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IS DIVORCE OKAY?

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Dealing with Divorce

One of the largest ethical issues of the 21st century in America is divorce.

Divorce (as a noun) is the legal dissolution of a marriage by a court. Divorce (as a verb) is to legally dissolve one's marriage with another. This is something that happens every day in America, as the number of broken homes among everyday people continually rises. What is worse is that even in the church the numbers are rising as well. There is a phrase that is often heard, which says, "50% of all marriages in the America end in divorce." However I am not sure this is exactly true since the rates recorded are based on many different numbers of statistics, places, and people. This makes the rates differ. Here is a perfect example:

According to the enrichment journal on the divorce rate in America:

- The divorce rate in America for first marriage is 41%
- The divorce rate in America for second marriage is 60%
- The divorce rate in America for third marriage is 73%

While according to Jennifer Baker of the Forest Institute of Professional Psychology in Springfield, Missouri:

- The divorce rate in America for first marriage is 50%
- The divorce rate in America for second marriage is 67%
- The divorce rate in America for third marriage is 74%

And DivorceRate.org says, *"Sociologists believe that childlessness is also a common cause of divorce. The absence of children leads to loneliness and weariness and even in the United States, at least 66 per cent of all divorced couples are childless."*¹ No matter what statistics or common sense may say about divorce, believers in Christ know

¹ Divorce Rate, <http://www.divorcerate.org/>, Homepage.

exactly what the common cause of divorce is – and that is sin.² Based on what statistics, agencies, programs, charts, or senses tell us, we are not sure of the exact percentage of how much divorce occurs, but we can surely tell that it is an ongoing issue both in the American culture, and the American Evangelical Church.

Sin in a marriage can destroy it in many different ways, and it can end up ripping apart even a sacred covenant made before God and given by God. But the question remains, is divorce biblical? And if so, then in what cases; and how are they any different from the world in these cases? As John Murray wrote, “*divorce is one that perennially interests and agitates the church.*”³ He goes on further addressing divorce saying, “*It is quite apparent that the first biblical passage bearing upon the question is Genesis 2:23-24.*”

“Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

This text lays the foundation of marriage; that is, its basis and nature of its definition. This will be extremely important to remember as we work our way through the main texts dealing with marriage so that we can have a proper view of the true Biblical Theology of divorce. These Scriptures will include: Deuteronomy 24:1-4, Matthew 5:31; 19:3-12; Mark 10:2-12, Luke 16:18, 1 Corinthians 7:15, and Romans 7:1-3. Oftentimes, when coming to the issues of divorce scholars tend to take a legalistic approach in dealing with the biblical interpretation and application. What I mean by this is that they often focus on the rules, regulations, laws and exceptions, instead of dealing with the

² Cf. <http://www.truthorfiction.com/rumors/d/divorce.htm> for Fact or Fiction on dealing with the divorce rate among Americans.

³ John Murray, *Divorce*. (P&R Publishing: Phillipsburg, 1961). p.1.

character of God when it comes to divorce. The legalistic way then comes to the text asking questions such as: *Under what circumstances is divorce permissible? Is it permissible to have had a divorce then be a minister? Is it permissible to remarry someone who has been divorced?* The problem when asking these questions before coming to the Scriptures to seek out answers on the issue of divorce is that it already gives one's mind a lens through which they are looking. Worse yet, it simply is not how ethics is done. It leads to moralistic teaching of the issue and forgets that one is to first seek the rules and regulations given in Scripture that govern the Christian life, and *then* look at the questions that deal with the text based on what is biblically mandated to the Lord's people. It is extremely important to do ethics the way Jesus Christ did – with the Word of His Father being first and foremost – putting into practice what He said and did.

The Old Testament Dealing with Divorce

Deuteronomy 24:1-4 is the most important Old Testament text in dealing with divorce. It is better known as the Jewish divorce Law, and states:

“When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, and if she goes and becomes another man’s wife, and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.”

The point of this text has been debated much throughout all of Christian history.

However, when dealing with ethics (ethics for the kingdom of God) and trying to live like Christ, we look at the truth and certainties that are shown clearly in the text. This text in Deuteronomy⁴ is obviously not intended to be a divine Law that is endorsing divorce.

The text is directed toward the importance of a certificate of divorce for those that have, or will in the future, become divorced. This was done for the reputation of the individual and for the rights of each other so that they could remarry, and not happen to marry someone who is still married but lying about it. It is clear that divorce was an issue among Israel, and as John Murray says about it: “*It must, of course, be fully conceded that divorce was practiced.*”⁵ The case which this particular passage is speaking of is uncertain, as it doesn’t mention the exact circumstances or reason behind it. However, it is important to mention (because of the upcoming text dealing with divorce) that it is not saying that adultery is lawful in any way. This is a given truth in light of the fact that the Law being practiced by Israel states that adultery ended in the death of who was convicted of it (Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22-27). Therefore, we can gather

⁴ Cf. For exegetical work done on Deuteronomy 24:1-4 John Murray, *Divorce*. p. 3-16.

⁵ Murray, *Divorce*. p.7.

explicitly from this passage is that divorce did occur in the nation of Israel to some extent, but can also be certain that God does not in any way warrant this matter nor approve of its action; for if God did agree with the actions of Israel and their cases of divorce, it would go against everything that He had warranted and approved in Genesis 2:23-24. God's provision and plan for marriage which is stated in that Genesis passage is also stated time and again throughout the Old Testament in dealing with His nation, and is also given profoundly in Malachi 2:10-16 – which is where the next focal passage in which to lay out a Christian ethical view on divorce is found:

“Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers? Judah has been faithless, and abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD, which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god. May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob any descendant of the man who does this, who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts! And this second thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. “For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.”

Here Malachi is living in a time when the nation of Israel has essentially divorced itself against their God, and therefore he deals with the topic of divorce once more. Malachi addresses divorce as he looks at mixed marriages among the nations. It is very important to see here the literal value Malachi is giving; this is not merely symbolic, as God is not referred to as the wife of Israel, which He is in other texts. Malachi is speaking to the nation of God – Israel – in order that they may see truths about their marriages and that they would remain faithful in them, as God is in His gracious covenant which He made with them. The prophet pleads for his people to understand

the unity in marriage, which is parallel to God coming into covenant with His people.

This lays the theological foundation which God had set forth in Genesis 2:23-24: “*And*

they shall become one flesh.” This also relates with what we saw in Deuteronomy 24:

that although God may allow divorce and made a Law for when it happens, He “*hates*”

the actual action; He “*hates*” when a man and woman, who made a covenant (like He

had done with the nation of Israel) and became “one flesh,” depart from one another in

divorce. Malachi 2:16 shows God’s thoughts of the man who divorces his wife, as the

prophet writes, “*For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the*

LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of

hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.” It is clear that He

hates the sinful conditions of divorce, and this is not what He planned for mankind from

the very beginning. The King James Version here relays this message of God’s feelings

towards the act of divorce much better, as it says, “*For the LORD, the God of Israel,*

saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith

the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.”

Here we can see that in the Old Testament God clearly has warranted what

marriage is, and that He does not affirm the act of divorce, but in fact hates the act of

divorce among His people of Israel. God does not want His chosen seed – His chosen

people – to be known for divorce, as they are to become one in the likeness of what He

has done with His people; that is, coming into a covenant with one another which lasts a

lifetime. But is this what the New Testament teaches the Lord’s people? Did Jesus or

Pauline theology have anything to say about the act of divorce for the New Testament church?

Paul's Dealing with Divorce

Here it is important to go to the Pauline theology of divorce instead of dealing with Jesus' teachings right away. At this point we've seen what the Old Testament says about divorce: that it is not approved, nor allowed, by God, and that He hates divorce in all cases. The reason for passing by Jesus' teachings on divorce until the end is because of the difficulties that arise with seemingly contradicting words; however, we know that Scripture never contradicts itself. Going to the passages that shed more light upon the doctrine of divorce will help one better interpret the harder passages on the issue, such as Jesus' teachings in Matthew 5 and 19. This is why we move further down the line into the New Testament Epistles (Romans and 1 Corinthians) for the church, before going back to the Gospels to look at what Jesus Christ had to say on the matter of divorce.⁶

The first passage in which Paul speaks of divorce is found in Romans 7:1-4:

"Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress. Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God."

⁶ I must make note that Dr. John Murray's approach of looking at Jesus' teachings before Paul hurts one's biblical theology of divorce, in that taking a position after reading Matthew 5 & 19 then makes a lens in which one much fit Pauline theology according to their stance upon these passages. I believe that looking at the whole of Scripture (Old Testament passages and Paul's references in dealing of divorce), taking the easier passages first and foremost helps shed light on the harder and much debated passages, such as Matthew 5 and 19, which is why Matthew 5 and 19 will be dealt with last; it will also be seen how it fits in with ALL the other passages which speak of the topic of divorce.

Here Paul sheds more lights on the theology of divorce, and as he does so, he uses it as an illustration for the believer to understand their relationship to the Law through the death of Christ. It is evident that Paul's words are said with the assumption that the Romans know the rules and regulations of marriage (v. 2), and that they know that divorce is forbidden. It is important to make sure that when coming to this text one understands that Paul is not trying to deal with the doctrine of divorce and separation in a marriage as much as he is focusing on the importance of the believer's relationship with the Law. He stresses that it was the death of Christ which gave His people freedom from the bondage of the Law. Paul here reminds us of the importance of marriage and its binding covenant, using it as a further illustration of what is taught in Genesis 2:23-24. John Murray states: "*What Paul enunciates here is that the basic law of marriage which applies to the institution wherever it exists, in other words, Genesis 2:23-24.*"⁷ Although Paul is using mankind's act of marriage and divorce as an illustration, we can still draw out the theology of divorce. It is important to see here that Paul makes two things clear about divorce:

1. A married woman is bound to her husband while he lives.
2. If her husband dies before her, she can then remarry.

Nothing more can be added to this text and it is extremely important here to not use the lack-of-evidence fallacy. For example, Paul says that "*a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives,*" however there is more to it than just what is read at first glance. Paul is using this passage as an example of what Christ did for us with the Law – setting His people free from the bondage of the Law – and is not making this the

⁷ Murray, Divorce. p.81.

actual law of divorce itself. In other words, Paul is not saying that a woman once married is always married until the death of her husband. We can know this because Paul deals with this same issue in a parallel manner when he wrote to the Corinthians, but goes into even further detail, bringing more out in his theology on divorce.

1 Corinthians 7:10-15 reads:

“To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife. To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace.”

In this passage, Paul is addressing issues involving both Christian couples and mixed marriages. When he states “*not I, but the Lord*” he is directly speaking of the teachings of Jesus (which we will deal with later). Paul is referring to the same thing that Christ talks of in the Gospels – divorce – and is telling them to obey the command of the Lord. However, it is very important to note what he is telling them exactly. Paul says that his words about divorce to the Corinthians are not of him, but of the Lord (Jesus’ teachings), and with this in mind he says, “*The wife should not separate from her husband.*”⁸ In the time of writing this, the Roman culture had allowed divorce, but here Paul is stressing to believers that they are not to divorce. Then when coming to verses 12-13, Paul knows that Christ Jesus had spoken on divorce but here brings new light to the doctrine of divorce with looking at the situation of a believer being married to an unbeliever. The ESV Study Bible notes:

⁸ It is important to mention that Paul here uses the same terms and words which Christ refers to in Matt. 19, “*chōrizō*” meaning to separate totally.

“He carefully distinguishes, therefore, between the written words of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels and Paul's own understanding of how Jesus' teaching would apply to this new situation. Paul views his admonition here as authoritative and inspired, not merely as human wisdom (v. 40; cf. 14:37–38). A wife . . . a husband who is an unbeliever. Is the believing partner defiled by being married to and having sexual relations with an unbeliever? Should they divorce? Clearly the believing partner is not defiled, for Paul says that if the believing partner has any say in the matter, they should not divorce.”⁹

Lastly we see that Paul does not merit divorce, as he makes it very clear that even a believer and unbeliever who are married are not to divorce. However, on this topic, he says in verse 15 that if the unbeliever continues to insist upon divorce, then the believer may get one and is no longer legally bound to their ex-partner. It must be noted that Paul is not justifying divorce through these words, but is simply saying that if it is the unbeliever who takes action, then the believer can allow it. The reason that Paul notes the allowance of this is that he is advising the Christian spouse not to create strife by trying to manipulate reconciliation with an unbelieving spouse who has left the marriage. This does not make divorce right; in fact, Paul believes that if the unbeliever does not demand divorce, then it is better for the unbeliever and believer to stay married – he says, in essence, that if the believing partner has any say in the matter, they should not divorce. Overall, Paul brings forth the following on the doctrine:

1. Divorce is not allowed (as the Romans were doing at the time).
2. If the marriage is mixed (unbeliever and believer), only the unbeliever is allowed to file for divorce.
3. If the unbeliever does not file for divorce, it is far better that the believer remain married with the unbeliever in order that they may be a light to their spouse.

⁹ ESV Study Bible, (Crossway: Wheaton, 2008), p. 2200.

Jesus' Dealing with Divorce

Mark 10:2-12:

And Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away." And Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. And he said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

Luke 16:18:

"Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery."

Now we come to Jesus' teachings on the topic of divorce. What we are able to draw from the noted texts sheds much light on this doctrine. To begin with, Luke seems to have a one-sentence summary (which can be seen in two ways) of Jesus' words, which are very clear:

1. If you divorce and remarry, you create adultery.
2. If you marry a divorced partner, you create adultery.

Here we see that there is no exception to the rule when it comes to divorce in a marriage. When looking at the text in Mark, we see that when Jesus was asked about the matter by Pharisees He goes directly back to what Moses commanded of them. In response to this, they say that they were allowed to write a certificate of divorce; to which Jesus replied, "*It was out of the hardness of your heart that He (God) wrote this commandment.*" This is followed by the key words of Jesus in this teaching, as He returns to the definition of marriage which we looked at earlier, taken from Genesis: "*But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. Therefore a man*

shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." Christ is further stressing the point that when a man and woman are brought together in the eyes of the Lord, *no one* may separate this covenant of two becoming one flesh. Through this, Christ brings our attention to the act of creation and these words that were spoken before Moses' time, to show what God's intention was from the beginning in terms of two becoming one. The significance of this is that Jesus shatters the Jewish tradition and civil law of divorce by going back to note what God Himself intended for creation. This is extremely important to understand; it is not the civil law or the Mosaic covenant that stands for the very purpose of God, but it is what God intends for His people, and how they are to be seen in a culture that has no respect, nor high view, of the covenant of marriage. The intention God has for marriage is that two to become one, and if that covenant is broken, adultery is the only result. Here Christ speaks the truth, which the disciples are able to see: that in the Lord's kingdom, His people are not to be known for divorce, nor (according to this text) is it permissible whatsoever. Christ's purpose is clear as He shows that in God's kingdom we are to live according to God's original plan for His people (Genesis 2:23-24) and not that which mankind has deemed acceptable (Deuteronomy 24:1-2).

When coming to the Gospel of Matthew there are further teachings from Jesus on the issue of divorce:

Matthew 5:31-32:

“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

Matthew 19:3-9:

“And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, ‘Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?’ He answered, ‘Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.’ They said to him, ‘Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?’ He said to them, ‘Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.’”

Although this is a parallel account of Christ’s teachings on divorce which we looked at in Mark 10, there are some differences in Matthew’s Gospel. Here we find three main views of divorce, which are necessary to go through so that one can view divorce correctly.

First, there is the view¹⁰ that stems from Christ’s talk of sexual sin. In Matthew 19, Christ uses two terms in the text: *moicheia* and *porniea*. This means that Christ was not speaking of the actual physical act of adultery between two people. If He had wanted to speak of that, He would not have used the general term *porniea* in order to give such a specific command that the only permissible reason for divorce is adultery. Rather, this says that all cases of sexual immorality and forms of sexual sin can lead to divorce. This includes adultery, pornography, lust, etc.

Another view is found in the Jewish history of marriage which stated that the man was to know his betrothed for a year before their marriage. The arranged marriage would be set, a certificate would be given, and a one-year period of time would be given

¹⁰ Cf. For the 5 main views of Matthew 19, Kingdom Ethics, Stassen & Gushee, p. 284-89.

for the two to get to know one another before their actual covenant of marriage and sexuality. During this time if the woman committed adultery, the man could give her a certificate of divorce stating that the engagement of the marriage was over. John Piper heavily advocates this position, which I also have much sympathy toward. The main reason for this view is based on Matthew's text dealing with what came before Matthew chapter 5. In chapters 1-4 we find exactly that of which some Jews dealt with in their own life, but specifically we see this in the story of Joseph and Mary. It was in their time of engagement – that one-year period – that Mary became pregnant. Joseph lawfully had the right to divorce Mary, but he did not. We see in these chapters the struggle of Joseph – what he thought and went through in his own journey with Mary – and then the even more glorious fact that he stayed with his wife, raising Christ.

Thirdly and lastly is the traditional reformed view¹¹ of reading the Matthew 5 & 19 texts. I'll quote here the Westminster Confession of Faith article 24, 5 & 6 to show their clear position of understanding:

"#5 Adultery or fornication committed after a contract, being detected before marriage, gives just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract. In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce and, after the divorce, to marry another, as if the offending party were dead. #6 Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asunder those whom God has joined together in marriage: yet, nothing but adultery, or such willful desertion as can no way be remedied by the Church, or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage: wherein, a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed; and the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills, and discretion, in their own case."

This here is a view which allows two reasons for breaking the covenant which man and woman made with God: Adultery (which is discussed in Matthews texts) and Desertion (that is, the leaving a believer behind).

¹¹ Murray, *Divorce*. p. 17-42

Going back to the text in Luke, we can look at who Luke's thought follows – Matthew or Mark? In essence, he says, "If you divorce and marry someone else, you commit adultery; If someone marries you who are divorced, they commit adultery." This seems to follow the parallel structures that are found in Matthew 19 and Mark 10. However, the second thought parallels the final clause in Matthew 5, which is not in Mark 10. This can lead one to think that divorce is permissible in some clauses; it may look that way, but that is not what God has intended whatsoever. God allows sin to happen and permits shortcomings in mankind's marriage. But it is never under His allowance to think that it is okay to divorce whenever one wants to. Divorce is not the intention of the covenant of marriage, and is not what God intends for His people among today's sinful culture. Rather, God wishes to see His people set a good example of marriage, in the way He intended, which He wants those who are lost to see.

Postmodern's Dealing with Divorce

No matter what one's view may be on divorce – and namely the views which come from the passages in Matthew – one should always remember what is most central in a marriage. The central purpose of marriage, and indeed all of life, is to seek first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33). If one comes to the conclusion that divorce is alright and permissible within God's sight, then he is to do so by living first for the kingdom of God. That is, he had better see that divorce – which is breaking the covenant of marriage – is symbolic of Christ and His church; therefore it is extremely serious. If the case is better to break apart as it will actually help the kingdom of God rather than hinder it, then acknowledge that. But when our culture practices divorce from

a marriage as if it was a job or a car – used for so long and time to get rid of it – how are we, the church, to be different? In all circumstances, throughout all hardship, we as believers resemble Christ and His church; therefore, in a marriage, no matter if it is through illness, adultery, sexual sins, or even if a partner leaves, we who made a covenant to our spouse are to be like that of God and His people (Romans 7:1-4 & 1 Corinthians 7:10-11). We can look at it this way: Does God divorce His covenant people when they constantly whore around and break covenant with Him? Such a thought is not even allowed – it is unthinkable! – yet that is what God expects of His people; Once a covenant, always a covenant, until the return of the great Groom, Jesus Christ for His bride, the church (Matthew 22:30).

Today's ethical issue of divorce is not whether it is permissible or not, but comes down to the view of marriage itself. The arguments that can come about from Matthew's texts are nothing in comparison to the ethical issue among the typical American. The bottom line is that the importance of marriage today for the believer, and what the foundation of that marriage is, should be what God intended, not what He allows. When one keeps the following points central in their life and morals, then he/she lives out the Gospel:

1. What God has joined together, keep together!
2. God's examples of covenant with His people give marriage hope.
3. Christ example of His marriage with the Church sets forth the example of marriage.
4. Being a believer always gives hope in all times among all things.