placed on those who are married a second time than those in the church who committed adultery (which is all too quickly covered up)
Has our sense of morality become twisted??

The new morality, merely by common practise, is this: "If you can hide it, it is not a sin, but it is something visible (like divorce) then you can never be "right with God" again.

Diane

Re: A pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/17 7:51

Hi Diane,

Thank you for that exposition. (I really mean that. I had not thought through the specifics of David's situation in that way.)

I think today, though, that if a husband of one wife takes another man's wife to bed, he is committing adultery both against his own wife and the husband of the adulteress.

He would be committing adultery against his own wife if he took an unmarried woman to bed, with whom he committed fornication.

I agree with the other excellent questions you raised and will be interested in others' responses.

Quote:

We need to grasp the seriousness of the sin of the heart because it applies today.

Whether a man was married or single before he knew the Lord, if he was not faithful to one 'spouse', then it appears he is forever disqualified from eldership/oversight, according to philologos's dissertation above.

I wonder if this applies equally to those who were delivered from homosexual behaviour also, who are now 'washed', 'sanctified', and 'justified' in 1 Cor 6:11. If anything, they would have an *advantage*, having never been married.

This still doesn't make sense to me.... Mainly because all through the Old Testament, there is an understanding that a man needs a wife. It is not until Jesus suggests that a man might choose *not* to have a wife, for the kingdom's sake, that this is challenged... and later taken up by Paul as a valid option for a (born again) Christian.

Re: get to the root cause - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/17 8:14

Quote:
-----there is an understanding that a man needs a wife. It is not until Jesus suggests that a man might choose not to have a wife, for the kingdom's sake, that this is challenged... and later taken up by Paul as a valid option for a (born again)

I think that procreation was a priority, for the preservation of the nation of Israel, as Adam was given the calling to perpetuate the human race.... "Be fruitful..." To not have children, or perpetuate that geneological line was sinful.(illustrated in one OT example)

(Maybe to a degree that applies today. We certainly are going to feel the effects of reduced birth rate.)

Having multiple wives was a social security net, built into the culture - even permitted by God. In our day, it is hard to imagine what it might have been like to be a single woman in that culture, without the protective covering of a man, and his provision. And with so many men dying in war, there would be less...

Anyway, I think we can easily miss some major points of Biblical obedience. I ask, is it legitimate for anyone to map out their own lives, be masters of their destiny - whether or not they take a wife "legitimately"?

In our culture the entire means of choosing spouses has strayed far away from Biblical standards. It is humanism - woven right into the fabric of the Christian community. And this, in itself, I believe contributes significantly to the increasing divorce rate. It's all based on faulty expectations, romantic idealism, etc etc

If we want to help correct the social disease, we better go to the root of it, not stay stuck on the symptom.

Diane

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/3/17 9:14

I have read most of the posts following and I do not think anyone has suggested this, so please excuse me if I am repeating what has been said.

I Timothy 5:

1 Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers,
2 the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.

3 Honor widows who are widows indeed;

4 but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God.

5 Now she who is a widow indeed and who has been left alone, has fixed her hope on God and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day.

6 But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives.

7 Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach.

8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

9 A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man,

10 having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work.

11 But refuse to put younger widows on the list, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married,

12thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge.

13At the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention.

14Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach;

15for some have already turned aside to follow Satan.

16If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

I would like to look at the context. It tells us how one should regard others in the church and since Paul was writing to a young man so one must consider that because of the angle he presenting this. He is to relate to the older people as a parent: men - fathers; women - mothers; young girls as sisters. And widows are to be respected and honored. Then follows admonition on how a family should care for a widow. If there is a young one, she should remarry.

Now the issue arises on what is meant in v. 9: "widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man". I would like to make this suggestion: the list would not be a membership list to a body of believers but is likely talking about a separate order that existed in the church that functioned as a benevolent organization to assist people in their distresses. To me this interpretation would make more sense because of the context.

What do you think?

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/3/17 9:33

Quote:

If the interpretation that a elder must not be divorced is correct, then surely it needs to be extended to include "neither have been a fornicator" ? Surely the fact that a man was legally married and divorced, shouldn't disqualify him when compared to a man that lived with a girlfriend out of wedlock and later split up?

The difference between a divorced person and one who was shacking is a vow. If you study the scriptures about vow making/keeping, you will find God takes this very seriously. Failure to keep a vow is referred to as a 'truce breaker' which is a sin. Today we would call it lying.

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/3/17 9:37

Quote:
-----Whether a man was married or single before he knew the Lord, if he was not faithful to one 'spouse', then it appears he is forever disqualified from eldership/oversight, according to philologos's dissertation above.

Did I say that? :-o

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/3/17 9:43

Quote:
-----Having multiple wives was a social security net, built into the culture - even permitted by God. In our day, it is hard to imagine what it might have been like to be a single woman in that culture, without the protective covering of a man, and his provision. And with so many men dying in war, there would be less...

Anyway, I think we can easily miss some major points of Biblical obedience. I ask, is it legitimate for anyone to map out their own lives, be masters of their destiny - whether or not they take a wife "legitimately"?

Most of the world doesn't have to 'imagine' this, it is their normal experience. This may have been the way it worked out in practice but I don't think we can say it was 'permitted by God' because of this.

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/17 9:59

Quote:
-----Now, if a LEGALLY divorced man takes a new wife, no matter how tender and faithful he is, he is tossed into the same sin bracket as a married man who cheats on his wife.

Diane, this is where some have issue. Who says the man's first marriage is dissolved? The state who issues the divorce decree, the person or person's married, or God? Does a "civil" divorce dissolve what God has joined together? From Jesus' own words, it does not appear to be so. Why are we changing HIS definition of a form of adultery, saying these relationships ARE approved by God, when it appears scripturally they are not. Why do we think that such men should be put in leadership positions, when it appears God says "no". Whose judgment are we resting upon---His or our own?

I personally see a huge problem in the confessing church today which has led to where we are at presently. What we are doing is the same exact thing that the Cor. church was doing---in our desire to appear "full of grace" and "merciful" we are allowing sin in the camp.....yet, is this ok with the Lord? (1 Cor. 5)

Quote:
-----It amazes me that a far bigger crime is placed on those who are married a second time than those in the church who committed adultery (which is all too quickly covered up)

I don't believe any of us would ever think it ok to commit adultery OR to cover it up. The hypocrisy I see is that some believe extramarital adultery is in one camp---those type should be dealt with, but those who commit adultery through remarriage after a divorce---should be elevated to positions of leadership within a church if it "appears" they are faithful to "this" wife. That is a very confusing stance to me.....

This very stance is why the homosexual "Christians" are calling us HYPOCRITES! They see very clearly that remarriage is called adultery by Jesus, yet we say it is not adultery.....yet we will come down pretty hard on other sexual sins 'within the camp'. Personally, I believe it has become such because we KNOW people and LOVE people who are divorced and remarried and we think "surely those scriptures CAN'T mean what they say"....surely there has to be some grace extended towards THAT sin.

Where is our measurement of sin coming from---within our own reasonings, or according to the Lord's judgments?

Believe me Diane, I would be very happy if you can show that the marriages which take place after a divorce, which are named by Jesus and Paul as adulterous unions, somehow come to be honored by God---the previous marriage dissolved. That's what I used to believe, but I can no longer hold to such a view in light of the Words of Jesus and Paul on the matter. I believe it was the Lord Himself who showed me the inequity of judgment within the Church on the issue of sexual sin/illicit relationships. I can see nothing but hypocrisy now---especially when I see big named ministries fighting so hard against homosexuality, yet remaining deafeningly quiet on the issue of church sanctioned adultery.

What Ron said about those on the "outside" is an important facet and consideration not only in leadership issues, but in

our dealings with sin overall within our ranks. The "world" is watching us.....watching to see if what we speak lines up with what we do. Blessings in Him, Cindy

Re:, on: 2006/3/17 10:03

So many opinions... here's a thought... make better decisions based on much prayer when you marry... and then dont get divorced...

Krispy

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2006/3/17 10:58

Quote:

Perhaps there is a symbolic issue here too. The Lamb will only ever have one Bride. So many of the God-given institutions which were designed to speak to us of God's character have been vandalised by the Accuser; marriage is one of them. As far as it lies within his power the prospective elder/overseer must be one in whose life the 'truth' is visible in its undamaged state.

Amen. I believe strongly that the local elders are to essentially represent the image of Christ in all its purity and glory. If it is our goal to show the world Jesus, and we are unable to do such with the "official" representatives of the faith, then where will people ever have any hope of seeing Christ?

As Paul said to the Corinthians, "stop sinning, for some people have no knowledge of God." This demonstrates that our lives alone will sometimes be the only means people have of knowing anything about God. With the image of God being increasingly distorted in creation, through such things as divorce, homosexuality, and the like, is it no wonder we have such a great increase in the number of people espousing atheism? Is it no wonder they look around and say, "Where is God?" when they can't see Him anywhere, including the church that bears His name? If they can't see the image of God in the local church, where in God's name will they see Him?

I think this is ultimately the theology behind the church, and why Paul gave the qualifications he did on what is required of the local overseers to be. It is sad though today, I have known of churches where the laws of supply and demand are the determining factor of eldership. Or in other words, a congregation feels they need a pastor, so they begin the quest to find one. They'll ultimately take who they feel is most qualified, whether they meet the specifications of an overseer or not. Ultimately, because they feel they "need" a pastor. Thus, the "need" for a pastor sometimes has women being placed in the position because "there simply isn't a man who is stepping up to the task!" But this is to likewise is wrong, for it breaks the Divine pattern.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/3/17 11:50

Quote:

----- I have known of churches where the laws of supply and demand are the determining factor of eldership.

This is a sobering reality. Often in the past when I have spoken on the topic of eldership/oversight I have quoted the old Bang and Olufsen slogan. Up to a standard, not down to a price.

Re: - posted by PassingThru, on: 2006/3/17 12:03

KrispyKritter wrote :-

Quote:
-----So many opinions... here's a thought... make better decisions based on much prayer when you marry... and then dont get divorced..
.

The disciples obviously struggled with that idea :-P :-

Mat 19:10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good, to marry.

Looking at the verse in question however, it does say that the elder IS to be a man of one wife, so he obviously has to have proven his steadfastness in marriage, as in all other areas of life.

ginnyrose wrote :-

Quote:
-----The difference between a divorced person and one who was shacking is a vow. If you study the scriptures about vow making/keeping, you will find God takes this very seriously. Failure to keep a vow is referred to as a 'truce breaker'which is a sin. Today we would call it lying.

A good point! I had never noticed that aspect in relation to the verse in Timothy. Referring to what Jesus said on divorce :-

Mat 19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever, shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

A man is bound to his wedding vows unless betrayed, so a person who remarries, makes a second set of vows, effectively becoming the husband of two wives (being that he now is bound to two sets of vows).

In the case of betrayal, his is no longer bound to his vows, and therefore doesn't commit adultery when he remarries.

The verse in Timothy say that he is TO BE the husband of one wife,not HAVE BEEN. I don't think that excludes widowers, nor men divorced on basis of betrayal.

If the man is divorced on any other grounds however, he (currently) is the husband of two wives, and isn't eligible for the position.

PassingThru

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/17 12:12

Cindy, I asked you earlier in the thread to answer this question on the basis of the following verse, and I don't think you have done so far.

Matthew 19:9 Jesus speaking:

And I say unto you, **Whosoever shall put away his wife and shall marry another**, except it be for fornication, committeth adultery:..

A man whose spouse committed porneia can divorce her and remarry. This is what Matt 19:9 says... yes?

Quote:
-----Who says the man's first marriage is dissolved?

I thought that's what Jesus just said. Now, the man can write a 'bill of divorce' and comply with all the terms laid on him

by Old Covenant law.

Are you suggesting that this arrangement defined by Jesus, is somehow superseded under the New Covenant, so now a man **cannot** divorce his wife for porneia and remarry - presumably because reconciliation would be a 'higher' solution?

If this is what you mean, please say so clearly, and don't attribute the idea to Jesus.

Quote:

-----From Jesus' own words, it does not appear to be so.

As indicated above, I think you're mistaken here.

So, the question is, **if a man has remarried**, (and also under Old Covenant law it was an abomination for him to go back to his first wife after divorcing a second wife), **how can either he or his ex (first) wife return to their 'marriage'**.

Jesus did not say that the adulteress had to have married the person with whom she committed adultery.... ***before the abandoned husband was free to (re)marry*** - which is what seems to be being practised today in some Christian circles.

And anyway, if she had committed adultery with a *married* man, ***he is not free to marry her***. But still her husband is free to divorce her (and remarry) ***according to Jesus***. Can you see that?

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/17 12:33

Quote:

-----dorcass said: Whether a man was married or single before he knew the Lord, if he was not faithful to one 'spouse', then it appears he is forever disqualified from eldership/oversight, according to philologos's dissertation above.

philologos said: Did I say that?

No, but you said this. Is there a difference in meaning?

Quote:

-----It is important to observe that this list is not aspirational; it is not the goal towards which the elder/overseer is moving. The list is 'no w'. The character and disposition of the 'elder/overseer' must be above reproach and in a world blighted by sexual irregularities a man's sexual behavior must be taken into account.

Perhaps there is a symbolic issue here too. The Lamb will only ever have one Bride. So many of the God-given institutions which were designed to speak to us of God's character have been vandalised by the Accuser; marriage is one of them. As far as it lies within his power the prospective elder/overseer must be one in whose life the 'truth' is visible in its undamaged state.

This is why I always want to distinguish, not between the persons, but between the 'roles' of pastor-teacher and 'elder/overseer'. The first is dependent upon gift, **the second upon character**. There is no essential biblical connection between the 'elder/overseer' and the 'pastor-teacher'. One man may indeed be both but not necessarily so.

It would also be illuminating to hear whether you attribute the 'husband of one wife' status to both pastor/teacher and elder/oversight.

I'm struggling, as you can tell, to understand why a man's sexual history only applies to his 'marriages' and not to pre-marital sexual activity (as others have mentioned).

And why it is the new birth may not be enough to absolve him from all of it..... especially if his divorce(s) were not for infidelity on either his or his wife's part, but for some other difficulty which would not count between Christians.

And while I'm here, you really are saying, are you, that all this is investigated before a man is invited to offer himself for eldership.... no matter what kind of good character he has demonstrated over his years as a Christian?

Re: - posted by TonyS (), on: 2006/3/17 12:57

Hello Cindy,

Ron wrote:

Quote:

-----Perhaps there is a symbolic issue here too. The Lamb will only ever have one Bride

This might just be a very important statement that would be beneficial to consider. And to some extent it may answer why all this is of such importance? Why was Christ, and Paul so dogmatic? Why is this such a great "mystery"? The only handle I have on it are from Paul's words to the folk at Ephesus when he wrote that the mystery of marriage concerned Christ and the Church and the spiritual fact that that a believer can become one with Christ as a member of His Body, symbolized by the husband-wife relationship.

For me Cindy, 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 could not be any clearer,

10 To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. 11 But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

And I believe it is God's only scriptural provision for an impossible marriage situation, such as physical violence, etc.... when perhaps for a time a spouse would separate. But in no way gives "permission" to go on to another marriage.

tonys

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/3/17 13:03

I just cant stay away! :-P

Heres a thought about qualifications for elder...

What about the not so good marriages of some giants in the past? Were they disqualified and it seems God well used them?

Who am I talking about? What about Wesley & Tozer? Tozer, you ask?...O yes Tozer. When Tozer passed over his wife remarried and said after she was remarried 'I now have a real husband'. :-o

Wesley as we know had huge problems with his wife...Did he rule his home well?? He was off traveling the country while there was bitterness in the home?? I'm just making a point of course.

Just some thoughts to chew on :-)

And by the way we can name other giants of the past.

Re: Where are all the godly examples? - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/17 15:59

Quote:

----- Perhaps there is a symbolic issue here too. The Lamb will only ever have one Bride

God has put all kinds of prophetic pictures right into our lives - woven right in, and marriage is one. We are called to bear that image. That is God's picture.

Quote:

----- here's a thought... make better decisions based on much prayer when you marry... and then don't get divorced...

Krispy, I nominate this the quote of the day! This is indeed the best answer yet. Unfortunately spiritual maturity is not genetic. People don't inherit genes for good marriages. Most young folk are not seasoned enough in their spiritual journey

y to have learned to rely on prayer, or hear God's answer. They mostly hear the voices on their minds (and EMOTIONS), culture, upbringing....

I have the solution: The PARENTS should pick the spouses. After all, the parents have tons more maturity and insight than their offspring. Now, the next challenge is: How do we implement this? The closest I have heard of this in the Christian community is Bill Gothard. He did not believe in dating, and he believed that the parents should be consulted and be considered the authorities in these matters. I think he has some valid, excellent teachings about marriage.

The only thing about Gothard, is that apparently wherever his seminars have been, there is a higher incidence of divorce. Perhaps that is the danger of presenting very high standards - that just can't be met in real life. The pressure rises... and snap!

Quote:

----- And by the way we can name other giants of the past.

What about the Bible itself? Why didn't God put more ideal characters in it to be our examples. Just look at Hebrews 11 - the great heroes of the faith: Rahab.... Samson.... (Hit myself on the head!!!) Why didn't God just let such characters fade into history (as part of an OLD dispensation). No, he click, dragged, and dropped them right into the New Testament!

Think of all the Old Testament heroes who had more than one wife (which apparently God did not approve of) Think of Jacob - and his 12 children - born to four wives.... What about Moses, two wives ... our greatest hero. What about Abraham (Hagar). Ab was the prototype of faith - our model. Where are all the ideal leaders with clean lives to model....?

That's just maybe exactly the point! God is about mercy - about using the fallenness of man as a backdrop against his Gospel of grace. If he did it for 4000 yrs of Bible history, why can't he now?

It's all about God, about Christ, about the Good News, and NOT about man. And that is what those outside the church need to see - what God can do for them.

Man HAS marred God's perfect picture: marriage, and then God comes along and says: You messed up, now you can't fix it. But I will fix it. Just watch!

And Hosea goes back and gets his prostitute wife!

Diane

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/3/17 16:34

Quote:

-----And while I'm here, you really are saying, are you, that all this is investigated before a man is invited to offer himself for eldership.... no matter what kind of good character he has demonstrated over his years as a Christian?

Did I say that? :-o

Re: how far can Christ restore a divorcee? - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/17 17:37

Quote:
----- I can see nothing but hypocrisy now----especially when I see big named ministries fighting so hard against homosexuality, yet remaining deafeningly quiet on the issue of church sanctioned adultery.

I agree with this Annie. There is a tendency to shout against the sins outside of the church and ignore the ones inside the church. Adultery, ie infidelity, is very common and is destroying the church. I'm just not prepared to refer to every legal remarriage as "church sanctioned adultery", because I really don't see Christ, or Paul say that explicitly. It is a deduction.

Quote:
-----The "world" is watching us.....watching to see if what we speak lines up with what we do. Blessings in Him, Cindy

Yes and no. Certainly they see our hypocrisy better than us. But the world also sees the church as laying a lot of guilt trips on people.

Here is an example of someone from the world coming into the church:
A recently divorced man has lost everything that was ever dear to him, all that he ever lived for – for the past 20 years. His life is ripped apart. This is worse than death. His ex-wife has decimated any sense of self- left him, and taken his kids. He now knows that he is an unfit father and husband.

Now he craves for solace somewhere. So he comes to the church. He meets all kinds of happy couples. However, seeing them only intensifies his pain and reminds him of his shattered dreams. How he would have liked to be like them. He feels lonely, an outsider.

At church he learns that God loves him and forgives any sin. That's very comforting for him. He wants Christ to restore his life. But he also hears about the wrongs of divorce. What's he supposed to do now? He can't go back. His ex-wife has found another man. Yet, she is technically his wife. According to scripture he should be loving her like a good husband. But how can he care for her? He can't go back, yet the church is telling him she is still his wife. So, he is sinning by not loving his wife, now "falsely" referred as his ex-wife. Divorce is sin, yet how can he repent. It's not possible.

Here is another dilemma he finds himself in. Clearly everything at church is for couples. (well, that's the way lonely singles see it) He is the only single male there, and feels somewhat left out. There are plenty single girls. But he finds out that he can never marry again because he apparently still has a wife. So really, he can't date them. That would be like a cruel tease.

Later.... after much time of healing and restoration... he realizes.... that now he can fully give his life to God and serve him. He is free to go to Bible College.... study the Word, pray... minister to the needy....

Annie, How can we, the church, help him and countless like him, have a clean conscience and the peace and joy of the Lord – which Christ promised?

How far can Christ restore him - if never into a place of official spiritual leadership?

What about non-official leadership - perhaps by example through a victorious life.
Diane

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/17 17:48

Quote:
-----Cindy, I asked you earlier in the thread to answer this question on the basis of the following verse, and I don't think you have done so far.

Sorry Dorcas, I must have missed that. So many posts on this topic. Anyways, I appreciate that you are willing to actually dissect the scriptures and discuss their meaning. I know you and I differ on this issue, but I appreciate your desire to at least dialogue a bit deeper than many do on this---especially since this personally affects you.

Quote:
-----Matthew 19:9 Jesus speaking: And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife and shall marry another, except it be for fornication, committeth adultery:..

A man whose spouse committed porneia can divorce her and remarry. This is what Matt 19:9 says... yes?

There are varying ideas on what the exact meaning of Mt. 19:9 is. What we do know is that it is the ONLY exception ever mentioned in NT teachings on divorce/remarriage.....and we know that this was written to a Jewish audience who had binding betrothals. The other two gospels (Mk. 10, Lk. 16), which give NO exception for divorce, was spoken to Gentile believers (Greeks and Romans). They had no such binding betrothal custom.

Personally, I lean towards the opinion that the "porneia" has to do with fornication PRIOR to the marriage bed as we see in Mt. 1:18-24. Joseph thought to put Mary away BEFORE she even left her father's house to become His wife. She was called his wife prior to that betrothal custom, but she had not left her parents yet and had not been joined to him. In a case where the man did not want to marry his betrothed, a certificate of divorce needed to be given, because lawfully, though the "marriage" had not yet been consummated, they were husband and wife.

There's another thing I have pondered lately too and that's that Jesus only allowed for UNLAWFUL marriages to be forsaken: adulterous, incestuous, homosexual, etc---all those marriages which God does NOT join.

In either case, I do not believe that Jesus was allowing for divorce AND remarriage due to unrepentant adultery by a LAWFUL spouse. The reason I don't believe this has to do with what Paul teaches in Rom. 7:2-3 and I Cor. 7:39.

In Rom. 7:2-3, Paul SPECIFICALLY uses not a model marriage (life long partners) and how THAT type of marriage is dissolved as the analogy of Christ and the law, but Paul uses the example of a woman who commits adultery by getting remarried. He calls her an adulteress. He tells how she will not be free to marry another until/unless her husband dies. Never is there any indication Paul believed marriage is ever dissolved outside of the death of a lawful spouse. For those who say that a new vow replaces an old vow, or that adultery dissolves the marriage, how do they answer what Paul taught there? Notice also in that passage, nowhere does Paul say that if the 'innocent' husband divorces his guilty wife, THEN the marriage is dissolved. He maintains that death dissolves a marriage.

Quote:
-----So, the question is, if a man has remarried, (and also under Old Covenant law it was an abomination for him to go back to his first wife after divorcing a second wife), how can either he or his ex (first) wife return to their 'marriage'

Yes, it was an abomination, because he put her away for uncleanness and then to want her back after she had been with another man? What a horrific handling of the marriage covenant. As for NT teachings on this, Jesus said to remarry if you commit adultery. To commit adultery means to take to yourself what does not belong to you. Does being really sorry about stealing something, then make it mine?

If we want to keep it in the terms of adultery, do you believe if someone commits adultery (extramarital), then they can n

ever reunite with their marriage partner? Isn't adultery able to be forsaken and the covenant marriage partners reconciled? NT teachings on remarriage after divorce speak of such as adultery. We do not find that in the OT. There was no forsaking of adultery---there was DEATH---which freed the "innocent" parties to get married again. Also, in the OT, if there was a divorce, the divorced (both parties) WERE free to remarry. None were considered adulterers for contracting second marriages. Not so in the NT. Jesus said AFTER a divorce, adultery takes place should someone marry again. So we see that the divorce does NOT dissolve the marriage. If divorce does not dissolve, then the parties are still married to each other and whatever vows they make to others are null and void to the Lord because their previous vows are still in force (unless one believes polygamy ok, which I still believe conflicts with NT teachings on marriage). Hope I answered your questions. Blessings in Jesus, Cindy

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/17 18:01

Quote:
-----10 To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. 11 But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. I believe it is God's only scriptural provision for an impossible marriage situation, such as physical violence, etc.... when perhaps for a time a spouse would separate. But in no way gives "permission" to go on to another marriage.

Tony, I am in complete agreement. To die to self and live for Him is a tough, tough walk, but with the Lord all things are possible.....and having brothers and sisters who will uplift us when things get tough or tempting is a MUST to keep our eyes fixed upon the Lord and His purposes for us-----to His Glory!! Blessings brother. In Him, Cindy

Re: Christ's holy standards - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/17 22:51

Cindy, I am reading your comments - lots of very good thoughts. These words especially grabbed my attention:
Quote:
-----Yes, it was an abomination, because he put her away for uncleanness and then to want her back after she had been with another man? What a horrific handling of the marriage covenant

I believe that the Old Covenant Law is not something to brush away behind looser standards. Each aspect of the law for shadows a very important spiritual picture - of God and his people. To parallel your words, I'd say: What a horrible handling of the New Covenant: For us to commit spiritual adultery with the world, and then expect our pure and holy God to take us back in our filthy state is really an abomination. We are kidding ourselves if we assume that he just turns a blind eye. He is holy and cannot look on any unholiness!

Jesus never lowered any standards. In fact, he raised the bar: ex lust=adultery, cut off hand if it causes you to sin, God wants all your possessions not just ten percent, pray without ceasing.... and on it goes - INCLUDING the standards for marriage. A man is to love his wife as Christ loved the church!!! Wow!!! What a very high standard. And who could do that?? Certainly only a very spiritually mature man who has been walking very closely with Christ and transformed by God. That is rare to see.

Now, who are Christ's standards for: It is for those who have been born from above and are living by the power of the Spirit, not the flesh, for without Christ's power, without faith we cannot please God. In fact anything done in the flesh is filthy rags. Whatever is not of faith is sin!!!

So, from reading God's standards in the Bible, I'd have to say that God is not the least bit impressed with ANYTHING a worldly-minded person does - including choose their marriage partner (we shouldn't be surprised we see so many marriages fall apart then, should we - the marriages were not built on the foundation of Christ). Except God build the house, the laborers labor in vain.

So who are God's New Testament standards meant for? - certainly not the worldly person, because even if worldly persons tried to obey those standards, they are still abominable defiled adulterers, prostitutes (to borrow OT word)

Now, I'd have to say that in these days, people carry a lot of baggage into their marriages - that play havoc with their relationship.

There are very very few spirit filled people around who have fully committed their lives to God and are able or willing to follow Christ's will. If they were, we might see more single workers for the kingdom.

So. now what????
Diane

Re: - posted by ChristianS, on: 2006/3/18 2:16

At the risk of being stoned I would like to add something to this discussion. God hates divorce we know that the Bible tells us so. Most of us hate divorce also. I wonder though if there is a time for divorce. You know a time for every season. What am I talking about? Please read the last few chapters of Ezra. There are plenty of divorces going on there, and dare I say it is the right thing for them to do in God's eyes. Now read the next book in the Bible Nehemiah. Some of those leaders names sound familiar? Any comments, and please don't say well they were Jews who did what they weren't suppose to do in the first place. Christians also do what they weren't suppose to do.

Re: - posted by lastblast (), on: 2006/3/18 9:32

Quote:
-----There are very very few spirit filled people around who have fully committed their lives to God and are able or willing to follow Christ's will. If they were, we might see more single workers for the kingdom.
So. now what????

There needs to be a REVOLUTION in the churches Diane----otherwise, nothing will change, except that more and more sin will be allowed in the camp and we will become more and more desensitized to evil works of the flesh. If we SEE sin in our camps, it needs to be dealt with---that dealing with includes not only a change of mind towards that sin, but forsaking those sins we are guilty of---as that is the "fruit" of repentance.

In Ezra 9-10, there was a GREAT revolution. God's judgment was upon that nation because they had forsaken HIS commandments. Notice that His favor was not restored with confession of sorrow at having departed from HIS ways.....it took ACTION on their parts to restore a right relationship with the Lord.

Read Mal. 2:6-17. There are many different things to point out in that passage, but take particular notice of verse 13---sorrow, weeping, etc do not satisfy the Lord. He rejects such. Yet, today, this is being taught in the churches as true repentance. Notice in verse 14 the wife of his youth IS the wife of covenant, not was.....so now what. See in today's church, it is taught that "ok, you did commit adultery when you remarried (many churches will admit this), now you need to acknowledge this to the Lord and from this point on, live for Him---treat this NEW wife as a covenant wife".....Is that what people take away from Mal. 2 as what will then satisfy the Lord and allow our "offerings" to be acceptable to Him?

Today, many in the churches are being taught and have examples set for them that they can disobey the commands of God and STILL get to keep the "fruit" of disobedience if they only are "sorry".....but they are not consistent in this teaching. Again, inconsistent application and hypocrisy rears its head. If we steal something from work, confess it to our brethren.....the counsel would be to return it. When we take someone else's wife or husband (adultery, in the Lord's sight), we say we can "keep" that which is STILL NOT OURS because we said "sorry". Why is the church using different weights and measures concerning sin and the application of true repentance? We know what the Lord says about such practices.....

There are many who are saying "do not judge", yet in I Cor. 5 we ARE told to judge WITHIN the camp. There are many who are saying "The Lord Jesus' Blood covers me if I am in adultery".....yet the Lord says, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our Lord into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not".....Jude verses 4-5.

And this: "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which call

eth herself a prophetess, to teach my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols, and I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not, Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. and I will kill her children with death and all the churches shall know that I am he that searches the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of YOU according to your works..Rev. 2:19-23.

and this: For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God; That no man go beyond and DEFRAUD his brother in ANY manner; because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

How many in the "church" today are defrauding their brothers/sisters? Many are taking each others husbands and wives as their own.

If I have spoken falsely, may the Lord correct me and show me truth. But if I have spoken truly and in the Will of the Lord, may He open the eyes of the blind and help all of us to walk in accordance to His will for HIS glory. Amen.

Blessings in Him, Cindy

Re: Ezra and Nehemiah - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/3/18 9:49

Quote:

-----There are plenty of divorces going on there, and dare I say it is the right thing for them to do in God's eyes

Thank you, ChristianS for coming on board and throwing some more fuel into the fire. You certainly got me thinking.

As I read these passages, I see a higher law in consideration: these people were threatening their entire nation by marrying pagans, They were disobeying the law of fidelity to GOD. Here divorce was an act of repentance.

I must admit, I do have a hard time with Nehemiah's leadership style - calling down curses, beating them up and pulling out hair. I hope no one takes him as an ideal role model. And then Nehemiah had the nerve to close the book with "Remember me with favor, O my God." (!!!)

Certainly this Biblical account is not a model to follow re divorce, nor leadership.

The spirit of this whole "restoration of the remnant" event, seems to be: God is jealous for his people. They are not to be unequally yoked with the world. He wants undivided loyalty at all cost.

Some other stray thoughts:

What God has joined let no man separate. No man - but does God ever separate unions in which one of his children is being constantly defiled?

Frankly, I don't think God initiates most unions I see (as explained earlier). They are the work of the flesh. So are most of the divorces that inevitably ensue for at least fifty percent of those unions.

How I praise God that he cares for his own children. We don't have a distant God who merely shouts down laws from heaven, but one who walks among his own, orchestrates life circumstances, refines them, and leads them to their final destiny in heaven - union with him, their eternal husband.
diane

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/18 14:43

Quote:
-----dorcass said: And while I'm here, you really are saying, are you, that all this is investigated before a man is invited to offer himself for eldership.... no matter what kind of good character he has demonstrated over his years as a Christian?

philologos said: Did I say that?

No, dear brother, you didn't.

I hope when you have time, you will be able to put a few more words to explaining how the apostle's exhortation should work in a church where a person clearly showing eldership qualities has been married more than once.

At what point does grace supersede the letter? Or, is it grace that the letter should not be superseded? ;-)

Re: Pastor, husband of one wife?, on: 2006/3/18 14:57

Cindy, thank you. I will leave our exchange there, now.

ChristianS

Quote:
-----Some of those leaders names sound familiar?

I will remember this challenge and try to do it justice when I read these again.

Re: - posted by Graftedbranch, on: 2006/4/1 14:50

Quote:
-----But why then, did God not insist that one of David's sons who was born from one of his other wives, became king?

Soloman was born of Bathsheba. Soloman was not born of another of David's wives.

God chose the son of David through Bathsheba to build his dwelling place.

Those who experience God as grace, those who are failures and repented and know their own weakness are alone qualified to build up God's dwelling place. The body of Christ is built up not by perfect followers who never failed and never had to repent deeply. But rather the body of Christ is built up by those who know their own weakness, who have learned God's deep mercy, who know His grace, and these alone can minister Christ to the fallen, the weak, the backslidden, etc.

Those who have never fallen cannot identify with those who do no matter how much doctrine they know. They will secretly despise the weak and believe that they are somehow superior.

Our failures are used by God to minister Christ into us and to make us lean on Him and live by Him as our holiness, our righteousness, our all, and this alone qualifies us to be ministers of Christ.

Graftedbranch

Re: Pastor, the husband of one wife?, on: 2006/4/23 15:14

Someone sent me this link, which brings to light a little more scripture and clear thinking, to add to what we've already got. I think the part which I find most liberating in this article, is the idea that GOD HIMSELF has given us certain liberties, and, we as people do not need to let other people take them from us. We have choices, even under God's direction.

(http://www.safeguardyoursoul.com/html/divorce___remarriage.html .) http://www.safeguardyoursoul.com/html/divorce___remarriage.html .

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/4/24 0:25

<http://www.safeguardyoursoul.com/html/divorceremarriage.html> .

The file you requested was not found on this Web site.

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Re:, on: 2006/4/24 1:19

I chopped off it all until ".com" and found it, but haven't read it yet.

http://www.safeguardyoursoul.com/html/divorce___remarriage.html

But the Site itself has those three Heretical "D" words on it

Doctrine - Deception and Discernment ... :evil: .

Thanks Dorcas - That about covers my Desktop completely now with Shortcuts - Ha :-)

Re:, on: 2006/5/23 0:24

Quote:

Dorcas:
"So, the question is, **if a man has remarried**, (and also under Old Covenant law it was an abomination for him to go back to his first wife after divorcing a second wife), **how can either he or his ex (first) wife return to their 'marriage'**.

Whats interesting in this scenario is we clearly see Jesus in matt 19 doing away with the allowance for divorce 'because she find no favor in his eyes' (aka 'for EVERY cause)...but we dont see Jesus retracting what you mention above.

Oddly enough in 1 Cor 7, Paul tells the christian couple who have separated to remain UNMARRIED or reconcile.

Paul may very well have understood that she COULD surely REmarry (hence his words to stay UNmarried) and possibly she would literally be defiled to the first husband once remarried.

I have tried to see which is the case, but nothing seems to show that Jesus did away with the condition of this woman in Deut 24:4.

Id be very slow about telling a woman who had been put away frivolously ('for every cause') that she is to return to her first husband if she has remarried after.

if Jesus didnt retract Deut 24:4, then this is an abomination to return....something some groups should surely be a bit more careful about preaching.