



**Four Errors
Concerning Divorce
& Remarriage**

- **“The alien is not under the law of Christ – the law of the covenant”** (Homer Hailey, “The Divorced and Remarried Who Would Come to God”, p.61)
 - i.e. those who have not obeyed the gospel are not under the things Jesus spoke concerning divorce and remarriage, such as in Matthew 19:9. Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 19:9 does not apply to alien sinners.
 - The result of this doctrine: If one divorced his spouse, not for fornication, and remarried, all prior to becoming a Christian, then when he becomes a Christian he should remain in his marriage; it is not adultery.

- **Problems with this doctrine**

- All men everywhere are answerable to the things Jesus taught in His gospel
 - John 12:48
 - Matthew 28:18-20
 - 1 Corinthians 9:21
 - Romans 3:23
- Evidence that gospel teaching included teaching about adultery
 - 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
- Jesus said “whoever”
 - Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18
 - The whoever there is as broad as the whoever of Matthew 7:24

All men today are answerable to the same law of Christ

- An associated doctrine: Since when one is baptized into Christ, he is forgiven of all his past sins, if he was in a marriage that was adultery, then he may remain in that marriage.
- A further step is taken by some: If a Christian commits adultery by divorcing his wife and marrying another, he can pray to God for forgiveness and then remain in that marriage.

- **Problems with this doctrine**

- Contradicts the Bible teaching of repentance

- Repentance is a change of mind, a turning from sin and unto God, which produces a change of life

- Matthew 3:2, 8

- Matthew 21:28-29

- Repentance is a requirement to be saved

- Acts 2:38

- Acts 17:30-31

- Repentance is a requirement for the Christian to be forgiven

- Acts 8:22

- **Problems with this doctrine**

- Contradicts the Bible teaching of repentance

- Those who continued practicing their sin are described as “have not repented”, “did not repent”

- 2 Corinthians 12:20-21

- Revelation 9:20-21

- In the Bible, those who repented turned from their evil ways

- Matthew 12:41

- Jonah 3:10

- **Problems with this doctrine**

- Contradicts the Bible teaching of repentance

- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

- Fornicator → Baptized

- Continue? Or cease?

- Idolater → Baptized

- Continue? Or cease?

- Homosexual → Baptized

- Continue? Or cease?

- Adulterer → Baptized

- Continue? Or cease?

- Polygamy, drunkenness, extortion, etc.

- Continue? Or cease?

- Baptism does not change a sinful act to a righteous act

- **Defenses of this doctrine**

- There is no command, example, or necessary inference of one who is in adultery when they become a Christian needing to get out of that relationship
 - What about:
 - Colossians 3:5-9
 - Consider this Old Testament example of people leaving unlawful marriages: Ezra 10:1-3, 10-12, 19, 44
 - 1 Corinthians 7:20 says to remain in the same calling in which you were called. Therefore, if you are married when you become a Christian, stay in that marriage.
 - Look at context
 - This is not talking about remaining in adultery....or in any other sin!
 - Cannot take that which is unlawful and insert into the context

- **Defenses of this doctrine**

- 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 says not to divorce.
 - Then a polygamist must not divorce a spouse or spouses?
 - Context does not allow for that which is unlawful

Repentance produces fruits of repentance. A marriage that was adultery before becoming a Christian does not become “not adultery” any more than a homosexual relationship before becoming a Christian becomes not a homosexual relationship.

- “Mental divorce” aka “second putting away”
 - i.e. If Bob divorces Sue not for fornication, and Bob later remarries, then Sue can divorce Bob and remarry with God’s approval
 - Some add qualifications: only if Sue didn’t want the divorce
 - Promoters of this doctrine may use terms like “married in God’s eyes,” “married as God sees it,” “married as man sees it,” “divorced in God’s eyes,” “divorced as God sees it,” “divorced as man sees it”

- “Mental divorce” aka “second putting away”

- Bob divorces Sue for bad cooking... is translated into: Bob divorces Sue in man’s eyes, but not in God’s eyes, since it was unlawful to divorce. So when Bob remarries, he is now guilty of adultery, so Sue can now, in God’s eyes, divorce him and remarry.

- **Problems with this doctrine**

- Unsound speech

- The Bible does not give such ideas as “married in God’s eyes” or “divorced in man’s eyes,” etc.

- Mark 6:17-18

- Being married is not the equivalent of being bound. Being divorced is not the equivalent of being loosed/freed.

- Romans 7:1-3

- Gives two different meanings to divorce and marries in one verse

- Matthew 19:9

- Divorce used once to describe the sundering of the marriage, whether lawful or not. Remarriage is a marriage, whether lawful or not.

- Adds intent to Jesus’ words – i.e. Sue says I don’t want the divorce

- Contradicts Matthew 5:32

- **Problems with this doctrine**

- Perverts the order of Matthew 19:9

- Fornication → Divorce Spouse for Fornication → Remarriage

- Not:

- Divorce → Fornication → Remarriage

- Jesus told the consequences of both a divorce for fornication and a divorce not for fornication – Luke 16:18, Matthew 19:9, Matthew 5:32

- In a divorce not for fornication, both parties commit adultery if they remarry

- If a man or woman divorces his/her wife/husband for her/his fornication, he/she does not commit adultery when he/she remarries

- (e.g. If Bob divorces Sue for her fornication, Bob does not commit adultery when he remarries)

- But the man or woman who is divorced for his/her fornication commits adultery when he/she remarries

- **The person divorced for his/her fornication may remarry** (taught by Jack Freeman, Las Vegas, NV)
 - i.e. If Bob divorces Sue for fornication, both Bob and Sue are free to remarry
 - The reasoning: if one is free to remarry, then both are free to remarry

- **Problems with this doctrine**

- It confuses the marriage and the bond (i.e. “if not married, then not bound”)
 - Romans 7:1-3
 - Because a man or woman is not married does not mean that the man or woman is not bound
 - The man or woman who was divorced for his/her fornication is indeed not married, but where is it said or implied that he/she is not bound?

- **Problems with this doctrine**

- The general rule Jesus gave

- Luke 16:18

- Jesus granted no authority to the one who was divorced for his/her fornication to remarry

- Jesus gave the right to remarry to only one: the one who divorced his/her spouse for fornication (aside from the right of a widow/widower to remarry or one reconciled to spouse in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11)

- Matthew 19:9

- cf. Luke 16:18; Matthew 5:32

- Colossians 3:17

- **Prevalent errors concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage:**
 - “The alien is not under the law of Christ – the law of the covenant”
 - Since when one is baptized into Christ, he is forgiven of all his past sins, if he was in a marriage that was adultery, then he may remain in that marriage.
 - Mental divorce, second putting away
 - Guilty fornicator may remarry

- If we are not careful, emotions and personal associations can influence us away from the truth
- If married,
 - Divorce is not your backup plan
 - Build a strong marriage
 - Remember and/or renew your 100% commitment to your wife or husband
- If you are not married
 - When the time comes, marry a Christian who believes the truth, including the truth on marriage and divorce
 - Don't get married thinking divorce is an option "if things don't work out"
- Matthew 19:6
- Hebrews 13:4