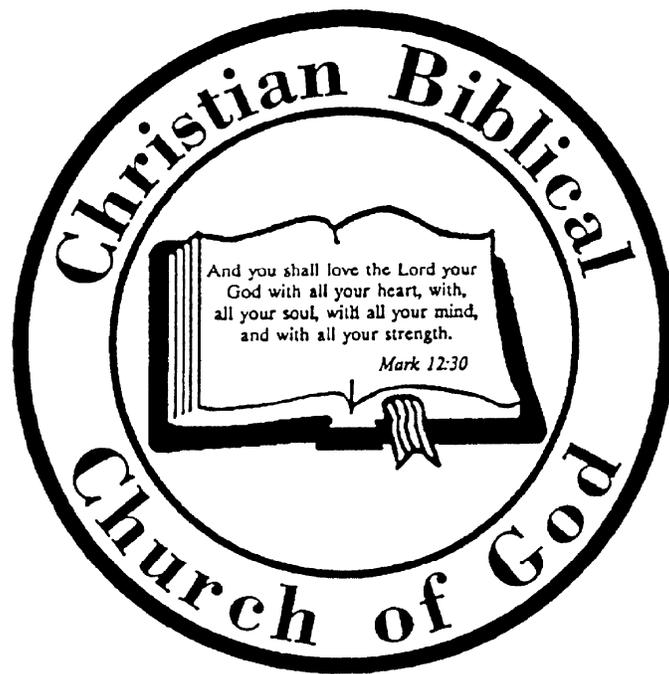


Divorce & Remarriage



Transcript Book

By Fred R. Coulter

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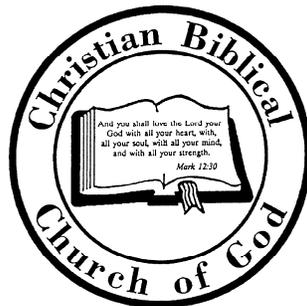
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Divorce and Remarriage

Series of 13 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



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Divorce and Remarriage

Foreword

How does God view the covenant of marriage and divorce? This series on is a compilation of thirteen messages by Fred Coulter that will help you to gain a better understanding of this subject.

Today we live in a society which puts very little value on marriage and family. As a throw-away society, if something doesn't presently suit us or is broken or needs maintenance—computers, appliances, electronics, cars, toys—whatever it is—people go get a new one. God never intended marriage and family to be this way. From the very beginning God instituted marriage as one man and one woman and godly children.

Examined thoroughly in this transcript book is the sanctity of marriage and the reasons allowed by God for divorce, due to sin and the hardness of hearts. Mal. 1:16 shows that divorce in an abhorrence to God. The world has no such loathing of divorce. This transcript book divulges how the marriage covenant pleases God.

Do we understand the marriage covenant relationship that God established? Do we value how physical marriage pictures the plan of God for His spiritual family? Are we prepared to humbly repent and submit to our very Creator and heal our marriages? Are we stubbornly hanging on to the ways of this world and falling into their traps? Let's examine God's divinely inspired Word and find out what God's wants. Are we ready to yield to Him and build a life that is pleasing to God?

A quick overall summary, as Fred Coulter's study of God's Word will show, is that *all divorce and remarriage cases and problems have to be answered individually!* "But He answered them, saying, 'Have you not read that He Who made *them* from *the* beginning made them male and female, and said, "For this cause... [For the very fact of the creation of God] ...shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh"? So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, **what God has joined together, let not man separate**' " That becomes a very important key. **What has God bound? If God has bound it, man is not to put it asunder or give divorce.** "He said to them, 'Because of your hardheartedness, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.' " and also, "And I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, **except it be for sexual immorality...**"—"pornea"—any sexual immorality whatsoever, even including adultery." (Matt. 19:4-9).

In today's world with many people living together without marriage, with sexual immorality through male and female homosexuality, with rampant divorce and remarriage, the majority of the world today (perhaps 80-90%) are living in relationships that are not considered marriage in God's sight. This is why all divorce and remarriage as well as all other sins are forgiven upon repentance and baptism. This is the way society was during Paul's ministry. To solve the problem Paul writes: "...to avoid sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband" (1 Cor. 7:2). And so that is how we have to look at the situation today. And this is the reason why *all divorce and remarriage cases need to be answered individually.*

A special thanks goes to Bonnie Orswell, Laila Patterson and Nancy Spaller for transcribing the messages.

Divorce & Remarriage Exception Clause

Fred R. Coulter

In discussing the topic of divorce and remarriage, I think we need to understand something very important: Too many church organizations get into this for political reasons rather than truth reasons. Since I'm independent—and I thank God that He worked it out that way—what I want to do is stand by the Truth of God. I have no axe to grind. I have no politics to please, and I hate politics anyway. I can't stand it; that's what always got me in trouble. That's what got me in trouble when I was in Worldwide.

When I came into Worldwide, they said, 'Don't believe me, believe the Bible. If it's not in the Bible, you don't have to believe me. Follow me as I follow Christ, and if I'm not following Christ, you don't have to follow me.' Well, that got me in and out, as it changed through politics over a period of time.

And just to rehearse a little bit, I do not think that Worldwide—initially through what Mr. Armstrong believed—ever taught divorce and remarriage correctly. Part of the lack of discovering that problem was that in the 30s, the 40s, the 50s and the early 60s, you did not have a lot of divorce and remarriage problems because there were not a lot of divorces and remarriages.

The basic misunderstanding that was in the Church, as the result of Herbert Armstrong's study, was based on the English word *fornication*. Fornication was declared to be *only* be sex before marriage between unmarried people. That was the only grounds for loosing a marriage which otherwise may have been binding. Since this is going to be a high level study, we will refer to things that we know.

The Old Testament teaches clearly concerning premarital sex that if they are caught, they *will* marry, *never* divorce, with the exception that if the father rejects the man, then compensation was paid to the father in the form of—I don't know if you would call it a dowry—for loss of virginity for his daughter; that is the best way I can describe it. Then the daughter would subsequently marry, she would produce the evidence that she was not a virgin, and therefore, this was accepted by the person when they married. That was the purest sense of it when God had it for premarital sex.

I'll just mention here that I've listened to all of Raymond Cole's tapes on divorce and remarriage—all five of them—and he does a

reasonably good job in the Old Testament on most of it, but he doesn't address certain basic things. He does *not* get into 1-Cor. 7 at all. I was very disappointed that since he was one of the main proponents of continuing the doctrine of Herbert Armstrong of fornication being premarital sex, and he insisted *for years and years* and would not listen to anybody until it became *politically expedient* to do so, because Bryce Clark's—his main assistant and henchman—niece was married to Dennis Adams. Dennis Adams went out and committed adultery, ran off with someone who was practicing witchcraft, gave up everything in the Church. He still insisted for years that that was a binding marriage and that she could not remarry. So, he still didn't come to the knowledge of the Truth because he was answering a *political* question to let her remarry rather than seeking the whole truth in 1-Cor. 7.

So, I preface what I'm going to bring out here from the point of view that I have no axe to grind. I have no one that I'm going to say 'You can marry.' I have no one I'm going to say 'You should divorce.' We're strictly going to look at what the Scriptures say and answer any questions that you have.

Hosea is very important because Hosea was commanded to marry a harlot and have children of whoredom, and he knew it going in, so there was no basis for divorce which made a better basis for divorce and remarriage later at a different time; and even under the Old Testament would have been a basis for divorce and remarriage if it would have been one of those discoverable facts hidden; same way with Christ. He *knew* Israel—what she was—inside and out. Therefore, He entered into the marriage with nothing to discover. He entered into the marriage to marry Israel knowing exactly what she would do. So, knowledge becomes a very, very important thing.

What I'm saying is, that a lot of people who say it's easy to loose a marriage, it's not quite as easy based upon your knowledge.

We're going to go through the New Testament and cover some Scriptures. Luke 16:14: "Now the Pharisees who were also covetous, heard all these things; and they ridiculed Him. And He said to them, 'You are those who justify yourselves before men, but **God knows your hearts**...' [That's just what I said in so many words. In other words, I have no political axe to grind and I'm not going to

justify myself before men because God knows our hearts.] ...for that which is highly esteemed... [or thought of] ...by men is an abomination before God. The Law and the Prophets *were* until John; from that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone zealously strives to enter it.... [In other words, you get into it by a great deal of exertion.]But it is easier *for* heaven and earth to pass away than *for* one tittle of the law to fail.' Everyone who divorces his wife... [Divorces or puts away is 'apoluo' which means *to divorce, to give an instrument of loosing the marriage*—that's literally what it means: a written instrument of loosing the marriage—'apoluo,' *separate*] ...and marries another commits adultery; and everyone who marries a woman who is divorced from her husband commits adultery" (vs 14-18). Right there, it's ironclad. If there was nothing else said, that would be absolute—correct? Does this tell us anything?

Let's go to Mark 10:2: "Then the Pharisees came to *Him and*, tempting Him, asked Him, 'Is it lawful for a husband to divorce... ['apoluo'] ...his wife? But He answered *and* said to them, 'What did Moses command you?'" (vs 2-3). That means what was written concerning some of the things in Deut. 24^[transcriber's correction], also the one concerning adultery in which she is suspected of adultery and she's brought before the priest and she drinks whatever this would be—ashes of the heifer in it—and if her belly bloated up, she was guilty, and then what happened to her? *She died!*

Verse 3: "...'What did Moses command you?' And they said, 'Moses allowed a bill of divorcement to be written to divorce'" (vs 3-4). In answering that, they are not answering the question. They are answering it in the sense that they have interpreted it. They are giving their answer from the liberal school that, yea, you can divorce for any cause—burned biscuits or whatever.

Verse 5: "Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'He wrote this commandment for you because of your hardheartedness.'" But God commanded it. When you go back and read it, it says 'thus says the Lord.' Moses did write it, but he did not command it separately from what God gave. When you go back to Deut. 24^[corrected] you will see that '**God** said.' Moses did not unilaterally write this and say, 'I'm going to write this because of the hardness of your heart.' No, He's giving the reason why He told Moses to write it.

You go back and you follow this all the way through, and these are the commands of the Lord. Deuteronomy 18:17 says, "And the LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well...'" That's when He gave the Ten Commandments and then He gives the prophecy there.

Deuteronomy 19:1: "When the LORD your God has cut off the nations whose land the LORD your God gives you..." So these are instructions that he got from the Lord—these are *all* from the Lord, every one of these things—because I do not believe that Moses wrote anything that God did not specifically command him. Whatever Moses wrote was what God commanded him.

From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. We'll talk a little bit more about the beginning of creation and what happened, because he's [Moses] going back to the original creation—correct? God made them male and female, and the whole purpose of marriage is for lawful sex—that's exactly what it is. You have children and all the result of it because it's love. It has to have responsibility, so therefore, He has the command of marriage. God made it so that His whole intent in the first place was never to have any sex outside of marriage—*period!*

He made us compatible sexual creatures—male and female. Two people can live in a house, being male and female, and never having sex; they're never one flesh. If they're married and agreed to not have sex, they're not one flesh because they don't come together in flesh, but they are married in a marriage covenant because that's what they agreed to. Whatever two people covenant to do with full knowledge, they should do it.

One flesh can only be accomplished with the sex act—*period!* From the beginning of the creation, 'He made them male and female, and on account of this'—on account of the creation of God, the very fact of the creation—'a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. This is all in the realm of sex.

Let's go to 1-Corinthians 6:15: "Don't you know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot?... [In others words, 'shall I sanction harlotry' is what he is saying, by his judgment—'I will make.')] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! WHAT! Don't you know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body?... [or one flesh, 'soma'—because of the sex act. And this is not being joined in marriage. This is joining in the sex act.] ...For He says, 'The two shall be... [or come into] ...one flesh'" (vs 15-16). And the Greek here is very clear: 'duo eis'—*two into* 'sarx mia'—*one flesh*. That's joining of the flesh.

Therefore, based on that, I said that two people could agree to marry and agree not to have sex—maybe one is a paraplegic, which happens—they are bound before God in that marriage covenant because they agreed to that. They are husband and

wife in the sense that they agreed to live together under a marriage covenant, but they are not one flesh because they cannot have sex. However, people like that, more than likely—understanding that—actually become more one *mentally* together. And in some cases because of that, I have known people who have gone above and beyond in situations like that where, *without sex*, they have a better marriage than people *with sex*. So, the term ‘one flesh’ means *to be joined in sex*.

Is there a difference between the two bodies joining with a harlot and becoming one—that’s why I said one ‘body’; it didn’t say ‘flesh’—and a difference in marriage? *Yes, because in marriage it is true!* It is far more profound, it has the blessing of God; harlotry doesn’t, you’re just joining bodies. What he is saying is that the two becoming one body in harlotry has not the blessing of God even though it is a counterfeit of becoming one flesh as husband and wife. There is more to becoming one flesh in a marriage.

Let’s go back to Mark 10. We read where a man shall leave his father and mother and should be joined to his wife and they two shall be one flesh. Mark 10:8: “...So then, they are no longer two... [That’s the difference between the one body with a harlot and adultery or whatever you want, because God does not view them—except in the case of Hosea—as one because it’s a perversion.] ...So then, they are no longer two, but **one flesh**.... [That’s how God views it.]Therefore, what God has **joined together**... [and it’s actually this in the Greek]: **...let not man separate**” (vs 8-9).

In such circumstances who alone can loose something which God has bound? *Only God!* God is bound by His Own Word, but God can loose what He binds—is that not correct? Did God not loose the Old Covenant, which He bound? *Yes! He did through His death*, though He divorced her; He could not remarry because it was full knowledge on His part. Human beings are not God, Christ in the flesh. So therefore, you cannot draw an absolute, perfect analogy between a physical marriage of carnal people and Christ and the Church or Christ and ancient Israel, because there may be things that, being human beings, they don’t know as God would know—maybe a lot of things!

We can’t be mixing apples and oranges here. The covenant that we have entered into with Christ is that *it is binding* and if it’s broken by us—God won’t break it because God is true and righteous and will not break His Word—we’re the only ones that can break that covenant. If we walk out on God, we face what? *Second death!* That death terminates any obligation of God to that person, and that becomes important.

From the beginning of the creation—he covered that in a couple of places—we will have to all admit and know and say and understand that when God created Adam and Eve in the beginning, before eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they did not have hardness of heart. Would you agree to that? After they sinned, they had hardness of heart—correct? So, things changed shortly after the beginning—is that not correct? Did not human nature change right after they sinned? Yes or no? *Yes, it did! Absolutely!* What He is saying here, He is giving His intent from the beginning. Absolutely, without a doubt! For us today, we’re in this because we have a change of human nature through the Holy Spirit; for us who are called and have the Holy Spirit. That needs to be clarified. ***People in the world are not capable because they are not converted!***

Verse 10: “And when He was in the house again, His disciples asked Him concerning the same thing. And He said to them, ‘Whoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, commits adultery against her. And if a woman shall divorce her husband, and be married to another, she commits adultery’” (vs 10-12). No problem with that! We’re dealing with not all the information given in that statement, but this is the ***standard to which you should enter into marriage—period***—even people in the world.

Matt. 5:27 is about lusting after a woman with the full intent of saying that that’s what leads to divorce. In other words, don’t even get involved in the thoughts which lead up to divorce—that’s what He’s really saying.

Matthew 5:31: “It was also said *in ancient times*, ‘Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.’.... [That’s going directly back to and acknowledging Deut. 24.] ...But I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife causes her to commit adultery; and whoever shall marry her who has been divorced is committing adultery” (vs 31-32). You have something else that is in there, which is called *the exception clause*.

Verse 32: “But I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife causes her to commit adultery; and whoever shall marry her who has been divorced is committing adultery **except** the divorce be based on ‘porneia.’” *Absolutely!*

- Who is speaking here? *Christ is speaking!*
- Who is Christ? *God!*
- What is one of His functions? *Lawgiver!*
- What He has bound He can loose—is that not correct?

The *exception clause* is not what men have designed, but what Christ said. He said, ‘*I say to you*’ and

there is no way you can construct that sentence any differently when there is remarriage involved, because if you separate and don't remarry, you're not committing adultery. *Has to be!* The Greek word for that is 'parektos'—which is *except, apart from, besides, without*. So here's an *exception clause* that Jesus gave. When we get to Matt. 19, it's even a little more clear with the *exception clause*.

'Porneia' is *fornication* in the *King James*—means *any form of sexual immorality*, broad. God's design is to protect the marriage—correct? What destroys a marriage? You go along and everything is fine and nice and wonderful—married 8, 10, 12, however many years, some as many as 30 or 40 years—and then all of a sudden that marriage is destroyed by 'porneia.' Today we have all kinds: adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality. Now they're going to have this virtual reality sex. I mean you've got everything—every kind of 'porneia' under the sun.

Is a woman or a man bound to live with someone who becomes a homosexual after the fact of the original marriage? Are they bound to never marry again? *No! That's not what it's saying here!* It says, 'If you divorce and remarry you're committing adultery *except* the divorce would be based upon 'porneia.' You're not committing adultery if you remarry because the whole thing is to remarry—except for 'porneia.' That's what he's saying. If the *exception clause* were not there, there would be no grounds for remarriage at all. That's what he's talking about, divorce and remarriage.

Matthew 19: 3: "Then the Pharisees came to Him and tempted Him, saying to Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?' But He answered them, saying, 'Have you not read that He Who made *them* from *the* beginning made them male and female... [From the beginning God made them male and female and said]: ...and said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh"? So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.' They said to Him, 'Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?' He said to them, 'Because of your hardheartedness, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, *except it be* for sexual immorality, and shall marry another, is committing adultery; and the one who marries her who has been divorced is committing adultery.'" (vs 3-9).

Now, you have a problem; there's an *exception clause* here: Verse 9: "And I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife..." [It's obvious for

any other circumstances if not for 'pornea'—the Greek there is 'e me' which is in the subjunctive, which means that if you put her away for fornication and you marry another you are not committing adultery. That's what it means! Clear and simple—'e me'—*except for fornication* or 'pornea.'] ...*except it be* for sexual immorality..."

Let's go to John, the third chapter, where we find a very similar thing of that of 'e me'—it is the same thing, it is subjunctive. There the 'e' is written 'e me.'

John 3:2: "He came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher *Who* has come from God; because no one is able to do the miracles [signs] that You are doing unless... [except—'e me'] ...God is with him.'" He is stating something here very clear. That He would not be able to do these signs unless God were with Him, but because God is with Him, He can do those things. It's a true statement. The we go on and we have the 'e me' all the way through.

Verse 3: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly I say to you, unless ['e me'] anyone is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.'"

You will agree that He's talking about an improbability, that since you are not born again you cannot see the Kingdom of God—is that not correct? Since you are not now born again you cannot go into the Kingdom of God. But IF you are born again—which then comes into the realm of what could be—then you can see the Kingdom of God.

So, we have exactly the same thing here. It also says 'Except you be born of the Spirit it is impossible.' It's exactly the same thing that is used back in Matt. 10:9. If you put away your wife for any reason other than fornication and shall marry another, commits adultery, because the marriage was not destroyed by 'pornea.' Loosed for another reason.

What we're dealing with is Christ—as God in the flesh—and what God alone binds is what God alone can loose. This *exception clause* loosens the marriage for remarriage. Otherwise, the rest of it makes no sense at all. In other words, if you put someone away for any other reason than for 'pornea' and you remarry, then you're committing adultery. But, you are not committing adultery if you put away for fornication and remarry. That's clear from the Greek.

Some people under those circumstances may choose either to forgive the one who has committed it—and then reconcile and God would honor that; or they may choose to go ahead and divorce and never

remarry because they're burned on marriage—God would honor that. That's their decision.

This is a very clear *exception*. Jesus the Lawgiver is saying, 'I'm telling you to scrap everything you know about divorce and remarriage and go back to the beginning and God intended you to be one flesh and the only reason there's going to be divorce is which I will give for 'pornea'; because it destroys the very essence of why the marriage was conceived in the first place.

That's what it literally means. I have no axe to grind. I'm not trying to loose people to get them to marry. I think different churches have gone so far it's incredible! The reasoning that they use is it's just ungodly. What we're supposed to do, being converted, is have our hearts not hardened. We're supposed to take away the hardness of heart.

Matthew 19:10: His disciples said to Him, 'If that is the case of a man with a wife, it is better not to marry.'.... [because he can't put her away for whatever reason they want to] ...But He said to them, 'Not everyone can receive this word... [Especially the Pharisees couldn't receive it.] ...but *only those* to whom it has been given.... [You disciples; you're going to understand that you're not going to be as the Pharisees and loose marriages right and left for any cause. I'm telling you the only exception.] ...For there are eunuchs who were born that way from *their* mother's womb...' (vs 10-12). They can't marry and they can't have sex, so therefore, they cannot be one flesh and they don't fit into the category of being marriageable.

“...and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men... [this is physical castration; that was a practice] ...and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs... [which is not by mutilation or by castration, but by choice] ...for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven.... [There are some who have done that. God honors that.] ...The one who is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*” (v 12).

That's very narrow grounds. If you have a marriage and you're trying to follow God's ways and so forth, it's going to be a rare case where 'pornea' happens. But it does happen. You can't take that 'pornea' and spread it all abroad to every kind of thing. People in the Church who have problems with their marriage, the thing they are to do is reconcile. That's what God says through Paul.

If a person before coming into the Church divorces because there was 'pornea' in their marriage, comes into the Church and subsequently marries in the Church, the offending mate who had committed the 'pornea' who was put away before they came into the Church subsequently somewhere else remarried is not living in adultery, because he

was put away for 'pornea.' If he then comes into the Church, now what do you do?

The only answer I can see for that is what happens when you are baptized? *You die!* We just discussed what happens when you take such a broad thing. Now, the offender cannot put away the offended. Anyone who has knowledge of the Truth and says, 'The Scripture says that this marriage can be dissolved because of 'pornea.' 'I'm going to commit *pornea* to dissolve this marriage. Therefore, I'm caught committing *pornea* and I am going to divorce.' That is a strict perversion of what this is. The offended party alone has the choice of divorcing. That is a deliberate perversion of the Scripture to make your circumstances ideologically mask, with Scripture, to fit your circumstances, but it's not correct!

Now, I'm even informed of those ministers in the Church who have been divorced and remarried two, three or four times. Believe me, they are twisting the Scriptures. They are living in adultery, without a doubt!

(go to the next track)

Some of the things we've discussed (off tape) I'm not aware of the great amount of lasciviousness concerning marriage that has gone on in different Churches of God to allow divorce and remarriage two, three, four or five times. We're talking about a whole different ballgame, and only God can read their hearts.

I will say that anyone who is converted and in the Church and has been taught what marriage is all about and knows what marriage is all about, then if, as Paul said, they separate they are to remain unmarried or be reconciled, because ***they know the Truth and are accountable to God*** for that—period! This applies to those who are converted and even to those who are not converted, provided they know and have the instruction. If you *know* then you are held accountable to God! It's not a matter of conversion, it's a matter of *knowledge*.

Can't be any other way, otherwise you've got this rampant divorce and remarriage and licentiousness that is hailed as wonderful liberty and all it is enslaving people into sin, and they are living in a perpetual state of adultery.

What we're coming to, in the final analysis is that the availability of divorce and remarriage is really very narrow. It's not a flawed thing. In the case of the unbeliever, there are so many things which cannot be applied in the same way today as it was then, simply because we are talking about those who believed in Zeus and all the pagan gods as a non-believer.

Whereas today, you've got a multitude of people who believe in Christ, howbeit not perfect. If you break the law, the law breaks you. 'Not everyone who says to Me, *Lord, Lord*, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.' But the one who is doing the will of My Father Who is in heaven. And many will say to Me in that day, Lord, have we not done many wonderful works, have we not cast out demons in Your name' (Matt. 7). Christ is going to say, 'I never knew you, you workers of iniquity'—'anomos.' *against law*.

Many of the things that are going on in divorce and remarriage are *against law* and they're going to pay the penalty, and there are going to be some people who are going to pay the penalty of not making it into the Kingdom of God. That is a reality. It can center around divorce and remarriage and probably a lot of cases it may center right there. God has to be the ultimate Judge on it, but Matt. 7 tells us, look, everyone, don't assume everything is going to be 'hunky-dory' because there are going to be a lot of surprises in that day.

In Romans 7 we have some very interesting things as we go along. We go from general to specific. Romans 7:1: Are you ignorant, brethren... [That's what it is in the Greek—very strong.] ... (for I am speaking to those who know law)...—present tense participle—*understanding right this minute law*; which is general, not *the law*, but *law*. General statement, *all law*. You understand the functioning of all law, which has to be those who understood the Old Testament. We're not talking, in this particular case, to Gentiles without the law. If it includes Gentiles, then it's those who know the law.

"...that the law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?" (v 1). That's a general statement. That applies to everything:

- idolatry
- having one God before you
- taking God's name in vain
- the Sabbath
- murder
- adultery

—go right on down the Ten Commandments and whatever the commandments of Christ that He gave; tie it all in. Do not these things have dominion over us as long as we may live; however long that may be? *Yes, absolutely!*

Then he goes to a specific law. He shifts from the general principle of the law to a specific one, v 2: "For the woman who is married is bound by law to the husband as long as he is living; but if the husband should die, she is released... [In this case it's not 'luo'—*loosed*. It's *cleared, wiped out*,

the law of marriage does not apply, because marriage is binding until death.] ...from the law *that bound her* to the husband." This is the way that it should be in *all* marriages, with the little exception. And when we get to 1-Cor. 7 we'll cover that.

Verse 3: "So then, if she should marry another man as long as the husband is living, she shall be called an adulteress..."

- What was Israel called?
- Did they not marry other gods?
- Did not the law apply to them as a nation in doing so? (Deut. 28) *If you hearken unto My commandments, blessed, blessed, blessed! If you don't hearken unto My commandments, cursed, cursed, cursed!*
- Did that not happen? *Yes!*

If I said there's no room for divorce, I meant there's no room for divorce *and remarriage*—if you know. Christ did—as the God of the Old Testament—divorce Israel, but He never remarried another nation. He had full knowledge of what it was. But she was called an adulteress and He called her an adulteress. He even went further and said, 'Judah is treacherous!' So much so that backsliding Israel has justified herself.

Those are pretty heavy words! Read Jeremiah and Ezekiel. If you don't come away with your mind and almost like someone sitting on your chest, you're oppressed at some of those things. They're unreal!

Now then, v 3: "...but if the husband should die, she is free from the law *that bound her to the husband*, so that she is no longer an adulteress if she is married to another man."

Here's what Paul is getting to: down between the two covenants. There were some people under the Old Covenant who were faithful—correct? They lived by that marriage agreement of the Old Covenant—correct? If they would have done anything outside of the Old Covenant in relationship to God, they would be adulteresses—correct? Under the Old Covenant they could not even enter into the covenant with Christ until He died.

The more rigid Jews today view what people do in coming to Christianity is adultery from the Old Covenant, because they don't know that the Old Covenant has ceased. The Old Covenant then is the terms of the agreement. Laws were in the Old Covenant which are eternal and always binding on everyone everywhere, which are included in every covenant that God makes under any circumstances anyway. So, the abrogation of a covenant does not abrogate the eternal laws, howbeit they are part of the covenant. Protestants can't understand that. In

our series on *Scripturalism vs Judaism* we come right to the heart and core of what the Protestants believe. They have accepted Judaism's proposition that the Law of Moses is everything that Moses said, and all the rabbis said and all the learned scholars said in this huge fence around here, this whole great expanded thing here is the Law of Moses.

When they come along and Christ says 'I'm stripping away all of the tradition,' they are taking the next step and stripping away all of the laws when Christ said, 'Don't think I'm stripping away the laws that are eternal. Those laws run through every covenant that I make, because I'm God!'

Verse 4: "In the same way, my brethren, you also were made dead to the *marriage law of the Old Covenant* by the body of Christ..." So, we have two things that were accomplished:

1. you were dead, My brethren
2. Christ died

Here we have a double ending of the Old Covenant relationship. Because when they're baptized, they died! Christ died on the cross. You have a double annulling of the agreement of the Old Covenant. That's what Paul saying here. This is very profound stuff!

The law in this particular case refers back to the law of the husband, but also—since it doesn't say the law of the husband—can refer to the term *the law* as the Old Covenant was called—this gets to be pretty technical stuff here, by the body of Christ. When we are baptized with Christ it says in Rom. 6—and as I wrote in the book *The Christian Passover*—you are co-joined into His death. It's a final, complete ending of that.

"...in order for you to be married to another, Who was raised from *the* dead... [referring to Christ] ...that we... [Notice how he shifts here. This is really some heavy, heavy writing, because he packs so much in these verses.] ...should bring forth fruit to God. For as long as we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, which *were* through the law... [that defines sin for us] ...were working within our own members to bring forth fruit unto death" (vs 4-5).

With the *law of sin and death in you*, even all of your good is not worthy before God, because you're going to die. What Paul is saying is even with the Old Covenant, though there was that relationship, you could never ever bring forth spiritual fruit to God, because they didn't have the spiritual fruit to do it. They all ended up in death because the 'wages of sin is death' and there was no expiation of sin, because Christ had not died. They were trapped in the death and there they were, though they had *the law*.

That is profound stuff! That is not easily grasped by a lot of people. You have to have the Spirit of God to grasp it. Now you are cleared from the old law—i.e. the Old Testament/Old Covenant—which bound you to the God of the Old Covenant because He died. You are cleared from the law and that relationship because you likewise died in baptism.

Verse 6: "But now we have been released from the law because we have died *to that* in which we were held so that... [after arising out the watery grave of your death and understanding the death of Christ] ...we might serve in newness of *the* spirit... [Obviously then the laws of God, which function in our lives as long as we live.] ...and not in *the* oldness of *the* letter.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 16:14-18
- 2) Mark 10:2-5
- 3) Deuteronomy 18:17
- 4) Deuteronomy 19:1
- 5) 1 Corinthians 6:15-16
- 6) Mark 10:8-12
- 7) Matthew 5:31-32
- 8) Matthew 19:3-9
- 9) John 3:2-3, 10
- 10) Matthew 19:10-12
- 11) Romans 7:1-6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 7
- Deuteronomy 24
- Matthew 5:27; 10:9; 7
- Deuteronomy 28

Also referenced:

Sermon Series: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*
Book: *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

Divorce & Remarriage Binding & Loosing

Fred R. Coulter

Let's continue on with 1-Corinthians 7:15—notice the one who initiates the divorce. It is very clear by the command of God that the believing mate cannot initiate and put away the unbelieving mate—cannot! That was a perversion of what was done as a result of doctrine in the various Churches of God.

1-Corinthians 7:15: “But if the unbelieving husband or wife separates, let him or her separate....” It has to come from the unbelieving mate. Both of you were unbelievers in time past; all of a sudden God calls one; they repent, baptized, receive God's Spirit, and start following God's ways. Some mates would say, ‘Oh, that's wonderful, you're a better mate than you've ever been. I don't believe like you do, but I'm happy to live with you.’ The other one says, ‘Where did you get this nonsense!’ That's the unbelieving mate. I'm going to divorce you.’ They separate themselves. See the vast difference, one from the other.

That's why I brought up the example of the man who was married to this Baptist woman for 35 years. I would not count her an unbeliever. She believes in Christ. She believes in grace. Not perfectly; she does go to church on Sunday. I understand that. Is she going to be in the Kingdom of God? *I don't think she'll be in the first resurrection, but I think she'll be in the Kingdom of God.* She's not a non-believer and she didn't separate herself.

With a non-believer, we're dealing with the ones who believe in Venus and Zeus and Apollo and Mars and all this sort of thing, complete foreign and contradictory ‘religion’—demon religion. That's what Paul said when he came to Mars Hill. He said, ‘I perceive that you're superstitious’ (KJV), *that you are devoted to demons* is what it means. So, we're talking about something that is totally different than what we say is a non-believer today.

A non-believer today has to make it clear that they are a non-believer. You don't define their non-belief in your terms for your excuse to divorce. They define their non-belief by the profession and by their actions. Again, this is not a broad, open wide window for license to divorce and remarry. This is a very narrow case.

“...let him or her separate.... [middle voice verb—he does it himself] ...The believing brother or sister is not bound... [the Greek here is ‘ou’—which comes from ‘ooks’—which means *the denial of the*

reality that it's a binding marriage. Without a doubt, I'm not pulling any punches.

Question about the one who is the non-believer separating and the word ‘not bound.’ In the Greek it means *not under the bondage or not bound.* This verb is used in many cases; it is also accurately used for the noun form of the word ‘doulo’ which means *to be bound, to be enslaved* in the sense of a slave or *bound to sin* in the sense of enslavement to sin. It means *to bind or loose a contract*—we'll go from binding and loosing to what the disciples and apostles were given. They weren't given binding and loosing so they could change the whole world. They were given to answer questions like this.

It's the exact same word: ‘doulo’—a different form of the verb. A different form of the verb does not change the sense of the verb, but it changes the person and the tense, but not the meaning of the verb: I go, you go, they go. In English it's all spelled the same: he goes, she goes, we go—different forms of the verb, but it all means the same. ‘Doulo’ means the same regardless of the form, and it is used when a person is a slave, they are *bound*—whether by property rights or indenture to that person, they are bound! Totally! They're bought and sold.

It's hard for us to comprehend that, the way that they were. *Strong's Concordance* does not break it down analytically, it breaks it down from the Greek word as it is translated into the English. You would have to look up all of the related English words to it and you would find that the same word is used. There's the Achilles' heel of that.

Verse 15: “But if the unbelieving husband or wife separates, let him or her separate.... [same word—it does mean *separate for divorce*] ...The believing brother or sister is not bound in such cases...” That marriage with the non-believer, because the non-believer has left looses the marriage because the Greek there is ‘oo’ which comes from ‘ooks’—which means *the impossibility of the reality of what it's negating.* If it says they are not bound, it means it's not possible that they are bound in such cases.

What if the believer says, ‘I'm going to get rid of my non-believing wife by making it so miserable that they'll be forced to go on their own volition’? *Don't guarantee your heart before God!* That's a malicious twisting! That is not right and remember Rom. 14—the judgment seat of God;

you're going to have to give an account for that. I suppose that there are some people, in their stupidity, think that they can outsmart God and do it.

But God knows everything! God knows the heart! We stand before God naked and the Word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword. The covenant marriage between Christ and the Church is not the same kind of covenant marriage between two people. Between Christ and the Church there are no grounds for divorce. You either stay married or you die in the Lake of Fire. There are no two ways about it! Christ is not the One to be put to the test, He already passed it. We are the only ones.

Could this not mean enslavement instead of bondage? *You have to understand what kind of enslavement it is talking about.* You can't bring to it a 20th century thought of enslavement vs the kind of enslavement that they were in. When they were released from enslavement they had no obligation to anything to the one they were enslaved to previously—period!

Let's answer the question concerning slavery: If you are bound because of being bought or sold as a slave you belong to that person—today, it's the IRS!—if you are loosed, not bound; this is stronger than loosing. This is the impossibility of being bound. If you are unbound as a slave, there is no possibility that that person has any more jurisdiction, any more affect in your life forever. You're not only loosed, you are not bound—the impossibility—'ook' *The negation of the reality of the fact stated*—that's what 'ook' means. The facts stated is binding, you are not bound. This is pretty strong language.

The brother or sister in such cases is not under bondage, or bound, "...for God has called us to peace. But how do you know... [Here's the thing that you do not provoke what we just said, that you make it deliberately miserable for the non-believer to leave. Here's the warning: don't do that] ...O wife, whether you will save your husband?...." (vs 15-16).

Obviously you yourself cannot save them, but bring them to salvation because of your conduct and good example. Who knows? Who really knows? Maybe in most cases like that, instead of fighting it on a doctrinal front—which most people do and smash the doctrine in front of the non-believer's face. If they fought it on the *love* front, you would have far less occurrence of this ever happening. And you would never have the thought enter into your mind that you would be so devious as to do what some people have done. Some have done it! God is going to judge them for that!

I tell you what, if they do that, I can

guarantee that God is going to make sure that their lives are going to have nothing but trouble until the point that they come to repentance of that, because you cannot, with the Spirit of God, practice sin. If you are practicing sin, until the point of death, God is going to prick your heart to repentance so that you may. In the case of those who have divorced and remarried, and again divorced and remarried, God is going to have to prick their heart. But they're going to divorce and say, 'God, I've been nothing but an adulterer and adulteress and I am going to remain unmarried because eternal life is worth more than my stupidity and vanity.

In this case how do you know? Maybe you're loving to your unconverted husband or wife, maybe they'll be so happy that they will say, 'I'm sure glad you're in that church. I don't agree with the doctrine, but, boy, I know you love me.'

Verse 16: "...Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife? Let each one walk only as God has apportioned to him, according as the Lord has called him; and this is what **I command in all the Churches**. Was anyone called being circumcised?.... [Is that how you were called?] ...Do not let him be uncircumcised...." (vs 16-18).

That's a tough operation; some Jews did. Do you think that's bad, the hatred between the Jews and Samaritans was so bad that if a Jew converted to Samaritanism he had to be re-circumcised. If a Samaritan committed to Judaism he had to be re-circumcised. Both of them requiring the initial circumcision in the first place, so they had a second rite of circumcision.

The question is: How do we differentiate this between slavery? *You're not bound in such place!* He's not talking about the slave, he's talking about husband and wife right there. The binding is the binding of marriage. Has to be, could be none other. What on earth are we talking about? We're not talking about if the wife is a slave. Was she bought as a slave? Was the husband a slave? Was he bought as a slave for the wife? *No! It's not talking about that!*

"...God has called us to peace" (v 15) means *He has called us not to be in a constant improper legal association by being bound if the unbeliever leaves*. That's what it means. If you are not bound, you are on the other side of the coin, eligible to remarry. If you have a marriage which is not binding, you do not have the obligation to stay bound. If something is not bound, are we going to be self-righteous enough to say that it is still bound? So therefore, you can't remarry. Is that what we're saying? *No!* We are not talking about Christ here, we're talking about brethren in the Church, in a

physical, marriage relationship between a believer and a non-believer. Don't mix apples and oranges!

Is this a basis for a brother or sister who had an unbelieving mate who left them and their marriage was no longer binding, that this is a ground for remarriage. *Yes!* But as Paul defines it, it is again, a narrow window—it is not broad. What does he do? Verse 16: “But how do you know...” after ‘God has called us to peace,’ which could also mean many things in the situation. If you get along peacefully with your unconverted wife or husband, because how do you know that ‘you may not save them’? He’s not opening the floodgates for everyone to decide who’s a believer and who’s a non-believer, and then say the believer divorced the unbeliever. There’s no allowance for that here. The unbeliever has to take the initiative and they do it. It has to be an unbelief which is unequivocal.

Just like I gave the example of the woman who was a Baptist and believed in Christ, believed in grace and the forgiveness of sin; married 35 years and didn't want to divorce. No way that marriage is loosed! None! I don't care what the court of the land says.

Where are all the examples? *God didn't want to clutter the New Testament with all kinds of stupidity!* That's why! He gave us a mind, He's given us His Spirit, He's given us His Word on which to make the judgment. Then He's covering this case here in this particular way so we would know. *Why? Because it's a question that comes up!*

Now then, we'll have to get to binding or loosing. Let's go through more of 1-Cor. 7, because you have to go through the whole thing. If you are not bound you are free to re-marry. It's not binding. Let's talk about a contract or fraud. No contract anywhere that is fraudulent is binding upon anyone, even in the law of the land in the United States. A contract is an agreement entered into with knowledge to which both parties agree. If there is fraud you cannot have a contract. It is void, even if that fraud is discovered subsequent to the fact of entering into the contract.

Why, when the Gibeonites came along and said, ‘Utt oh, we're going to be killed by these Israelites, we'll take our worst clothes and driest food and we'll go 25 miles up the road and circle back another way’ and come in and say, ‘Oh, we're strangers from a far land, please don't kill us.’ They entered into an agreement that they would not kill them. Joshua decided, after he discovered the fact that they had been defrauded, that the judgment would be, ‘No, we're going to make you wood-carriers and water-bearers; you and your descendants, forever.’ That was his judgment! Plus, he did not want to make an open fool of those

princes who agreed to it.

So, we have here a judgment and a political decision, which is of a different kind than we're talking about with marriage. In a contract of marriage where there is fraud, or a contract of business... If you, in your business signed a contract and then subsequently you found out the other person perpetrated fraud on you, you can take him to court and sue him for fraud. He cannot subsequently take you to court and sue you for non-performance because it's an invalid contract. He cannot, because there was fraud.

It's the same way in a marriage. If a person asks are you a virgin?—either male or female. *Yes, I'm a virgin!* I want a virgin for my husband or wife. *I fit that!* Subsequent to the fact of the marriage it is discovered that that was fraud, the choice has to be made at that time by the offended party whether they wish to continue in that marriage or not—at the time of discovery. If they accept it and say, ‘Ok, I forgive,’ you cannot go back and use that later because then it's something you know.

Again, every one of these things, when you get down to it, is really a very narrow particular definition. You're not dealing with great numbers of people. You have to make a judgment on that based upon the command that says *you shall not bear false witness*. If you bear false witness it is fraud! Therefore, whatever the false witness is, *it's fraud!* Therefore, it is breaking a commandment of God and is not a legal binding contract.

Is God going to bind someone to a lie in marriage? You're assuming God would bind it. You show me where, in the Bible, how you can either judge that you did, or that He does force it upon them. In the case of the Gibeonites I'm sure that God did—that's a thorn in the flesh. You cannot carry that into what we're talking about here because sometimes when you have fraud involved you change the circumstances. Where they said, since you didn't ask me I'm going to punish you—with the Gibeonites. Sometimes God will leave you to your own stupidity. Therefore, you cannot make decisions based on a scenario.

When we are talking about fraud in marriage, before the fact of marriage, we're not talking about the Gibeonites and what God did to them in Israel—we are not. Don't mix them together because they're not mixable. There are certain things you can learn from it, which may or may not apply; which may be good or not good.

We're talking about a marriage that has been based on fraud. You can go to different places in the Old Testament—especially where there was putting away of the wife who was not a virgin, that's fraud. If it was found subsequent to the fact that she was

not a virgin, what were they to do? *Bring the evidence of the wedding night linen before the judges! If there is no blood, she stands convicted as a non-virgin! Fraud! Put her away! That may or may not be hardness of heart; that is a judgment of law.*

Verse 18: "...Was anyone called in uncircumcision? Do not let him be circumcised. *For* circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; rather, the keeping of God's commandments *is essential*. Let each one abide in the calling in which he was called. Were you called *as a slave?*.... ['doulos'—bondsman—now we're talking about slaves, so there's a clear example that in marriage he's not talking about slavery. We're talking about not being bound.] (The servant—'doulos'—or the slave, if you were called being a servant or slave): ...Don't let yourself fret. But if you are able to become free, by all means do so. For he who has been called in *the Lord, though he be a slave, is a free man in the Lord*. In the same way also, he who has been called as a free man is a slave of Christ; *for* you were bought with a price. Do not become slaves of man. Brethren, in whatever *state* each one was called, let him remain in that with God" (vs 18-24).

This is in relationship to slavery; that's what it's referring to. If you're called in poverty does God say to stay in poverty? *No!* You can increase your ability by work. So this is limited to slavery and circumcision, which were two giant problems at that time.

Verse 25: "Now concerning virgins, I do not have a command from *the Lord*; but I give *my* judgment... [There's a binding and loosing of judgment] ...as one who has received mercy from *the Lord* to be faithful. Therefore, I think this *judgment* is good because of the present distress: that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is.... [Even though he's talking about virgins, he says *man* here, but it could be translated for that *person*. It's 'anthropos' referring directly to virgins.] ...Have you been bound to a wife?.... [There it is, the same form.] ...Do not seek to be loosed. Have you been loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife" (vs 25-27)—because of the present stress.

Verse 28: "However, if you have married... [or you may marry—it's in the subjunctive; it's one of those possibility things] ...you have not sinned... [If you've been loosed you are not bound if you remarry; you have not sinned.] ...and if a virgin has married, she has not sinned. Yet... [because of the present stress] ...those *who marry* shall have distress in the flesh, but I *wish* to spare you." That is of anymore requirements; I don't want to get into anymore details of this.

Verse 29: "Now this I say, brethren: the time

is drawing close. For the *time that* remains, *let* those who have wives... [this is a tough one] ...be as if they did not have wives... [tending to the Lord rather than looking to the world] ...and those who weep, as if they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as if they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as if they did not possess; and those who use this world, as if they did not use *it* as their own... [but not abusing it] ...for this world in its present form is passing away. Now, I desire you to be without anxiety. The man who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord... [in this present stress] ...—how he may please the Lord" (vs 29-32)—if he's caring for the things of the world.

Verse 33: "But he who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how he may please *his* wife." This is a matter of support and things like this—in the present stress. They didn't have supermarkets to run to, to buy whatever they needed.

Verse 34: "There is *also* a difference in *attitude* between a wife and a virgin. An unmarried woman is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be Holy both in body and *in spirit*.... [Paul is personifying this on a spiritual level] ...But she who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how she may please *her* husband.... [she's going to keep the house and take care of the food; the husband has to go earn a living and all of this] ...Now, I am telling you this for your own benefit; not to place a snare in your *way*, but to *show you* what *is* suitable, *so that you may be* devoted to the Lord without distraction. But if anyone thinks *that his* behavior toward his virgin is not right, and if she is in *the prime of life*, and so *thinks* he ought to *marry*, let him do as he desires; he is not sinning. Let them marry" (vs 34-36).

Verse 37: "However, he does well who remains steadfast in *his* heart, not having the need to *marry*, but has control over his own desire, and has determined in his *own* heart to keep himself chaste. So then, the one who marries does well, but the one who does not marry does better. A wife is bound by law for as long a time as her husband may live. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whomever she desires, (*but only in the Lord*).... [I've seen that happen where people run out and marry someone who is not in the Church, after they've been in the Church, and they create all kinds of problems.] ...However, she is happier if she continues to abide by my judgment; and I think *that* I also have God's Spirit *in this*" (vs 37-40).

What are you going to do when you have a church that is so full of corruption that everybody is participating in the sinfulness of the decisions—beginning with the ministers at the very top because

they are not really seeking to giving themselves wholly to God and to know what God says. And because of the hierarchical association or leadership which says you teach what the hierarchy does and therefore, you don't think and you don't make any judgments and the ministers on down the line do not study. When problems come up and members bring it to the ministers, they make decisions which are based in sin, because they're not based on God's Word—everybody is culpable.

If you are sitting in the congregation and the whole church is filled with adulterers and adulteresses and marginal adultery, and you are living there with people who are living in lies and cheating and defrauding and stealing and all this sort of thing, what are you to do? *Separate yourself!* If the church is so corrupt that it won't preach the Truth so that the people can correct their lives and repent before God, you must remove yourself from that fellowship, because it's not fellowship with God, it is a social association with people.

That's what Paul was saying here in 1-Cor. 5; this is the whole contingent of Paul. He says that 'because of the sin that was being done—of 'pornea'—that was so gross that even the Gentiles had a hard time with it. Then he brings it down and says that 'you put such a one out, that you're not to be in there fellowshiping with you. You put them out! You admonish them as a brother—estranged! In other words, whatever dealings you have with that person is going to be: you repent and I'm not going to accept you in fellowship until you repent. That's your fellowship with him—dealing with an estranged brother.

You are to be a witness against that sin on a personal level. He says, 'Know you not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump'—and hasn't that happened? The Church becomes filled with sin and sin then no longer becomes sin, because you live with it and you get comfortable with it and you are tempting God and His grace and His mercy, because God does not come down immediately and punish you with the pounding fist in the face. He's hoping that through His mercy that He will lead you to repentance if you don't harden your heart.

If you have a congregation that is so filled with sin, *you'd better leave!* They're not consenting to the wholesome words of Jesus Christ (1-Tim 6:3^[transcriber's correction]). Paul also makes it clear here concerning fellowship.

1-Corinthians 5:6: "Your glorying *is* not good. Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore, purge out the old leaven, so that you may become a new lump...." (vs 6-7). This refers

- directly to the Feast of Unleavened Bread
- directly to purging the leaven out of your home
- directly to your attitude
- directly to that sin within the congregation as a whole and all of them applies into this statement.

"...*even* as you are unleavened.... [That was the whole process of conversion and baptism and the receiving of the Holy Spirit.] ...For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us" (v 7).

In other words, he's saying this behavior is effrontery to God and the sacrifice of Christ. How can you take the Passover and the unleavened, un-sinful flesh of Christ—symbolized by the blood; and take the unleavened, perfect blood of Christ—sinless, symbolized by the wine; and partake of that and have all of this sin going on? That, brethren, is happening in too many Churches of God! They no longer understand what sin is!

Verse 8: "For this reason, let us keep the Feast, not with old leaven, nor with *the* leaven of malice and wickedness... [Isn't it malice to go out and perpetrate the kind of 'pornea' that this man was living in—knowing better? Is it not malice, with forethought, to pervert the Word of God, to give license where God never spoke? *That's malice and wickedness!*] ...but with *the* unleavened *bread* of sincerity and Truth. I wrote to you in an epistle not to associate with the sexually immoral; and *yet, you can* not altogether *avoid contact* with the sexually immoral of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since you would then have to go out of the world" (vs 8-10).

He's talking about the world out here is in a different category. In business and working you're going to come across all kinds of people. But you're only interfacing with them on a business level. You are not brothershipping with them on a fellowship level as someone in the Church whom Christ brought together. Otherwise we would have to go out of the world. There are times down deep inside I wish that were possible! Just to get out of the world totally, but you can't!

Verse 11: "But now, I have written to you not to associate... [do not fellowship; do not have the coming together] ...with anyone who is called a brother, if *he be* either sexually immoral... [any kind of adulterous sin such as an adulterous marriage; accepting homosexuality within the ranks of the Church] ...or covetous... [Those that are still covetous because all they're trying to do is reach out and grasp and greed.] ...or an idolater, or a reviler..." [Can get into the thing of politics, because they rail and rant. Look at the 'NOW gang,' all of those. They are railers, demonstrators.] ...or a

drunkard, or an extortioner...”

This so-called ‘college of God’ where they blackmail the students, bug the rooms and the classrooms and then use that information against them. That is extortion! Rather, they should be hauled before God, accountable for their conduct. ‘We’re not going to police you as children and you’d better make your conduct honest and right before God, because if you don’t, you’re going to face God.’ You’re not going to eliminate all problems, but at least you can keep them down to a dull, manageable roar that you don’t have to have betrayers and extortioners and double-speakers. It just gets to be a mess.

“... with such a person *you are* not even to eat.” (v 11)—in the form of being a brother. Once you’re brought into the Church and you’re in that relationship with Christ and you are there because of God’s Spirit, your relationship is not the same as those in the world, because God is not dealing with them. You can’t get away from all the evil in the world, so it is true if you have a church that has people that are divorcing and remarrying back and forth, and there’s nothing but a wicked and adulterous generation sitting there pretending it’s a Church of God—*LEAVE IT!* You have no alternative! We’re called OUT of the world, not to bring the world in—isn’t that true?

If they’re offended, then you tell them. They say, ‘Why don’t you fellowship with me anymore?’ *That’s a question that I’m glad you asked! The reason is that, as far as I understand God’s Word, you’d better look into it whether you’re living in adultery or not!*

Are we going to make God serve with sins and say we have license to do evil? NO! Not going to! Absolutely not! Sometimes that will make you lonely, but who was the loneliest man on earth? *Jesus Christ!*

(go to the next track)

1-Corinthians 5:12: “For what *responsibility* do I have to judge those who are outside *the Church*? Are not you yourselves to judge those who are within?... [that commit open sins. It’s not a unilateral action by a minister to disfellowship and put out—the Church collectively] ...But God judges those who are outside. So then, put the wicked person out from among yourselves” (vs 12-13). When you get to the point that the whole church becomes corrupt, you have to leave. ***God is putting you out from them to preserve your righteousness!*** And He’s going to deal with them.

If there were not things to judge, if there were not things bind or loose, there would be no reason for this. There would be none whatsoever.

There would be no need. It’s been given in two different ways. It’s given directly of what you bind, will be bound. What you loose, will be loosed (Matt. 16). In Matt. 18 it is *what shall have been bound in heaven* shall have been bound on earth. That is a limiting factor that you don’t have license to do anything you want to. That’s why it’s in the different tenses.

Matthew 16:19: “And I will give to **you...** [singular in person to Peter; not taking away from the rest of them] ...the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatever **you** may bind on the earth will have already been bound in heaven...” Notice what all of this is based upon:

- the fact that Christ was recognized as the Messiah
- the fact that Christ said He would build His Church on Himself

Those are also limiting conditions in what Peter could bind and loose—just the limiting context of itself. Of course, binding here is the ‘desmeuo’ which is a participle form of ‘deo’—*to bind*. And loose is ‘luisis’—which is from the verb ‘luo’—*to loose*. “...and whatever you may loose on the earth will have already been loosed in heaven.”

You can’t take one without the other. The whole principle of Bible study is the principle of addition or of inclusion vs the principle of exclusion and subtraction—meaning that when you go through the Scriptures you add it all together, including everything—not excluding anything. Otherwise you end up like the Protestants and other scholars taking one Scripture to divide and war against the other Scripture. The circumstances in both, though they appear to be the opposite, as you perceive them, are really talking about two different things and really not fighting one or the other, but all included together. That’s the principle of inclusion or omission.

So, you can’t take Matt. 16 and isolate that and say, ‘I declare a cross is legal. I declare that you can divorce any number of times you want. And, God, You must bind what I bind.’ **NO!** Is God going to bind anything against His law? **NO!** God is not the Author of sin—is He? **NO!** God will be merciful to forgive sin. God will be gracious to lead us to repentance. But God is not going to serve with our sins! When God serves with our sins, we’re telling God what to do. ***No man tells God what to do!***

With the principle of addition, we come to Matt. 18 and we have a whole different sense of it here. Matthew 18:18: “Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on the earth **will have already been** bound in heaven...”—past tense; accomplished—meaning that you must base it upon:

- What are the laws of God?
- What are the commandments of God?
- What are the principles of the Word of God?

That's what God has bound in heaven—isn't it? Did not God speak those words? Did they not come from God? *Yes!* "...and whatever you shall loose on the earth will have already been loosed in heaven."

Now, you've got a qualifying Scripture to add to Matt. 16, so that the two of them together means that in any circumstances that you make a judgment and bind and loose, God will do that, because you must know the Word of God to know what has been bound in heaven so that you make the right decision on earth. That's what it means.

Sometimes you have to make a decision. Sometimes it's not a positive decision. Sometimes it's a very difficult decision. In divorce and remarriage it's difficult because

- it involves people's lives
- it involves children
- it involves love or the lack thereof
- it involves sex or the lack thereof—whatever it may be
- it involves property
- it involves money
- it involves business
- it involves reputations

So, it's a pretty weighty thing! We should not go around and be binding and loosing and all that sort of thing and the way that it's done.

We need to be careful, too, that one particular judgment of God for a specific set of conditions at a specific set time for that specific individual does not necessarily mean that you do it for everyone.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*
by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 7:15-18, 15-40
- 2) 1 Corinthians 5:6-13
- 3) Matthew 16:19
- 4) Matthew 18:18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 14
- 1 Timothy 6:3

Divorce & Remarriage

Fred R. Coulter

I got a nice letter which summed up some of the thoughts and questions you had, based on a comment that I made. Let's go to the source of the comment. It kind of brought a little consternation; I can understand why and it will be something that can help many people, more than just those of us here.

John 4:16—the account of the woman at the well: “Jesus said to her, ‘Go, call your husband and come *back* here.’ The woman answered and said, ‘I do not have a husband.’ Jesus said to her, ‘You have spoken well in saying, “I do not have a husband”; for you have had five husbands... [Apparently she had gone through five of them and she was living alone at the present time.] ...and the one whom you now have is not your husband. This you have spoken truly” (vs 16-18). So, she was just living with someone. Sounds kind of like today—doesn't it?

I made the comment that Christ even held this unconverted woman to a standard of marriage. Obviously, that brings up the question, which we'll cover in a little bit. First of all, we have to admit even though what is said here, we don't have all the facts. As a matter of fact, we don't have any of the facts. In talking to her, please understand that the Samaritans worship in this mountain, and so forth—that's where the temple was in Mt. Gerizim. If you recall how that came about from *The Christian Passover* book, a whole group of priests would not put away their wives—in interracial marriage—during the days of Nehemiah and Ezra. They went up and had a temple built by Sanballat, the Governor of Samaria. They took with them the Law of Moses. That's all they had, the first five books. They didn't want to take all the Prophets because the Prophets held in there—and also with the thing concerning David—that Jerusalem was the place God placed His name.

Obviously, they could not have that in Samaria, otherwise you defeat the very purpose for why you built the temple. They had the first five books of Moses and I'm sure whatever the circumstances were concerning her divorces and remarriages—or whether there *were* divorces and remarriages or just separations and multiple marriages—we're not told. Here, the one she is with now she's not married, but she's with him. This really presents a lot of complications. We don't know the facts concerning it, but the Old Testament conditions were—and I'll just summarize them:

1. You can put away your wife for a blemish.
2. You can put away your wife for having pre-marital relations and not knowing about it.

3. You cannot put away your husband or wife if the two of you committed pre-marital sex and were caught at it; then you're forced to marry and cannot separate.

However the circumstances fit here, gauging from her current behavior, my inclination for this would be to say that she probably got caught in pre-marital sex with the first man. Therefore, according to the Scriptures, that marriage was binding under the Law of Moses. Then all the subsequent ones were not marriages and they are not husbands—she was living in adultery.

Today we're living in what is called *Sodom and Egypt*. Let's see how Christ labeled that generation. In the letter of the law, in a carnal world, there have to be some standards. God has to hold them to some standards otherwise there's no way that He can even judge the world. If they weren't held to some standards He could not condemn them of sin. Here's what He said of His generation:

Matthew 12:38: “Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, ‘Master, we desire to see a sign from You.’ And He answered *and* said to them, ‘A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign...’” (vs 38-39). He calls it an adulterous generation. Why? *Because they had divorce and remarriage, divorce and remarriage, divorce and remarriage!*

Let's come to Matthew 5 and see where Jesus clarified it; we begin to get a clarification here. Please understand this thoroughly: ***All divorce and remarriage cases and problems have to be answered individually!*** You can't go ahead and do it straight out and have the same thing apply to everyone. You have a set of things to go by, like we have here, that applies to everybody, but we don't know all the circumstances in everyone's life. That's why divorce and remarriage is really a problematic situation.

Matthew 5: 31: “It was also said *in ancient times*, ‘Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.’” That doesn't necessarily mean that it was in the Old Testament. There was a *bill of divorcement* they could give under certain circumstances. He's talking about a general thing. You don't like your wife, get rid of her; if she burns the biscuits, get rid of her.

I had one unusual situation where that you had a marriage, but even after five years it was never consummated. That is not a marriage. A marriage is to become one flesh. To become one flesh becomes the important thing.

Verse 32: “But I say to you... [Now we have a New Testament standard] ...whoever shall divorce his wife, except for the cause of sexual immorality... [‘pornea’—*sexual immorality of any kind*. Today you have to include homo and hetero and bestiality, because those things are quite rampant.] ...causes her to commit adultery... [that is if she remarries] ...and whoever shall marry her who has been divorced is committing adultery.” This is a standard that the New Testament is held by.

Let’s see what Christ said concerning divorce and remarriage, Matthew 19:3: “Then the Pharisees came to Him and tempted Him, saying to Him, ‘Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?’ But He answered them, saying, ‘Have you not read that He Who made *them* from the beginning made them male and female, and said, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh”?... [That’s the whole purpose of marriage, to be one flesh.] ...So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.’” (vs 3-6). Meaning that *only God can give us the grounds* for a proper divorce. What God has bound, God can loose. One of the ways that He looses is through the sexual immorality once you have been married.

Verse 7: “They said to Him, ‘Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?’ He said to them, ‘Because of your hardheartedness, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, except *it be* for sexual immorality [‘pornea’], and shall marry another, is committing adultery; and the one who marries her who has been divorced is committing adultery’” (vs 7-9).

Now then, let’s come to 1-Corinthians, the sixth chapter, and let’s see something. I had a very strange D & R case to contend with. This strange situation was: The husband would go out and commit adultery and his wife knew it. She would always accept him back. This went on for years and years. She was told that she could put away her husband. She said, ‘No, I accepted him every time and he came back. Therefore, I feel I’m bound to him because I understood the circumstances and I accepted him back in the hopes that he would change.’

IF on the very first instance of being caught in adultery and they finally confess it—the husband or wife—and they totally repent and the repentance is accepted with the promise and assurance that it will never happen again. What if it does happen again? *If it happens again then the husband or wife has the right to put away the husband or wife based*

upon the cause of fornication. But, if you keep accepting them back then it falls into this category:

1-Corinthians 6:15: “Don’t you know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot?... [This is talking *spiritually* concerning false doctrines from the harlot: Babylon the Great. Drinking in of the religious doctrines of the world, teaching that to the Body of Christ.] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! WHAT! Don’t you know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body? For He says, ‘The two shall be one flesh.’” (vs 15-16).

In this case, if a man marries a harlot or if a woman marries a whoremonger, and accepts that status of living, there is no divorce. They’ve accepted it. They lay themselves open for venereal disease, emotional trauma and upset. Just look at the situation concerning the well-known minister we know of from the Worldwide Church of God and Church of God International who still is in that modus operandi and his wife took him back every time. We have that kind of situation which can exist.

Even if there is sexual infidelity or sexual immorality, if the offended party accepts it over and over again *they are bound*. They have a miserable marriage, their emotions are all upset all the time, but they are bound.

We come to two other cases which are important, 1-Corinthians 7:1: “Now concerning the things that you wrote to me, *saying*, ‘*It is good for a man not to touch a woman*,’ *I say this*.” This is how they avoid fornication. This is really a Gnostic doctrine when you understand it. If it were Nicolas—one of the deacons who was ordained—it was said of Nicolas that he had a beautiful wife, and in order to show that he was above sin, it is said that he said, ‘Any man can take my wife and have her and it will not affect me.’ So he would be above sin. This is what they’re trying to do here, to be above sin.

Christ said ‘If you look upon her...’ Now, what are you going to do? That was their way of avoiding fornication. Paul gives the answer,

Verse 2: “Rather, to avoid sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render *his* conjugal dues to *his* wife, and in the same way also the wife to *her* husband” (vs 2-3).

If there are never sexual relations in a marriage—which is hard for me to comprehend, but I know of at least one case that way—the marriage was never consummated; it was never a marriage. That circumstance can either be annulled or divorce would take care of it.

Verse 4: The wife does not have power...

[‘exousia’—*authority*] ...over her own body, but the husband; and in the same way also, the husband does not have power over his own body, but the wife. Do not deprive one another of *conjugal dues*, except it be by consent for a time... [do not withhold your obligation in marriage, because if you withhold your sexual obligation in marriage, then that is called *fraud*, you are *defrauding*.] ...so that you may devote yourselves to fasting and prayer; and *then* come together again as one, so that Satan will not tempt you through your lack of self-control.... [In other words your lack of continuing sexual obligations.] ...Now I say this by permission, and not by command.” (vs 4-6).

1-Corinthians 14:36: Paul says, “WHAT? Did the Word of God originate with you? Or did it come only to you *and no one else?*.... [They were so spiritual that they were having all kinds of revelations, sins and things like this, saying it’s from God.] ...If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual...” (vs 36-37)—which is very profound and interesting in light of the: *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* where Alan Knight talks about the spirituality of man. The spirituality of man apart from the Holy Spirit is:

1. the spirit of man in him—which can be used and developed to a good degree
2. demonism

Most cases, when you have your own individual spirituality, sooner or later you’re going to get involved in demon spirituality. “...let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are commandments of the Lord” (v 37). This permission now becomes the commandment in the Lord.

1-Corinthians 7:7: “For I wish *that* all men might be even as myself. But each one has his own gift from God; one *is* this way, and another *is* that way.” He’s saying in effect that God’s calling gave him the countenance so that he would not need sexual activity.

Just stop and think: How would you like to be married to the Apostle Paul? Travel with him wherever he goes or sit at home year after year wondering if he’s alive or if he’s dead? What he’s doing? What he’s preaching? Maybe get a letter once or twice a year at the most. Then one day he shows up at the door and he’s all beaten up, scared and bruised, because he’s been stoned and whipped and beaten. His clothes are all rags because he was shipwrecked, etc. Can you imagine that! Imagine just the mental torment that a wife would go through not knowing any of these things. She wouldn’t be able to keep up with him and the schedule that he kept. The reason that he said this was because if there were those like that, then they would be able to do the preaching and evangelizing and things like this.

Verse 8: “Now I say to the unmarried and to the widows *that* it is good for them if they can remain even as I *am*.” We’re going to see that that is for the temporary stress of the times. When Paul was writing 1-Cor. it looked like Christ was going to return very soon. They had plagues, famine, drought, wars, all of these things. You don’t want to get married if you’re going to run off to war, or die of starvation, or have no means of support.

Verse 9: “But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; because it is better to marry than to burn *with sexual desire*.... [Each one has to make a judgment on that him or herself.] ...And to those who are married I *give this* charge, *yet* not I, but the Lord: **Do not let the wife be separated from her husband**” (vs 9-10). We’re dealing with people *in the Church!* Dealing with people in the Church is entirely different than dealing with those in the world—*entirely different!*

There was one case where a woman put away her husband—in this case both married in the Church, both attended Ambassador College, which they did pound in your head at that time concerning divorce and remarriage and in marrying making sure that everything was right and so forth. They were married, had four children, married from 8-10 years. Finally, she divorced him. In this particular case he wasn’t too good of a provider. At that time in the Worldwide Church of God they came down with the change in divorce and remarriage understanding. What she did—very typical to what a man did to me—she sought out a minister who would loose her and she knew all the explanations on how to explain it.

But, in the marriage ceremony it is this: You marry: for a wife, until death do you part, for better or worse, in want or in wealth—richer or poorer—until death do you part. So, living in circumstances which are close to poverty is not a cause for divorce.

- Was there adultery? *No!*
- Was there sexual immorality of any kind? *No!*

He was just not a good provider. Years later he is a good provider, and he did want to come back twice but she refused. Well, if they want to be reconciled you cannot refuse.

Verse 11: “(But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband.).... [God is interested in reconciliation. Sometimes reconciliation is very hard, because both have to admit wrong. We’re talking about those who are in the Church. This is based upon forgiveness. If you don’t forgive you’re not forgiven. This is part of reconciliation for those in the Church.] ...And *the* husband is not to divorce *his* wife. Now to the rest, I, not the Lord, say *this*: If any brother has an

unbelieving wife, and she consents to dwell with him, let him not divorce her” (vs 11-12).

We had a plague of this in Worldwide. They’d come along and say they’re not converted; here’s an unbeliever—if they be pleased to dwell. In the one case that we discussed earlier—being married for 30-40 years—in this particular case the husband was in the Church of God, had been attending for years. She was a Baptist and would needle him every once in a while concerning what he believed and so forth. But, as I told him, *‘she was pleased to dwell with you.* If she is pleased to dwell with you, you cannot put her away.’ Maybe you do have arguments. Arguments alone are not any grounds for divorce. It just means that you’re going to have arguments and difficulties. What you need to do is pray that you’re going to have your own life and your own mind turned around—and for your husband or wife, which every way it comes.

In counseling people this way, what really works is the love of God. If you really love God and set out to love each other, then the difficulties and problems will narrow and you won’t have as many arguments and fights as you had in the past. Arguments and fights of themselves do not loose a marriage. In the end, you’ve just got a miserable marriage. If you have a miserable marriage and you’re not willing to work at, God says, ‘Stay in your misery then.’ If you do separate, then come back together.

For the unbelieving, we had that the believer was putting away the unbeliever, rather than the unbelieving leaving. It was just the opposite. How many of those were done which were not correct?

Verse 13: “And *if* a woman has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to dwell with her, let her not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband; otherwise, your children would be unclean, but now they are Holy.... [under God’s protection] ...But **if the unbelieving husband or wife separates**, let him *or her* separate...” (vs 13-15).

Not the believing putting away the unbelieving. How many came to the ministers and said, ‘Oh, my husband or wife is a non-believer.’ Well, *put him/her away.* They violated the Scriptures! What if they give advice like that? *It’s wrong advice!* Are you living in sin? *Yes, you’re living in sin!* This is *in* the Church we’re talking about with unconverted mates.

Verse 15: “But **if the unbelieving husband or wife separates**, let him *or her* separate... [If the unbeliever takes the initiation and says, ‘I’ve had enough of this religion of yours, I am gone, I don’t believe it, I won’t have anything to do with it, I will

not counsel it, goodbye, I’m out the door.’] ...The *believing* brother or sister **is not bound** in such cases; for God has called us to peace.” This gives us an understanding about marriages before coming into the Church or as you come into the Church. If you are coming into the Church and your husband or wife does not believe, and they leave, then you’re not bound.

What if you were divorced and remarried before you ever came into the Church? Well then, that is buried in the watery grave of baptism as a sin that can be forgiven. Now everything starts new in the Church. That’s why *in the Church* it is so important that things be handled properly. Many who have divorced before they came into the Church and remarried in the Church, then that falls into that category. That first marriage was under the blood of Christ because you repented and now you’re in the Church. When you are in the Church and you have knowledge and you understand then it becomes a different proposition altogether—different proposition totally.

Verse 16: “But how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?” I’ve seen that happen, too. Of course, that was lacking a lot in Worldwide. All this fighting and carnality going back and forth instead of really loving your husband or wife and helping them to see, through the fruit of the Spirit, the goodness of God’s way. Lot’s of times it would be that you *drive* them away.

What if you understood the Scriptures here and you determined in your own mind, the Bible says that the unbeliever leave and I’m not bound. So, you determine in your own heart and mind to be mean, nasty and evil, to make things deliberately ‘hell on earth’ until they go out the door. And you say, ‘Hooray! I’m loosed!’ I would not want you to meet God in that condition! You are using the *letter of the law!*

- Is that love?
- Is that reconciliation?
- Is that peace?
- *NO!*

Where is Christ in that? *Nowhere!*

Where is Satan in that? *Right in the middle of it!*

Another case came up, and this happened when they first had the change of D & R. A man came to me and it was concerning a man and wife whom I baptized up in Boise, Idaho, way back years ago—1965-66. They had a little rocky marriage and they talked about divorce before being baptized, but they came into the Church. They studied the material, the Bible, they repented, understood God’s Word. Then nine years later he comes to me and

says, 'Did you know that I was planning on divorcing my wife when we were baptized? *No, I didn't! But it doesn't make any difference! Why? Because you were baptized, you knew the Truth and you forgave each other and accepted each other, so your marriage is bound!* What did he do? He shopped around until he found a minister to loose him.

The minister made the wrong decision. The wife stayed single, stayed in the Church, reared the children, exemplary, wonderful. He went out and became a whoremonger, totally destroyed the family and everything in his selfishness! That is a penalty upon someone who is determined to do their own way.

Would you say that, after the fact, she would be loosed to marry again? *You would have to look at it and say based upon the fruit of his life, in all probability, yes!* You see the determination in it. That just adds sin to sin. People who shop for a minister within the Church to give them what they want, and the minister gives them what they want, are causing the people to sin. Who is responsible? *Both!*

1. The minister because he gave them bad advice; wrong advice.
2. The individual because they wanted to serve their sins.

Either way you can't palm it off and say, 'Well, the minister said so.' Even if the minister said so, if he does not base it truly upon the Word of God, what do you have? *Two sins!* His and the one involved in getting that kind of decision to leave the husband or wife.

This really becomes a dicey situation, because we are to make decisions of binding and loosing—the ministers are. It's very clear there in Matt. 16. What do we bind or loose? *Things and circumstances in people's lives based upon the Word of God!* Not just bind or loose to make it convenient, or to give an out so that, in leaving, the individual that you can salve your conscience by saying the minister 'told me.'

That makes it doubly difficult. That's why at baptism divorce and remarriage is a forgivable sin, like any other sin—adultery, murder, stealing, whatever it may be. But once you're *in* the Church, now you have this standard here by which to live. You can't go out and do like the world does. That's the whole thing. You show me one couple that never had a fight or an argument.

Boy, I tell you, I want to shake their hand, give them a hug and say, congratulations. I include myself in it. You're always going to have some sort of disagreement one way or the other and you get real carnal and real miserable, but always remember

this concerning a fight or family argument: **The Bible says, do not let the sun go down on your wrath!** There needs to be forgiveness and acceptance. Don't go around and carry a grudge! Don't go around thinking you're going to reform the other person! *You cannot do that!* But what you can do is—through love and example—help that person to reform him or herself.

How can you expect your wife to not be mad at you when you lose your temper all the time? How can you expect your husband to not be mad at you when you're bitchy, *bitchy, bitchy* all the time? It doesn't work! You'll be in a constant state of agitation and looking for any fault that will come along to 'settle the score' by continuing to fight so that 'I can win' so that 'she won't win' or she can win so that he won't win. You can't have a win/lose situation! Love is based upon getting together and solving the problems.

Verse 25: "Now concerning virgins, I do not have a command from *the* Lord; but I give *my* judgment, as one who has received mercy from *the* Lord to be faithful. Therefore, I think this *judgment* is good because of the present distress: that *it* is good for a man to remain as he is" (vs 25-26). That's only for the current distress. What if we had civil war here in America? What if we had where it would be much like we saw in Kosovo? No place to live, war, killing, shooting, being chased out of your home, living in refugee camps and everything. It would be stupid to say, 'Let's get married. Let's have a honeymoon here.' That's a distress, and this is the kind of thing that was going on.

When the distress was over and the circumstances changed, v 27: "Have you been bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed.... [Showing that a bound marriage can be loosed *according to the laws of God*, based upon the words of Jesus. What looses a marriage? *Death, adultery, fornication, homosexuality!* That looses a marriage, yes.] ...Have you been loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.... [because of the distress] ...However, if you have married, you have not sinned..." (vs 27-28).

It's perfectly all right to seek a wife, you haven't sinned. In the distress, you have a terrible, terrible troubled time. But if you marry, you're still married. We have a lot of war-brides, married just before their husbands went over—they got married and their husbands were going overseas. They had their honeymoon, the wife got pregnant, he got killed. Now here's the wife with a child. She's loosed; he died! Is she free to remarry? *Yes!*

Verse 28: "...and if a virgin has married, she has not sinned..." Let me just mention this: I saw this big building up on not quite the top of a hill. It looked like a Catholic Church, but it wasn't a Catholic Church, and I drove up to find out what it

is. I go up there and it was a nunnery—the Catholic’s whorehouse! That’s what it is! I think we’re going to help solve the problem of short hair, because I’m going to bring this out. When the nun-candidates take their vows, they are betrothed to Christ. They shave their heads. What does it say about shaved heads—or shorn? *It is a shame!*

After they’ve gone through everything that they have, they’ve qualified to be a nun, the rest of their lives they have cropped hair. Therefore, I say to all women with short hair: Think about it. Have you joined the ranks of the nuns and not knowing it, in relationship to your hair length? That’s going to put it, not on a picking basis—I pick on you because you have short hair. On my trip it was almost universal. Shorthaired women running around, stomping around, I couldn’t believe it. I started running a count. Eighty percent of the women that I saw had short hair, as short as a man. I’m not talking just cropped, I’m talking about short and sheared up the back—80%!

Today, most of the hairdressers are homosexuals, and they want to degrade women. One of the ways that they do that is to mess up their hair. But there’s one safety valve, *it grows!* It shows in 1-Cor. 11 that long hair is given as a covering to show that she is under the authority of her husband. I’ve also seen how that simple thing has an awful lot to do with the change of attitude with women. On top of that, I saw numerous middle-aged hippies. Men with long hair pulled together with a rubber band. Can you believe it?

Verse 28: “...Yet those *who marry* shall have distress in the flesh, but I *wish* to spare you.... [In other words, it’s going to be difficult physically.] ...Now this I say, brethren: the time *is* drawing close. For the *time that* remains, *let* those who have wives be as if they did not have wives... [that is staying spiritually close to God] ...and those who weep, as if they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as if they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as if they did not possess; and those who use this world, as if they did not use *it* as their own; for this world in its present form is passing away. Now I desire you to be without anxiety. The man who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord.... [That is unless his mind is in constant turmoil because of lustful sex sins in his mind.] ...But he who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how he may please *his wife*” (vs 28-33).

(go to the next track)

Audience questions:

- If the law applies to people equally outside the Church and inside the Church, how then does 1-Corinthians 7 fit in?

1-Cor. 7 does not apply to those out in the world! If a person has been in the world and divorced and remarried, that is a sin which is forgivable at baptism. Therefore, if they are single they are free to marry.

If they are married and the mate is an unbeliever, as long as the unbeliever pleases to dwell with the mate—husband or wife—after baptism then there should be no divorce. It’s the unbeliever who should leave, not the believer instigating to put away the unbeliever. There have been too many cases like that. I think if we just look at the fruit of what happened with those things, it’s, in many cases, not good.

- The WCG told many people to separate and then in 1974 they were told that they were refuting it based upon just what I said. Are all these people living in adultery and sin?

No! If the minister tells someone they are to free to remarry when they are not, who is responsible? *Both are!* The minister has to make sure that he gets all the pertinent facts and makes sure that he seeks for the truth. The worst thing that ever happens in divorce and remarriage situations is that you get drawn into an emotional, sympathetic point of view and you don’t look at the facts.

Yes, there is emotion—whether it be loneliness on one side or upset emotions on the other side because you’re fighting and arguing all the time—clear away all of the emotions. I know that when I counsel with people on divorce and remarriage, I tell them that before we start. I know this is hard. I know that it’s difficult. I know that it’s emotional. But please, let’s not have any emotional-driven conclusions here. Base it upon Scripture! Base it upon facts! Then the emotions can be added into it, but not until then.

Of course, this assumes that the person is being told they are free and did not set out to deceive the minister. *Yes*, if the person comes to deceive the minister and ‘knows the ropes’! How can you tell from a minister’s point of view that they ‘know the ropes’? They come up and say, ‘Well, so and so did this and it’s fraud, and this is fraud and that is fraud.’ How do you *know* it’s fraud? Or knowing just the right words to say. What they are doing, they are digging their grave even deeper—spiritually speaking—because they are trying to deceive a minister of God, if he be a minister of God.

In other words, they did or did not try to ‘stack the deck’ in trying to get the decision to be in their favor. That’s why you can never, never make a D & R decision based upon talking to only one mate—either the wife or the husband—you must talk to both.

I've had cases where the stories between them are so far removed you would never think that it's telling about the same marriage. So, somebody's got to be not telling the truth. I've seen that when people do a write-up for me; I've asked them to write it up. I could tell they've been educated in the Church and what to say, because they say the right, key, trigger words. But unless they present the facts, all the right, key, trigger words don't mean anything except you're trying to get your way by twisting, turning and deceiving.

If a member—man or woman—does that to be loosed from a marriage, do you think that they are free to marry before God? *No!* They're just living a lie and living in sin. The worst thing to do is to come and try and con the minister into giving a decision.

- If a person remarries based on information from the minister, are they living in continuous adultery?

They may or may not be! If it's fraudulent information that you gave, *YES!* You know it! You're living in sin and you know it!

I also found that too many ministers were so afraid of making any decision concerning D & R that they would not make a decision. They would write it up and send it to headquarters. When that happens, there are many miles removed. They only read what is there, and you can't tell if it's fraudulent or not. You can't tell if the information has been twisted or turned. No one at Pasadena should have ever made a decision concerning D & R for someone out in the field. They never talk to anybody. If the ministers are so squeamish that they refuse to handle it that shows three things:

1. they were cowards
2. they didn't know the Word of God
3. they didn't know how to handle the situation

When a member turned out to be more clever than the minister and was able to wrap the minister around his or her finger to get their way. In either case, the product of that is not good. God is not going to be deceived. God is not going to sanction or put His blessing upon and lies that people have coming to a minister to lie. Ezek. 14—those who come to inquire of Ezekiel, the 'elders have idols in their heart.'

Any lie that you have, that you hold up and palm off as truth to someone else is an *idol in your heart*. God will not be inquired! In other words, God is not going to hear that. So, both are responsible.

- A. The person who is in the divorce and remarriage situation.

B. The minister who sits there and listens to it and does not give the right kind of judgment that he needs to give.

- WCG and WCG ministers told so-and-so that she was free to marry. Then based on that decision the minister married her in the Church—who is responsible?

Both are!

- Divorce and remarriage seems to be a very important subject. *Yes!* It will influence the lives of adults and children for the rest of our natural lives. *Yes!*

I happen to come from a divorce situation with my mother and father.

- In God's mercy and love, just what does He want?

Well, before being baptized, then that is part of your sinful life, which is forgiven! After being baptized, you're to learn the Word of God so you don't continue that kind of carnal behavior and destroy any marriage within the Church. You have to change! And change with God's Spirit!

- Remember the time plagued with improper childrearing practices?

Oh yeah! Not only improper but getting downright demonic. It's rendered some people unsuited for marriage. *Yes, and the result of that*, when they grow up they're dingbats and unsuited for marriage, even under the most ideal situations. To the novice, which all of us are in our first marriage, the trait that makes a prospective mate unsuited for marriage is hard, if not impossible, to detect.

Therefore, everyone who is being counseled for marriage have to be told you really need to get to know each other in many different circumstances. What needs to be told is this: You're to understand that if you're coming to God and you are in the Church and baptized, ***this is your one and your only marriage***—period! You need to understand that! Until death do you part! Even Christ, while He was married to Israel—under the Old Covenant—put her away; gave her a bill of divorcement, but He never remarried any other nation. He was faithful until the time that He came in the flesh so that He could die to terminate that marriage covenant.

Even in the Church we do not provide people with enough guidance in selecting a mate. *That is difficult! Very difficult*, because you end up match-making! If you end up match-making then you can create as many mistakes as the other way around. Remember the song from *Fiddler on the Roof*: 'Matchmaker, matchmaker, find me a find, make me a match...'

Marriage is the second most important decision we make in our lives—the most important is to answer God’s calling. *Yes! That’s true!* It is treated like an instinct that all humans have. *There are certain things that God has given to human beings, which make them click*—what is called ‘fall in love.’ They found that that is based upon the pheromones which our bodies give off.

Why is it that you’re drawn to a certain person—man or woman? Why is it that you’re repelled by other people—man or woman? But, you don’t want to have it just that way at all. I mean, that way only. You’ve got to get the facts in the marriage.

It seems that we fail for success in selecting mates and then everyone is shocked when the marriages fail. *That is true!* There must be a better way. There is!

Ephesians 5—here is the way! Now then, let me state this categorically. From vs 1-21 is one whole set of circumstances talking about conduct within the Church.

- conduct which we should have
- conduct which we should not have
- conduct which we should not allow

Then Paul sums it up, Ephesians 5:20: “Giving thanks at all times for all things to God and the Father in *the* name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit yourselves to one another in *the* fear of God” (vs 20-21). That is in the congregational setting.

One woman said that this means that the husband must submit to the wife. That doesn’t mean that, because v 22 would be a contradiction: “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”

Now then, when most women hear the word *submit*, they think of a husband who brutishly beats up on his wife. Please understand that’s not what the Church—even in Worldwide—ever advocated, with the exception of one minister who is an evangelist who bragged that he ‘spanked his wife.’

- How do you submit to the Lord?
- Do you argue with Him?
- Do you fight with Him?
- Do you scheme against Him?

NO! You’re to “...submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord”—and as we will see, *in everything in the marriage estate!*

Verse 23: “For the husband is *the* head of the wife... [Unless you can change the sex, you can’t change this fact.] ...the husband is *the* head of the wife even as Christ is *the* Head of the Church...” This tells us

- how the husband is to love his wife
- how he’s to be concerned for her
- how he’s to watch out for her
- how he’s to protect her
- how he’s to comfort her
- how he’s to watch over her

Loving your wife is as difficult to the husband as it is for the wife to submit to the husband. But, you do make yourself more unlovable if you do not submit. If you do it in the right way, you wives, you can have virtually anything your heart desires—especially if you know how. That is true.

Sometimes a man must make a decision and in making the decision it is his responsibility to do it. If he makes a wrong decision, what happens? *He suffers, and the wife and family suffer!* Therefore, it is very important that the husband love his wife and family as Christ loves the Church. That’s a tremendous responsibility!

- This then, coupled with proper sexual relations is how a marriage is held together.
- This then is how the proper relations with each other can be maintained.

It’s always a building and a growing situation that we are in. What if you have a cantankerous husband or a cantankerous wife? What do you do?

- You pray about it!
- You fast about it!
- You do all you can to love your husband or wife!
- Do the things that are helpful and pleasing!
- Don’t be criticizing and picking and looking for little things to come after!

What does that do? *That just agitates!* If your husband has a mistake that he makes all the time, just realize that’s one of his mistakes. If you have a mistake that you do all the time as a wife, husbands, just realize that’s a mistake. All mistakes are recoverable with the exception of death, and that is recoverable through the resurrection. Everything else can be taken care of or even built into a better condition than previously, but you have got to take that attitude to do it, otherwise it’s going to be a constant *battle of the sexes*.

Now then, let’s understand something else important: I think that too many people watch too much television—both women and men—and men take too much of the ‘Henry George’ syndrome that the TV portrays of the *stupid husband*, and too many women take the ‘Rosie’ syndrome—know it all and always correcting their husbands and always putting them down, always having something to say. Whenever the husband does something you always

but in and say, 'I wouldn't do it that way.'

What the husbands need to do is just look back at the wives and say, 'I know that, but I'm doing it this way, thank you.'

Verse 24: "For even as the Church is subject to Christ, in the same way also *let* wives be *subject* to their own husbands in everything." That's important! But if your husband is loving you, he is not going to take advantage of you to put you down.

If you're submitting to your husband in everything, you are not looking for a cause to come back and pick and nag and criticize and, as it is taught today, the only way a woman can get her way is to be her 'bitchy' own self. That's what's said right on television. That's the way a lot of women are.

You have to ask yourself—wives and husbands: How am I? And of course, some women will say, 'Yeah, Fred, you're a man and you don't know.' My answer is: *I am married, and I do know!* The advice that I am giving you is what I have also had to learn, too.

Verse 25: "Husbands, love your own wives... [Even when she is the big 'B' self.] ...in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with the washing of water by *the Word*" (vs 25-26).

That doesn't mean that you set your wife down and you just browbeat her with the Bible and say, 'Okay, I'm washing you with the water by the Word.' That means you take the principles out of the Bible, and by the Spirit of God you help her, encourage her, uplift her, help her. If you can help her not to be so big 'B' then you're going to have much more peace yourself, because you are loving her and she will be inspired to love you.

I challenge you this: If you have trouble in your marriage, see if you can draw close enough to God on your own, asking for God to give you the love that you can inspire your mate to love you back—and stop your fighting! It works! But you both have to be willing!

Verse 27: "That He might present it to Himself *as* the glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame. In the same way, husbands are duty-bound to love their wives as their own bodies...." In this case, when a man loves his wife, he loves himself. This means that men are also not to make decision just to show the wife. In other words, 'I'm going to do this just because you're the big 'B' and I don't want you to be, you're snippy and you won't submit so I'm going to do this.' *No! No! No!* That is a misuse of authority, just as much as it is a

misuse of a wife's conduct going around being the big 'B': snipping, picking, harping, griping and all of this.

Verse 29: "For no man has ever hated his own flesh... [and all you wives know that, when your husbands get sick—they're little babies!] ...but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord *does* the Church. For we are members of His body—of His flesh and of His bones.... [We are together as husbands and wives in the Church, to the very sacrifice of Christ.] ...—of His flesh and of His bones" (vs 29-30). It took me a long time to understand what that meant. That goes clear back to Adam. Eve was made from one of his bones—right? *A rib!* Meaning that your relationship with each other is to develop a closeness that it is as if one flesh—your ribs—are joined together.

Verse 31: "For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall be one flesh." Which is a lifetime process of growth and understanding, going through trials and difficulties, the good times, exhilarating times, the successes, the defeats, altogether.

I can say that in my lifetime in the Church of God, we've had enough people being after us and so forth that it has been very difficult on my wife and the family. But God has delivered us out of them all! So, you have to look at that side, too. A lot of the things, I was put into the position that I either had to stand for the Truth or compromise and go the way of men and politics. Therefore, I was against the hierarchy and they were against me. God delivered me out of all of them.

I'm thankful that I have such a wonderful, loving wife, that she stuck with me through it all the way through it—thick and thin! And it's been difficult! It's been difficult for a lot of people, and it's difficult in the world—isn't it? Most families today are what they call *dysfunctional!* That means that everybody is, in one degree or another, out of control in some way. The only way you get back in to being functional is to let the Spirit of God and work, and go back and study the Proverbs; that will give you an awful lot in how to conduct your life. Talks about

- *anger*, why it's not good
- *deceit*, what ends up with that
- how a *kind word* turns away wrath
- a *word spoken in time of need*

There's a time when your lives are down and you need to just go up and give them a hug and kiss and tell them you understand—make sure you do, though, just don't do it just to say so. You have to understand. Always remember this: Women are going to go on feelings, and women—when

correction comes—take it personally! Whereas, men look at it: there’s a problem, let’s solve the problem. Women look at it: I’m wrong, instead of ‘I have done something wrong.’ There is a vast difference!

If you have done something wrong, it can be changed. If some correction comes—either man or woman; husband or wife—don’t take it personally. Have you ever called yourself a ‘dumb doe-doe’? *Yes, I have!* In many occasions I do something or say something and turn around and say, ‘dumb, dumb, dumb, when are you ever going to learn, Fred.’ If there’s a problem that comes up, take it as a problem. Work out the problem. Don’t take it as an assault against your person, because it’s not. *Very important!*

- Is there Scriptural support for making ministers making a decision regarding such matters as D & R? *Yes!*

Let’s also make it very clear: ***God is not going to be bound to sin!*** That’s why it’s very important for any minister who’s going to make a decision, make sure he gets all the facts and make sure he gets the truth and past the emotion. Get into the truth of the situation. If you have a woman who is always boo-hooing and everything is just a big trauma all the time, well, she’s got an emotional problem. What she needs to do is get a hold of the emotional problem and start looking at the facts, instead of just being drug around like there’s a big ring in her nose and a big ‘E’—emotions—dragging her all over the place.

Matthew 16:18—this applies to all the ministers, though Jesus said it to Peter: “And I say also to you, that you are Peter [petros]; but upon this Rock... [petra—which is Christ Himself] ...I will build My church...” The Catholics have turned this around so that whatever the pope says, as long as he sits in his kiddie-car chair—called ‘ex cathedra—whatever decision he makes is infallible. ***NO!*** A man, at his very best intentions, let alone not pretentious, if he makes a bad decision, it is his decision and he cannot claim the authority of God. Is Christ the Minister of sin? **GOD FORBID!**

“...and *the* gates of the grave shall not prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven...” (vs 18-19). That is how the conduct needs to be for everyone. This is not the keys to the grave. Christ alone has the keys to the grave. He has the key of David. This is not the key of David. These are the keys of understanding so that people can be taught the right way to enter into the Kingdom of God. That’s what it’s talking about here.”

“...and whatever you may bind on the earth will have already been bound in heaven... [according to the commandments and laws of God] ...and whatever you may loose on the earth will have already been loosed in

heaven” (v 19). This is not a blanket, *carte blanche* for doing whatever you want. The ‘whatever’ is obviously restricted by the Word of God. No one can do anything contrary to the Word of God and bind anyone to it. It isn’t going to be done. Yes, it’s quite a situation here.

- What else would we bind or loose?

Divorce and remarriage is probably the main one that we would. Paul brought that up in 1-Cor. 7. Another thing Paul said was ‘if you understand about idols, idols are nothing’; and if you want to eat in the temple restaurant, to get the food to eat—obviously had to be clean food—you have permission to do that. If you have conscious to idols, don’t go in there. That was a binding and loosing in that particular case.

Another binding and loosing would be should we travel on the Sabbath? There are some people who feel that we shouldn’t travel on the Sabbath, we shouldn’t eat out on the Sabbath, we should just stay in our homes and just study our Bible and hole up here and that’s it. Well, if that’s the way you keep the Sabbath, then for you that’s fine.

But like today, I drove nearly 260 miles, and by time I go home it will be pretty close to 285-90 miles in one day. I did eat out on the way up. I stopped by and got something to eat. God wants ‘mercy and not sacrifice.’ In those cases, it’s far better for me to go, and, of course, someone will say, ‘you’re a minister and you’re just like a priest and you can profane the Sabbath and you can get away with it and that’s okay for you, but it’s not okay for me.’ In some cases there may be a grain of truth to that.

But, if you do keep the Sabbath at home, you have no need to go out and eat. We can make that decision. If you are traveling, then it’s okay to go out and eat. No problem with that.

Should you watch television on the Sabbath? Well, I suppose it would be okay to catch the news and, if you’ve studied, prayed and kept the Sabbath, it would be all right to watch something like on Discovery Channel about God’s creation. Other than that, there certainly wouldn’t be anything that you would watch on television. You can’t watch sports. That’s for your own pleasure and entertainment. You can’t watch some of these silly movies. Maybe, if the *Ten Commandments* were on, you could watch that. That movie would be all right. Or if there is a true, historical documentation of something that fits in with the Bible, like archeology of the Bible and so forth. That would be all right to watch. We can make that decision.

But what we do is, we say, ‘you have to make that decision in your life.’ So, in a sense, we’re just giving parameters on what you can decide for yourself what you need to do.

- Concerning interracial marriages in the Church:

I would say, the lesson of the world is it always leads to trouble—outside in the world and in the Church. You cannot strictly forbid interracial marriage, but it should be *strongly discouraged*. Even the black brethren I know believe that the races should be separate. Since they said that, and I do agree with that, then I think that's what God shows that it would be best not to.

What if you're in your 50s and 60s and you're already past childbearing age and something like this and you have an interracial marriage where it's not the extreme of black and white, would that be permissible? *Probably!* Would there be any sin in that? *Probably not!* The difficulty comes especially when you have children that come into the world, because now you're bringing children of a mixed racial background into the world, and they never asked you to be their parents, it just happened. So, that creates a great difficulty!

That's the best way I can say it. Look at all these GIs who married Japanese women and Korean women. Now they're all getting old and middle-aged and the wives are thinking about being buried back in the homeland. Yes, it was fun and exciting and all this sort of thing to marry a soldier from America and come and live here in America, share all the blessings and all of that. But then, sooner or later, your own racial things are going to come up, because that's the way God made you. It's going to create some difficulties.

Does that mean if you are of the same race that you won't have difficulties? *No!* You have certain people, like the Irish, which have terrible tempers. They're always fighting! Same way with certain ones down in Australia. They call it 'buck up!' That is when they go out and have a fist-a-cuff!

Just because you're of the same nationality does not mean you're compatible. In selecting a mate make sure you're compatible!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 4:16-18
- 2) Matthew 12:38-39
- 3) Matthew 5:31-32
- 4) Matthew 19:3-9
- 5) 1 Corinthians 6:15-16
- 6) 1 Corinthians 7:1-6
- 7) 1 Corinthians 14:36-37
- 8) 1 Corinthians 7:7-16, 25-33
- 9) Ephesians 5:20-31
- 10) Matthew 16:18-19

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 11
- Ezekiel 14
- Ephesians 5:1-19

Also referenced: Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight

Baptism, Marriage & Funeral Ceremonies

Fred R. Coulter

I like to give funerals for those who die in the faith. This woman was not in the faith, but I was asked if I had something. I was faxed something that was done in Worldwide, and I looked at it and it started right out with “the wages of sin is death” and there’s no immortal soul. When I gave my first funeral, it was July—I was ordained in May 1965—and I didn’t know it, but the three sisters who asked me to perform the funeral, they were living together. Two of them had been married, their husbands died and the third was never married. One of their family died and they asked me to do the funeral.

How do I do a funeral? I have my trusty little guide, so I went on down—150 miles—way out in Idaho. Anyway, I did not know that all these people were Catholic. I really did it! I just went through and read the thing like it was and preached it just like it was. It says in there that Herbert Armstrong did this because there were atheists out there and he wanted to let them know—BOOM! Sure enough, he did. He smacked them right in the face! I almost got tripped going down the aisle after giving that! So, I learned a lesson on that.

My second funeral was one that I had to really make a change, because this was a very tragic situation. People, again not in the Church, but what happened was this: Mom and dad got a babysitter so they could go out. There was a fire in the room where the baby was and it burned up. They come home and their baby is dead. I knew immediately not to use that straight outline that’s in the book, because what sin had the baby done? *None!*

I adjusted it and I gave just a straight *second resurrection* funeral, because you have to give people hope. You just cannot come in there and lambaste them like that. It is an opportunity to preach the Gospel, but I think since it’s ‘all appointed once to die’ and the ‘wages of sin is death,’ there it’s really talking about the *second death* when you really analyze it, though we may sin or there may be an accident and we may die sooner than we expect. Of course, if we die sooner than we expect, we’re just dead, we have no thoughts of it.

The first funeral that I gave when we were in Christian Biblical was Esther Grisinger. The next one was her husband Robert; both those were very gut-wrenching. Then, I had a loan officer working for me and his brother wanted to get married, so he knew I was a minister. The lady he was to marry was his high school sweetheart, but she grew up and married someone else and had a couple of children

and then her husband died. They met each other again and it was like no time had ever been lost. So, they asked me to do the wedding. I worked up a wedding ceremony which we’ll cover here in a bit. I had that and try to improve on it as we go along.

Then I got this letter from South Africa and it said, ‘What am I going to do if someone wants to be baptized?’ So, I started writing the letter and it expanded and expanded. I was doing the funeral ceremony, I might as well just finish this and do a baptismal ceremony. Just thinking about it, none of us have ever known anything about a baptismal ceremony—have we? *Just in Worldwide!*

I wrote him in South Africa and said, ‘A person does not need to be an ordained elder or a minister to baptize. They certainly do for anointing. A person needs to be an elder for that.’

BAPTISM

John 4:1: “Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples)” (vs 1-2). Why did He have his disciples baptize them instead of Jesus baptizing them? Two very good reasons:

1. If they got into a shouting match over whose baptism was more valid. Someone could say they were baptized by Jesus Himself, therefore, ‘mine is more valid than yours.’
2. If Jesus had not died—which it does tie in with the death of Jesus Christ

It was a baptism unto repentance, much like John’s, but then for the receiving of the Holy Spirit whenever Christ would die. I assume that some of these disciples here may have been part of the 120 which were there in Acts 1—don’t know for sure.

Let’s come to the *Baptismal Ceremony for the Christian Biblical Church of God*—a person should really know a lot and a lot of members know a lot. They should be able to go ahead and baptize, especially if there’s not a minister around. They should be able to go ahead and baptize, but what has to be is:

Each person who desires to be baptized should be counseled to determine whether the individual has truly repented of his or her sins and has accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

This is not in the sense that the Protestants have. They said, accept the Lord, open your heart and He comes in and you're now saved, which then completely bypasses anything to do with baptism. Baptism is not even ever mentioned. Then I mention some of the things that you need to determine and ask some questions as you're going through.

The person must understand what sin is—the transgression of God's commandments and laws. Each one must realize that the sacrifice and the blood of Jesus Christ is the only payment for his or her sins.

There are things we need to know:

1. John 6:44: "No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him..."

There has to be a calling. You have to determine that.

2. Romans 2:4: "...the graciousness of God leads us to repentance."

Or the kindness or goodness of God leads us to repentance.

Another purpose of baptismal counseling is to determine whether the individual has the fruits of repentance and the desire to live God's way and to keep His commandments as magnified by Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

- Psa. 51 is a psalm of repentance—that's where David repented.
- Psa. 86 shows the readiness of God to forgive and so forth.

Let's go to Matthew, the third chapter, and let's see what John the Baptist preached. I got a call the other night from a man who said, 'How can I get a Passover book?—*The Christian Passover*. He said, 'I'm half Jewish.' Whenever they are Jewish or half-Jew they always have to tell you. I said, 'Utt oh' to myself. He said, 'I agree with your conclusion, but I don't agree the way that you got there. I haven't read the book.' Then he proceeded to tell me a little bit about a Jewish tradition, which is the fasting of the firstborn on the fourteenth. I said that I didn't find that in the Scriptures.

He's going to send that to me, and he says he has information that they did unleaven their houses before the fourteenth began, that they kept a little bag of leaven to burn later on the fourteenth—I think the day portion. But I think he will be surprised to find that we also discovered that just by going through the New Testament. Then, I was given a couple of tapes from the Christian Jew Foundation and the first thing he starts out with is the 'tradition of the rabbis is...' That's why Paul said in the New Testament there is 'neither Jew nor Greek; male nor female; Scythian or barbarian.'

I told this man that we have a series that we entitled *Scripturalism vs Judaism* and we showed how the beginning with John how that Christ and John the Baptist were making a decisive separation from Judaism. He's going to be a little surprised when he gets it.

Matthew 3:1: "Now, in those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying, '*The voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths."*'" Now John himself wore a garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey" (vs 1-4). Very austere! Also, he was a Nazarite from birth, which means that he probably had a flowing mane of hair and a flowing beard. I'll bet he was awesome to look at. When he said to repent, this was something!

Verse 5: "Then went out to him *those from Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the country around the Jordan*... [by full immersion] ...confessing their sins. But after seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them..." 'Oh, I'm so happy you have arrived! We have been waiting for you. You can take off your miter and your robes and we have a nice place for you to changed over there and you can come down in the clean part of the Jordan and we will baptize you.' NO! He didn't say that!

Notice how he treated them. Is this not separation complete: "...*You brood of vipers, who has forewarned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, produce fruits worthy... [answerable to an amended way of life] ...of repentance; and do not think to say within yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father"...* [Isn't that what Christ said? Isn't that what Paul said? In the New Testament all children of Israel have to repent! All Gentiles have to repent! They're in exactly the same status to begin with.] ...for I tell you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. But already the axe is striking at the roots of the trees; therefore, every tree that is not producing good fruit is cut down and thrown into *the fire*.'" (vs 5-10). Then they gave them a warning: ***If you don't repent then you're going to have the baptism of fire, which is going to come—the Lake of Fire!***

After these two things have been determined, the one doing the counseling needs to go through the Scriptures of 'counting the cost' with the person desiring to be baptized... As you go over these Scriptures with the person, you need

to determine whether or not that each one has made this commitment in his or her life before God the Father and Jesus Christ. This commitment is a covenant with Jesus Christ and God the Father. It is an irrevocable total decision of his or her life to Jesus Christ until death.

That becomes so important! One thing about this dedication: *it is never to be used*

- 1) for self-will
- 2) by others to leverage it so that they can manipulate you and use you and merchandise you, etc.

That's between you, Jesus Christ and God the Father. Again, let's see what Jesus said concerning this. I think we'll also find this very enlightening. As we're going through this, let's just analyze this from the point of view of Passover preparation, because this will help us rededicate ourselves in a way that we need to. One thing: ***You cannot clean yourself up, only Christ can.***

The comment was made that when he came into the Church of God he wasn't counseled on 'counting the cost.' And counting the cost later came as a great surprise. That's why it should be addressed ahead of time. God is offering you eternal life in splendor and glory, the greatest and most precious thing that could ever happen to anyone. There has to be a *cost* we need to understand concerning it.

Luke 14:25: "And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned *and* said to them, 'If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple'" (vs 25-26). We're going to see that that means to *love God more* in comparison to. But, if someone comes to you and says, 'I want you to prove your love to me, you must give up your God.' Then you know what you need to do: ***follow God!***

Also included: *your own life*. We also have to reckon ourselves in being *dead to Christ* as we're going along. Notice the next phrase: "...he cannot be My disciple." In the Greek that means, in the strongest terms, it's *'impossible to be My disciple.'* The Greek there is 'ou'—which means *the absolute impossibility of* and the verb is 'dunatai.' It's not that it cannot be, it is there is no power to make you My disciple. This is pretty profound when we understand it.

Verse 27: "And whoever does not carry his cross... [Which means there's going to be trouble and difficulty along the way. We don't know what it is, that's why He says]: ...does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple" We have

to come after Christ. Christ is not going to perpetually come after us. When God the Father calls us, He sends His Spirit to be with us, and then we have to make choices and decisions to follow the lead that He gives us. If we seek Him, we will find Him. Notice what it says, again, when you don't come after Him and 'bear your cross'—ou dunatai—you "cannot be My disciple.

So, it's not a matter of what a person professes. There are a lot of people who live even some Christian principles. But that doesn't make them Christians in deed. What makes a person a Christian in deed? Let's see what makes a person a disciple of Christ or not, which is accomplished after baptism. That way we know God is not making any mistakes. There may be tares, which the wicked one sows. There may be those who are lukewarm. There may be people who are nearly dead, and you can go through Rev. 2 & 3. But here is a thing that makes a person a disciple of Christ:

Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit... [as God views you] ...if the Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." There's the impossibility that he's talking about. That's why when you come to Christ you have to know that you have to count the cost. Then he goes on showing about someone who's going to build and make sure that he has enough to finish it. If he doesn't, everyone mocks him. Same way with someone going to war, you have to count the cost first.

Luke 14:33: "In the same way also, each one of you who does not forsake all that he possesses cannot be My disciple.... [again 'ou dunatai'—impossibility. Why does He say, 'forsake all that he has'? Does that mean go out and sell? The only one that I know of in the Scriptures that was told to give away everything that he had was the 'rich man' who had many possessions.] (Why does He say): ...forsake all that he possesses cannot be My disciple."

That's tied in with the meaning of coming out of the world, giving up—that's true. When you die, what do you take with you? *Nothing!* Baptism is a death in the watery grave. Therefore, that's what this has the meaning of here. That doesn't mean to will everything away and go dress like John the Baptist and go up on top of a mountain and play John the Baptist. There was only one of him. Aren't you glad? *Yes!*

Let's go to Matthew 10:32; this shows us the comparison that hate is a relative term in this particular instance in relationship to loving others. Then you have to let the Scriptures define the Scriptures and interpret the Scriptures so that we

understand. “Now then, whoever shall confess Me before men... [This is what you’re doing when you’re baptized—correct? *Yes!*] ...that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven... [Everyone likes v 32, but some people may not like v 33]: ...But whoever shall deny Me before men...” How do you deny God? *Many different* ways:

- rejecting His commandments
- saying His Word is not important
- rejecting the Spirit of God

“...that one will I also deny before My Father, Who *is* in heaven” (v 33). You never want to put yourself into a position where that there is not going to be any intercessory activity of Christ on your behalf. You never want it to get to where it’s going to be a denial to God the Father.

Verse 34, He makes it clear: “Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.” The Word of God is ‘sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing asunder the soul and spirit and the joints and marrows, discerning the intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12). This is the sword He’s talking about, literally, the sword of the Lord, which is the Spirit of God.

Verse 35: “For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law... [This thing will happen because you’re called and they’re not.] ...And a man’s enemies *shall be those of* his own household. The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me... [‘eth’ in the old *King James* means ‘ing.’] ...and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross [daily] and follow Me is not worthy of Me” (vs 35-38). This gives an ongoing thing that is something that we’re always doing.

Verse 39: “The one who has found his life... [nice and comfortable and secure] ...shall lose it, and the one who has lost his life... [to the world and to himself] ...for My sake shall find it.” We’re kind of at this juncture again—aren’t we? The way this is worded is that it means something that’s an ongoing thing constantly. It doesn’t mean that we have to go to extremes and buy swords and go out and do things like that. It just merely means that these things are going to be for us to confront all the time.

Baptism Counseling and Ceremony:

Prior to baptism would be best to go through these words of the baptismal ceremony so each one can fully understand the significance of baptism. Also, these words are to be recited by the one who is doing the baptizing while he is in the water with the one who being baptized.

You’re not go in and pry into all their sins, because their confession is to God. You’re to determine whether they’ve repented sufficiently for baptism so that they can begin the Christian life. That the individual has determined to set his mind to love God and keep His commandments and so forth.

I give this whole section in Romans 1 to 11 and I think we’ll find this really important. This is important for a person to know. Make a booklet for those who are baptized. Give it to them before and make sure they understand it and then you can counsel with them about it. Put in there the date they were baptized. Put their name in there and then that is there own personal one, the one who baptized them and the date and all of that sort of thing. I know that that would be meaningful. How many here can remember a single, solitary word from your baptism? I can remember some of the words. I can remember the laying on hands more than anything else. I knew at that instant that I received God’s Spirit, and I knew that there was a change in my life—without a doubt!

In Acts 8 we find that Philip was baptizing, but he didn’t lay hands on for the receipt of the Holy Spirit. They had to send down the apostles to lay hands on them. So, it’s very possible that when there is an elder available that he should be the one who would do it. But when you’re dealing with a situation where there is no elder, but you have someone who is long-time in the Church then they can certainly do it. Obviously when you compare that with John 4 and there was not the laying on of hands for the receipt of the Holy Spirit because Jesus was not yet dead, then His disciples could do that without the same necessary qualifications that you might have later on, as it was with the apostles in Acts 8.

Even though the disciples baptized them and Jesus didn’t, it’s obvious they didn’t lay hands on them for the receiving of the Holy Spirit. That would be an instruction later. But as Jesus said to them, ‘The Holy Spirit is with you and shall be in you.’ That would be after He was resurrected. The Spirit did not come as a begettal until after He was resurrected from the dead (John 7) when He spoke that ‘out of His belly shall flow rivers of living water’ and He spoke of the Holy Spirit for those who would receive after He was resurrected from the dead.

Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?” That was right after showing that through grace the imputed righteousness of Christ is given to each one of the believers, as we find in Rom. 5 is the gift of God. Grace does not give license to sin at all.

Verse 2: “MAY IT NEVER BE!... [That’s

what it means in the Greek—may this never come into existence! It's a very emphatic statement.] ...We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?"—*as a way of life*, because that's what it means. Obviously, it does not mean that you're going to quit sinning and have no sins at all. It says a little later, 'Don't let sin rein—rule—over you.

Verse 3: "Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized **into** Christ Jesus, were baptized **into** His death?" That's why baptism is so important. That's how the death of Jesus Christ can literally be applied to you. We're baptized **into** His death.

Verse 4: "Therefore, we were [co-buried] buried... [that's what it means in the Greek—one word that means *jointly buried* or *co-buried*] ...with Him through the baptism into **the** death... [Why is **into the** death? *In baptism you're making a covenant with God and the covenant with God demands your life!* You're certifying that covenant with your death in the watery grave—that's what you're actually doing.] ...so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life." That's why it's important to determine whether the person desires to walk in newness of life. Wouldn't be any good to baptize someone and then just have them get up; and live the way they've always lived; it won't work!

Verse 5: "For if we have been conjoined together in the **likeness** of His death... [the Greek for *likeness* is 'homoiomate' which means *exactly the same*. When you go in that watery grave and you get buried under that water, God is looking at your death as the same as the death of Christ.] ...together in the likeness of His death.... [Paul uses another terminology here; then he gives us some hope by saying]: ...so also shall we be *in the likeness of His* resurrection." When you have *so also* you go back and pick up the same comparison of the wordage.

Verse 6: "Knowing this... [Should we not know this when we're baptized? Is this not important for us to know?] ...that our old man was **co-crucified** with *Him* in order that the body of **sin might be destroyed**... [Not destroyed all a once. Paul said, 'I die daily.'] ...so that we might no longer be **enslaved** to sin... [controlled and dominated over by sin] ...because the one who has died *to sin*... [in the watery grave] ...has been **justified** from sin" (vs 6-7). Justified means *put in right standing with God*; made right with God through Christ!

Verse 8: "Now, if we **died together** with Christ... [I couldn't find a good English word for 'co-deathed'] ...we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised

from *the* dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all... [all human beings and all ages] ...but in that He lives, He lives unto God. In the same way also, you should indeed reckon [calculate] yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord" (vs 8-11).

Verse 12: "Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof.... [It's a different thing to struggle against it and not want to sin, but you do end up sinning. That's a pull of the flesh. Where you submissively obey it *in the lusts thereof* and say, 'Oh, well...' and just totally give into it.] ...Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace" (vs 12-14). Knowing that this whole thing is by grace; baptism is by grace.

Verse 15: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not **under law**, but under grace?... [I might mention that in the English translation where it is *the law*, the word *the* is not there in the Greek. It is *under law*, not *the law*. A lot of people assume that you have no obligation to keep any laws with that kind of translation.] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness" (vs 15-18). That shows then how we are to walk in newness of life. It's very important concerning baptism.

If the person meets those basic requirements and fully understands the purpose of baptism, then it would be proper to baptize him or her.

Baptismal Ceremony:

This is a little broader than what we had with our former affiliation. You should get a *yes* answer for each of these questions:

- Have you repented of your sins?
- Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior?
- Are you ready to bury your old sinful self and life into the covenant death of Jesus Christ in this watery grave?
- Are you going to walk in the way of Jesus Christ, keeping His

commandments; to love Him with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, all your being and with all your strength?

After receiving an affirmative answer to these questions, you should continue by asking:

What is your full name?

As we're going through this, just put your name there for the sake of what we're studying today.

Repeat the person's full name and say:

- because you have repented of your sins, which are the transgressions of God's Holy, righteous and perfect commandments and laws;
- and because you have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior for the forgiveness of your sins, and Who is your Lord and Master in heaven above, sitting on the right hand of God the Father as your Intercessor and Mediator, and your King in the coming Kingdom of God;
- and because you are burying your old sinful self and life into the covenant death of Christ Jesus in this watery grave for the remission of your sins;
- and because you are determined to walk in newness of life, in the way of Jesus Christ, keeping His commandments and to love Him and God the Father with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, and all your being and with all your strength

I baptize you, not into any sect, denomination or organization of this world, but into the name of the Father—because you will receive the begetting of His seed; and of the Son—because His life, sacrifice, death and resurrection brings the forgiveness of your sins; and of the Holy Spirit—because the Holy Spirit comes from God the Father and into your mind as a begetting to be a son/daughter of God, and will lead you into loving obedience to God the Father and Jesus Christ now, and when Jesus Christ returns you will be in the first resurrection and God will grant you eternal life as a son/daughter of God in glory. I do this in the name of Jesus Christ, that is by the authority of the name of Jesus Christ—AMEN!

I know this says an awful lot and it may be a little wordy, but in going through and trying to think this through—How can we best define to a new

'baptism' exactly what it is that they are doing? To add to it

After baptizing the person, the one doing the baptizing should lay hands on the head of the individual and pray for the begetting of the Holy Spirit and commend them into the hands of Jesus Christ and God the Father—AMEN! To finalize the baptism, the one doing the baptism should look the newly baptized person in the eyes, and say "On the authority of Jesus Christ your sins have been forgiven!"

Then you can lay hands on the person right while you're standing in the water—if it's not up in the Arctic or someplace where it's too cold—and pray for them right there. When you do, that should be a prayer from the heart, whomever is doing the baptizing, because you know enough about the individual so that it is a personal and meaningful prayer.

In going through these, if there's any experience that I've had, it's this: When we get something finished to a certain point, it's always used, whether we buy a piece of equipment or as with *The Christian Passover* book and getting it done or with *Lord, What Should I Do?* Having the baptismal ceremony thing, that's important and I think this will really help.

MARRIAGE—WEDDING

Then having the wedding ceremony—really quite a thing. With the wedding ceremony you don't want anything to go wrong. Everybody is nervous! What I did, the last wedding I had, I took and put in a little binder and I entitled it: *Our Sacred Wedding Ceremony*. I put their names on the front of it and put the whole ceremony in it with the certificate in the back and had them sign it and the best man and bridesmaid and so forth and gave it to them with this instruction. I went over it first and gave them a copy of it first. I said, 'What I want you to do when the going gets tough and when you have your first fight—which you probably will—go ahead and get this out and go over it again and understand that this is what you want to do.

As I go through this we can view it from several points of view:

- If you are married, use it as something to strengthen your marriage; your own dedication
- If you are not married, use it as something to look forward to when you do get married
- If you are widowed or whatever, let's all look at it from this point of view: of what it's going to be like when we're

resurrected and meet Christ in the air and there's going to be the wedding of Christ and the Church.

(go to the next track)

I like weddings. Weddings are my favorite thing. When I was asked to perform a wedding, I again looked at the old outline—remembered it—and I said we need to change these things and emphasize what's in the Scriptures.

This will be mostly just going through and reading the words together and make some comments as we go along. Just take it from the point of view of what it's going to be like when we are on the Sea of Glass and the Church is married to Christ.

I will have to say that it's very possible that God the Father Who will be the One Who will marry us. Stephen could look up and behold Christ standing at the right hand of the throne of God, then we can be sure that God the Father is going to come down for the most important event up to that time in history—the marriage of the Church and Christ.

This is a happy and joyous occasion. Marriage is a natural union but a Divine institution ordained at creation by Almighty God.

This intimate love relationship was created by God Himself because GOD IS LOVE. Physically and spiritually the marriage estate portrays mankind's supreme destiny of ONENESS with God and His Family in His eternal kingdom forever.

Since Almighty God is the Supreme Sovereign Ruler and He is our Creator, therefore, it is only fitting and right that we use the laws and principles of God's Word as the fundamental authority which govern this sacred marriage covenant into which you are both now entering.

It is a covenant, and a covenant is an agreement unto death.

In the beginning after the Lord God had created Adam, He said, "It is not good for man to be alone, I will make a helper suitable and compatible for him." So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man and he slept; then the Lord took one of the man's ribs and from it He fashioned a woman and he brought her to the man.

The man said, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called 'woman' because she was taken out of man." For this cause shall a man leave

his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife and they shall become one flesh (Gen. 2:18, 21-24)

Then the Lord God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth."

Today, in the presence of these witnesses, we are asking the Lord God Almighty, in the name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ to bless this marriage with love, understanding, in faithfulness and dedication to each other knowing that marriage is honorable in everything.

Jesus upheld this honor by teaching. He Who created them in the beginning made them male and female and said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. Consequently, they shall no longer be two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together let no man separate" (Mk. 10:6-9).

Also, He said, "Whosoever divorces his wife, except for the cause of sexual infidelity and marries another, commits adultery. And if a woman divorces her husband, and is married to another, she commits adultery" (Matt. 5:32).

So, we see that it is God Who joins husband and wife together as one flesh. What God has bound, man is commanded by that authority not to separate. What God has bound only God can loose, as revealed in His Holy Word.

A marriage so bound and blessed by God is binding for life, for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, in want or in wealth, until death do they part.

Now, let's understand the New Testament instructions concerning the marriage estate:

Wives, submit yourself to your own husbands as unto the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the Head of the Church, which is His body; and He is the Savior, Deliverer and Provider of the body. In exactly the same manner as the Church is subject to Christ, even so let their wives be to their own husbands in everything in the marriage estate.

Husbands, LOVE your wives in exactly the same manner as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself up for her in order that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of the water through the Word of God; that He might place her beside Himself of the glorious, untarnished Church, not having a single spot or stain, wrinkle or blemish, or any such thing, but that she might be consecrated Holy and completely blameless.

In exactly the same manner, the husbands are duty-bound and under obligation to God to love their wives as their own bodies. The man who is loving his wife in this manner loves himself, because no one truly hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it exactly as the Lord does the Church.

For we are members of His very own body, of His very own flesh (through His crucifixion and all that means)...

Now, let me just stop here and let's turn to Ephesians, the fifth chapter, and let's look at that verse. The first time I read this, I had a very difficult time understanding this.

Ephesians 5:30: "For we are members of His body—... [We understand that. You're baptized into one spirit into one body—correct?] ...of His flesh... [It doesn't say spirit.] ...and of His bones." What does it mean, of *His flesh and of His bones*? How are we to understand that?

I've studied on that and thought on that and all of a sudden it dawned on me: What is the rib? *A bone!* So what this is telling us and why I gave this explanation here: We are members of His very own body, because they are to become one—the Church and Christ are to be one and one in the Father; of His very own flesh through the crucifixion and all that that means. It couldn't be possible without Jesus coming in the flesh and having died; and of His bones because the Church is a spiritual creation for the same reason that Adam's wife was created from his own rib, so also is a counterpart for Christ: the Church is created from His innermost being.

That was the best I could understand it, and I think that has a lot of meaning when you put it together that we are to be one.

This mystery is great, immense and supreme. For I am speaking concerning the relationship between Christ and the Church (the bride of Jesus Christ and their eternal destiny). However, let each one of you also be loving his own wife as himself and the

wife see that she reverence her husband (Eph. 5:22-33).

The Apostle Peter continues God's instructions, "In the same way, you wives be submissive to your own husbands.... from your heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quite spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. Thus did Sarah obey Abraham calling him 'lord.' And you have become her daughters if you do what is right.

Likewise, you husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, and grant her honor as a fellow-heir of the grace of life so that your prayers may not be hindered" (1-Pet. 3:1-7).

Your Sacred Marriage Covenant:

We are here today in the presence of God, coming before His very throne in heaven above and we're asking God to join you as husband and wife. Therefore, in accordance with God's Word, each of you should solemnly promise before God, in the presence of these witnesses to accept the sacred marriage covenant according to the conditions set forth and imposed by Almighty God as revealed in His Holy Word.

Do you (his first name) enter into covenant with God in the presence of these witnesses, to take (bride's full name) to be your lawful wedded wife unto death; and as the Scriptures command, for better or for worse, in sickness or in health, in want or in wealth, to cleave to her, to love her, as Christ loves the Church, to honor her and cherish her and provide for her?

I Do!

In going over it before the actual ceremony I tell them to wait until the dollars come up—*provide for her*. Because in the end-run it's going to cost you!

Now then, do you (her first name) enter into covenant with God...

What it is, it's not a marriage of the state. It's not a marriage of the Church. It is a marriage before God! If more people understood that when they're entering into it, that it's a covenant, then it would help them over the rougher times, because they're not looking for the escape hatch to get out some way.

You can have that. Someone will say, 'I'm looking for an escape hatch. I'm kind of bored at

home here, I think I'll do the tour of the local discos around here. You know sure enough it's about over at that point. But if you have it so that it's this way, you're making a covenant. A covenant is something you do or you die. There's no in-between. There's no getting out of a covenant. That's why Christ died.

...in the presence of these witnesses to take (his full name) to be your lawful wedded husband, until death, as the Scriptures command, for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, in want or in wealth, and to submit yourself to him as unto the Lord in everything in the marriage estate as the Church does to Christ, and to honor and reverence him?

I do!

Since we're asking God to join you as husband and wife, and praying for His binding and blessing of this marriage, it is appropriate to follow the Biblical example of laying on of hands to set you apart for this sacred covenant.

So then, I will now join your right hands for the laying on of my hands on their right hands and with the laying on of my hands, we will ask God to join you as husband and wife.

Let us kneel.

(special prayer blessing the marriage)

This is why it's very important for any elder who is performing a wedding, that you get to know them so that you can have your heart into the prayer. Not just a mechanical thing. This is something to where we need to feel the presence of God with His Spirit. We need to have honor and beauty with the words of God, we need to honor them who are being married to have a prayer from the heart that is going to be special.

Also, there are many people there, there are cameras going, there are videos going and they want to take this home and remember it for the rest of their lives as it were. When that is done,

Presentation of the rings,

You may kiss the bride!

By the authority vested in me as a minister of Jesus Christ, in the name of Jesus Christ I now pronounce you husband and wife.

Then there's the marriage certificate that we have.

FUNERALS

As I mentioned before, these should be adjusted to the circumstances. I'm real happy that you asked me to do something for it, because I've

had this in mind to do something and this is something I've thought on.

One night I was watching Discovery Channel—that's about the only thing left, everything else is bore! You've got all the sports, sweat, blood and all the vanity that goes with that.

The Discovery Channel showed this herd of elephants. They're supposed to be one of the most intelligent animals on earth, which they undoubtedly are. One of their own dies and they don't know what to do. They come over and smell it, and kind of rub the paw on it and don't know what to do. They kind of look around and if something disturbs them they give their trumpet call and get all mad and sooner or later they just walk away. Human beings are the only ones that gather together when someone has died.

When you have a funeral you have the name of the deceased, the obituary, eulogy for the deceased can be presented by friends or relatives of the deceased, depending on their wishes.

The Memorial:

This service is unique occasion. Of all the creatures which God has created, only human beings assemble together to honor their dead and to give a remembrance of a loved one who has died. Also, we all know that just as there is life, death is also a reality of life.

Because death is so final, grief fills our hearts over the loss of a loved one, regardless of the circumstances of its occurrence. Death brings us face-to-face with the reality that human life is temporary. With death, we are confronted with the ultimate weakness of human beings. The helplessness and futility that a life has come to an end and no human being of him or herself has the power to escape death or to overcome death, except our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, our Creator the Lord God has revealed in the Holy Scriptures that this physical life, which we now possess in the flesh, is temporary. As Moses wrote, "The days of our years are threescore and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore (Psa. 90:10), but as the Scriptures reveal, it has been give to all human beings to die once. "It is appointed unto men once to die.... For in Adam we all die" (Heb. 9:27; 1-Cor. 15:22).

After Adam and Eve had sinned, thereby bringing death to all their progeny—to all mankind in all ages—God said to Adam,

“For dust you are and unto dust you shall return” (Gen. 3:19). So we are all physical, we are all dust. Moreover, at the time of death, one’s “breath goes forth, he returns to the earth, to the dust, in that very day his thoughts perish” (Psa. 146:4).

In the face of death, all mankind has wondered and asked this question: Is there life after death? In the Scriptures we find that Job asked this same question: “If a man die shall he live again?” (Job 14:14). That is why death is such a mystery! No one, except Jesus Christ, has returned from the dead to eternal life.

Furthermore, the Scriptures teach us that death is an enemy. Yes, the last enemy to be destroyed through the power of the resurrection, as revealed in God’s great plan.

So then, the Scriptures reveal that there is life after death. And this life is in Christ Jesus—in Him and Him alone! Jesus Christ said, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.... I am the Resurrection and the Life” (John 14:6; 11:25).

Job understood this profound Truth of God, because he answered his own question: “If a man die shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time [in the grave] I will wait until my change come. You shall call and I shall answer You; You will have a desire of the work of Your hand” (Job 14:14-15).

Just as we all die in Adam, “Even so in Christ shall all be made alive [by the power of the resurrection]. But everyone in his own order” (1-Cor. 15:22-23).

God the Father has given the power and the authority of the resurrection to Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “Truly, truly I say to you, the hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that shall hear shall live. For as the Father has life in Himself, also has He given to the Son to have life in Himself. And He [the Father] has given Him [the Son] authority to execute judgment also because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the grave shall hear His voice. And they shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:25-29).

At this time the vast majority of people have not been called of God to receive the gift of eternal life. But in God’s great plan for all mankind as revealed in the Scripture, they will all be resurrected to be granted a calling to eternal life.

Moreover, God has made provision in His plan for all of those who have not been called in this life, and for all those who have died untimely deaths—in infancy, in accidents, in disaster or in disease—they shall be resurrected to a new life in the flesh. This new life in the flesh is revealed in the book of Ezekiel. “Therefore, prophesy and say unto them, thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, all My people, I will cause you come up out of your graves and you shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, oh My people, and brought you up out of your graves and put My Spirit in you and you shall live’” (Ezek. 37:11-14).

Because God is Love, He “...is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2-Pet. 3:9). And again, “Who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth” (1-Tim. 2:4). Therefore, God the Father in His great wisdom and profound love has provided that even if one dies without the knowledge of salvation, He will resurrect each person to a new life in the flesh. This is for all those whom He has not called at this time before the return of Jesus Christ.

So, there is hope—GREAT HOPE—for all mankind! God Himself will undo every evil, end every sorrow, conquer every death through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore, we can have great comfort in the Lord Jesus Christ and His love and in His plan for all of those who have died and have not been called to salvation in their lifetimes.

However, those who have been called during their lifetimes and have died in the faith—in Christ Jesus—will be raised to eternal life with eternal glory at His second coming! This is why Jesus Christ said, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life... and the Resurrection.” While we have our sins forgiven through the death and blood of Jesus Christ, the faithful in Christ who died “shall be saved by His life,” because He Himself was raised from the dead by the power of the Father.

“But now is Christ raised from the dead and become the Firstfruit of them that slept [in Christ Jesus]. For since by man came death [the Son of man] came also the resurrection from the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order. Christ the Firstfruit, afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming. Then comes the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, for He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. **The last enemy that shall be destroyed IS DEATH**” (1-Cor. 15:20-26).

The very reason for the resurrection of the dead is to destroy death—the last enemy. “So also is the resurrection of the dead. “It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body.

“As it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul. The last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy. The second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such as they also they that are earthy. As is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly. As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

“This I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. Neither does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and **WE SHALL BE CHANGED!**” (1-Cor. 15:42-52).

The Apostle John wrote that because of the love of God the Father, all those who are in Christ and die in the faith will be raised with a glorious spirit body. “Behold, what glorious love the Father has given to us that we should be called the children of God. Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that if He shall be revealed at His second coming, that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Everyone who has this hope in him

is purifying himself as He is pure” (1-John 3:1-2).

God wants us to rejoice in His revealed hope for the dead. We are not to be sorrowful and grieve. The Apostle Paul wrote: “I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep... [that is, those who have died] ...so that you be not grieved as the rest who have no hope. If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so also those who have fallen asleep in Jesus God will bring up again from the dead together with Him. For this we are telling you by the Word of the Lord that we who are living and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede them who have fallen asleep.

“Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a proclamation of command, with the voice of archangels and with the trumpet of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we also, who are still living, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds for the meeting of the Lord in the air, and we shall always be with the Lord. So then, encourage each other with these words” (1-Thess. 4:13-18).

As the Scriptures reveal to us, death and the corruption of the flesh will be overcome. “For it is necessary that this corruption put on incorruptibility, for this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruption shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying which has been written, ‘**DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY!**’” (1-Cor. 15:53-54).

Death will be destroyed! Death is the last enemy and it will be conquered. The ultimate love of God the Father will be clearly manifest. God the Father will give eternal life to all those who are in Christ Jesus His Son. He will accomplish it through the power of the resurrection, and by His profound love and grace for each one He calls.

As the Apostle Paul wrote: “For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ of Whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named. That He may give you according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; for Christ to dwell in your hearts through

faith; being rooted and grounded in love; may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height and to know the love of Christ which passes any human knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God, even to Him Who has the power above all things to do, exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power which is working in us. Now to Him be the glory and the Church in Christ Jesus into all the ages of eternity, Amen” (Eph. 3:14-21).

The Apostle John was given this vision of the coming new heaven and earth where the children of God will live forever with the Lord:

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away and there is no longer any sea. I John, saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men. Men made perfect through Jesus Christ. He shall tabernacle with them and they shall be His people and they God Himself shall be with them, even their own God. And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death shall be no longer, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor disease shall be there any longer, because the former things are passed away.’

“He Who is sitting on the throne said, ‘Write.’ Because these words are true and faithful and He said to me, ‘It is done! I am Alpha, Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, and I will give to the one who is thirsting from the fountain of the water of life freely. The one who overcomes shall inherit all things and I will be His God and he shall be My son” (Rev. 21:1-7).

Thus is fulfilled the plan of God as expressed in John 3:16, which says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever is believing on Him may not perish, but have everlasting life—Amen.”

Then give a closing prayer. If there is an internment at the grave site, then another short prayer should be given to commit the body into the grave and into the hands of God.

The other outline is for someone who has died in the faith.

I think it would be good that everybody who has the Spirit of God and affiliates with us, I think it would be nice if they all had that. Not that they would use it officially, but that they can have it. Then you consider that we have something that was never given to the Church members, which is the Passover Ceremony.

If we build these things up and if we develop the kind of studies and literature that is to up-build the brethren, that’s going to help them and inspire them and is going to do so in a complete way, I think that God will bless what we’re going to do.

The days of having salvation by pamphlet is over. Those can be thrown away and changed at the drop of a hat. Today, everybody, even the world, is sharp on every single word you say. They’ve been trained with that with the media and television and things like this. They’re being overwhelmed with knowledge from the world. We need to have things that are in depth.

I had one man call me and said, ‘I need all of your translations that you have done.’ I said, ‘You don’t know what you’re asking for, but I’ll tell you.

This is good, because then people can study. The whole purpose of someone teaching the brethren of God is so that they can have a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. It is not to glorify the minister or have a priesthood to exclude the knowledge of God and give you so much because that’s all you’re worthy of.

We need to teach and up-build the brethren, because God the Father has called them, and that’s plenty worthy enough—isn’t it? In that then we should all become teachers. How can a woman teach? That doesn’t mean she’s going to preach publicly, but can she not go through the Bible like Pricilla did and show this and that and the other thing and help other people? In that then we should all become teachers. How can a woman teach? That doesn’t mean she’s going to preach publicly, but can she not go through the Bible like Pricilla did and show this and that and the other thing and help other people? *Yes, without a doubt!* There’s no doubt!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

Baptism

- 1) John 4:1-2
- 2) John 6:44
- 3) Romans 2:4
- 4) Matthew 3:1-10

- 5) Luke 14:25-27
- 6) Romans 8:9
- 7) Luke 14:33
- 8) Matthew 10:32-39
- 9) Romans 6:1-16, 18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 1
- Psalm 51; 86
- Revelation 2; 3
- Hebrews 4:12
- Acts 8
- John 7
- Romans 5

Also referenced:

Booklet: *Baptismal Ceremony for The Christian
Biblical Church of God*

Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*

Marriage:

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 5:30; 22-33
- 2) 1 Peter 8:1-7

Also referenced: Booklet:

The Sacred Wedding Ceremony

Funeral:

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 90:10
- 2) Hebrews 9:27
- 3) 1 Corinthians 15:22
- 4) Genesis 3:19
- 5) Psalm 146:4
- 6) Job 14:14
- 7) John 14:6
- 8) John 11:25
- 9) Job 14:14-15
- 10) 1 Corinthians 15:22-23
- 11) John 5:25-29
- 12) Ezekiel 37:11-14
- 13) 2 Peter 3:9
- 14) 1 Timothy 2:4
- 15) Ephesians 3:14-21
- 16) Revelation 21:1-7

Also referenced: Booklet:

*The Funeral Ceremony for The Christian Biblical
Church of God*

Created Relationships

Fred R. Coulter

What does God really desire? *God desires an eternal spiritual relationship based upon love and the family structure!*

Let's go to the beginning and let's look at the creation of man; let's look at Adam and Eve for just a minute—and we'll look at it from a little bit different perspective. Let's understand some very important things that God did to have a relationship with mankind. Mankind is the one who chose not to have the relationship.

After God made all of the animals, created everything and made the environment—everything necessary for human habitation—then God said, Genesis 1:26: “And God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness...’ That's quite a blessing to be created in this particular way and in this particular fashion, as compared to all the animals and the rest of the creation. We'll just interject here the rest of the story—being the rest of the Bible from the beginning of God's plan to the end—that we will be *after the God kind*. If we're going to be after the God kind, then we have to have a relationship.

Too many things have gotten totally out of hand with human relationships and church relationship and relationships with God. People want to do it *their* way rather than God's way. Notice what God gave all of mankind. You think about this in type what is going to be in God giving the eternal inheritance to us who enter into the Kingdom of God. Here's what He gave mankind:

“...and let them have dominion over... [that is let them be structured over and to rule over] ...the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth” (v 26). God gave the whole earth as a wonderful present and blessing to all of mankind. We need to really understand what God did and how He desires this relationship. That's what God created. We are created to have a relationship with God. Keep that in mind.

Verse 27: “And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female. And God blessed them.... [God wanted us to be blessed so that we would develop in this relationship.] ...And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it... [God revealed in this, part of His plan; what He had in store for mankind.] ...and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves

upon the earth.’ And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree upon which *is the* fruit of a tree bearing seed—to you they shall be for food. And to every animal of the earth and to every fowl of heaven and to all the living creatures that crawl upon the earth, every green plant *is given* for food.’ And it was so” (vs 27-30). That's true today. Even today in eating meat, when we eat meat, we eat what the animal has eaten, which is grass or herbs or whatever it is.

Verse 31: “And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, *it was exceedingly* good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” In order to have this relationship with mankind, God created from the beginning the Sabbath Day. This was a day for a *special relationship day* where God would put His presence in the Day. It was literally so at the beginning. God put His presence in the Day, He blessed the Day, He sanctified the Day—that is to set it aside because in the sixth day—not the seventh day.

Genesis 2:2: “And by *the beginning of* the seventh day God finished His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it **He rested from all His work which God had created and made**” (vs 2-3). That is coming right up toward the beginning of the seventh day everything was done. God blessed the seventh day and that is part of the grace of God. The Sabbath is part of the created structure, which God has given for this relationship based upon grace, which He created from the beginning. In it He rested from all His work, which God created and made.

Now then, God “...formed man *of the* dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (v 7). God also put the two trees in the Garden of Eden: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (v 9). “And the LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden...” (v 15)—a perfect, wonderful place to live for *a relationship* with God.

God, after creating Adam, wanted him to know and understand that being created he was to obey. But this was not a hierarchical thing that God did, it was a *created relationship* and all created relationships from God require obedience. In this created relationship there are responsibilities. So, God said Adam was to “...dress and keep...” (v 15) the garden. He also told Adam that he could have the

freedom of eating all the trees of the garden except the one, v 17: “But you shall not eat of the tree of *the* knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat of it in dying you shall surely die.” Because this tree—in the eating of this—would destroy that relationship that God wanted to have, that God created to be. Let’s also understand, this is part of the covenant that God had with Adam.

- there were laws
- there were commandments
- there was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which God said you shall not eat thereof

Also, we understand with this thing that Adam didn’t die instantly, but we know from the book of Romans, chapter five, that when they ate of it, the *law of sin and death* was imputed to them as part of the judgment because of the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We’re going to understand why. What happened with Lucifer? *When he fell, he broke that created relationship with God.* He wanted to become something that he was not, should not and could not be.

Likewise, man is given the choice whether he will follow in that relationship with God or not. In the beginning Adam and Eve were neither mortal nor immortal; they were in-between. They were not subject unto death until they ate of the tree.

Let’s come back and read the rest of the story, v 18: “And the LORD God said, ‘*It is* not good that the man should be alone. I will make a helper compatible for him.’... [In order to bring this point home, God did this]: ...And out of the ground the LORD God *had* formed every animal of the field and every fowl of the air—and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them....” (vs 18-19) In this relationship, in order to have the relationship, God not only created the man, but gave him a language, gave him a mind, intelligence and understanding. So, when He brought the animals by for Adam to name, He was teaching two things:

1. to name them
2. that there was nothing in all the creation for him that was compatible and suitable for him

Before God made Eve He brought home this important lesson to Adam so that Adam would understand that in order to be complete he had to have a woman, a wife, to have that relationship.

“...And whatever Adam called *each* living creature, that *became* its name. And Adam gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field, but there was not found a helper compatible for Adam. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall over Adam, and he

slept. And He took one of his ribs, and *afterward* closed up the flesh underneath. Then the LORD God made... [*built* in the Hebrew] ...the rib (which He had taken out of the man) into a woman and He brought her to the man” (vs 19-22).

God was teaching another lesson in relationships. This lesson is—this is true—this is a *created relationship*. It is not a hierarchy. It’s not superiority/inferiority. It is a *created relationship* that God intended from the very beginning.

Verse 23: “And Adam said, ‘This *is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. *She* shall be called Woman because *she* was taken out of Man.’ For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother... [one relationship] ...and shall cleave to his wife... [that’s another personal relationship] ...—and they shall become one flesh” (vs 23-24). That’s what God wants it to be for us. We’re going to see that the ultimate that God wants is for it to be *one spirit*. This is a *created relationship*.

God made the woman the ‘weaker’ vessel. That is also a *created reality* of life—we need to understand that. God did not make women inferior. He made them in the *created relationship* to be subject to their husbands. That’s the way God has designed it. You can argue all you want, but that’s exactly what God has done and that’s what God expects.

Out of the husband and wife relationship—or the man and wife relationship—then there were to be children born. That likewise is a *created relationship*. It is not a hierarchy. It is a created relationship, which is supposed to be based on love, and the children are born as a result of that love. There is to be care. There is to be concern. This is important to really understand and grasp in the whole understanding of the relationship that God wants with us today, and wants with us through all eternity. And what we are going to teach the people when we are kings and priests in the Millennium, we are going to have that kind of relationship with them in a very open way, like God intended to have with Adam and Eve at the beginning. In the beginning God was in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve.

When they sinned, we saw, they had to be put out. We saw what that sin did. Then we have also a removal from God, which then severs that relationship or distances that relationship. Then when Cain and Abel were born, there was another *created relationship*. Each of them had a responsibility to God as well as to mother and father. That is also a *created relationship*, which God intended.

Then we saw a breaking and severing of that *created relationship* because Cain did not want to obey God and follow Him and do what God wanted. He wanted to do his own way and his own thing. Abel, on

the other hand, wanted to love God and serve Him and he did what God wanted. Cain killed Abel and that, again, severed another relationship—the *brotherly relationship*. We're going to understand that that's part of the problem that we have in the world today. And, yes, that's the deep problem that we also have in the Church of God today, brethren. We're going to see that what God is laying upon us is a great and tremendous responsibility, because of the relationship that He wants with us.

God created man and woman; He created the Sabbath Day; He told them to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. He had to remove them one step because of sin. Then because of further sin, Cain had to be removed yet another step and put into the land of wandering. Yet, God was still on the earth and those who had a relationship with Him were the patriarchs listed here in Gen. 5. Because man broke that relationship totally, corrupted God's way, became evil and gave themselves over to Satan the devil, and Satan the devil was the one who broke that relationship with God by going against the *created structure* that God made. This is something that we need to understand.

The whole world followed Satan the devil and destroyed all relationships with all human beings and the whole world was wicked and evil and corrupt and the earth was filled with violence and God destroyed it. And except it were that Noah found grace in the sight of God, we wouldn't be here today. When we come to the other side of the Flood, there is another further removal of God. God no longer is on the earth in a permanent place in the Garden of Eden. God is now part of the time in heaven and part of the time on earth, and reveals Himself only to whom He wills.

We come to Genesis 12 and God calls Abraham. Abraham went through all the things to understand the personal relationship with God. God loved Abraham and Abraham loved God, and Abraham was called 'a friend of God.' The ultimate test of that relationship—that He had with Abraham and Isaac—was a type of what God the Father was going to do with Jesus Christ. There would be the love, the obedience, the worship of God to the point of death. That's what Jesus Christ was going to do.

You know the story: God told Abraham, 'You take your son, your only son—your beloved son whom you love—and you take him to one of the mountains of Moriah that I tell you and you offer him there for an offering. Abraham did, and Isaac did. They went and the offering took place, and God supernaturally provided the ram 'caught in the thicket' for the alternate sacrifice.

The whole lesson and the whole story was because the relationship between Abraham and God was so great and was so strong that Abraham *believed*

God. It was 'counted to him for righteousness' and he *obeyed* God. Therefore, the plan of God then was sealed in that relationship between Abraham, Isaac and later in Jacob and on down to our time.

Let's go to James, the second chapter, and let's understand something. This is what we need to realize, not only in the lives of the patriarchs but also in our own lives, and also in the relationship with one another that God has brought us into. God has brought us into a *created relationship* within the Church. It is not a relationship which we have done, but a relationship which *God* has done.

I want you to understand how serious and how desperate the condition of the Church is today, because of breaking that relationship in so many different ways.

- By superimposing upon the Church a hierarchical system.
- By superimposing upon the family a hierarchical system and calling it a hierarchy, which it is not.

It is a *created relationship* based upon love and based upon obedience to God and to each other. That's why there's the love of God, the love of neighbor and the love of family.

James 2:23: "And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Now, Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness'; and he was called a friend of God." Jesus calls us 'His friends, no longer servants.' Servant is a *structured* relationship which is not by creation. Being a friend of Christ, called of God the Father and having the Holy Spirit is a *created relationship*, which God has created. This is profound for us to grasp and understand. We need to change our whole, entire way of thinking in this understanding of God's relationship and our relationship with one another. This will help us solve many, many problems, once we really grasp it and understand it. Abraham was called 'a friend of God.'

Verse 24: "You see, then, that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." When we have this relationship with God, we must have the works of love and obedience to conform to that relationship.

That's a whole different view of understanding things than 'here's a law and you must do it.' It's the other way around: Here is God, here is your calling, here is what God expects you to do in love to Him and love to your neighbor and love to the brethren. Do you see how profoundly different that God's way really is?

Verse 25: "Now, in the same manner also, was not Rahab the harlot justified by works when, after receiving the messengers, she sent *them* out a

different way? For as the body without *the* spirit is dead, in the same way also, faith without works is dead” (vs 25-26)—and so is a relationship! A relationship without the works of love and service is also dead!

Let’s come to Hebrews, the eleventh chapter; this is important concerning the Feast of Tabernacles, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the offering of Isaac and so forth. That is very important that we understand this and realize why God gave the promises to Abraham and then subsequently to Isaac and Jacob. It was because of the relationship that they had.

Let’s come over to Hebrews 11:8: “By faith Abraham, being called *of God* to go out into the place which he would later receive for an inheritance, obeyed and went, not knowing where he was going.” That’s the way it is with the relationship with God. We trust Him *in faith* for everything, regardless of the circumstances around. God is always going to work it out, no question about it.

Verse 9: “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, like a foreigner, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the joint heirs of the same promise... [This has to do with the Feast of Tabernacles and our sojourn here now and what we are going to be doing in the Millennium, in the Kingdom of God.] ...for he was waiting for the city with *the* foundations of which God is *the* Architect and Builder” (vs 9-10). So, there would now be a place for that permanent relationship. That’s what it’s all about with New Jerusalem.

Verse 11: “By faith also Sarah herself received power to conceive seed, and gave birth *when* she was *well* beyond the childbearing age because she esteemed Him faithful Who had personally promised *her a son*. Because of this *faith*, there came into being from one *man*—and moreover, *one* who was *reproductively* dead—*descendants* as numerous as the stars in the heavens, and as countless as the sand on the seashore” (vs 11-12). That’s all projecting forward to the plan of God.

Verse 16: “But now, on the other hand, they are aspiring to a more excellent *country*—that is, a heavenly *one*....” In that heavenly Jerusalem there is going to be a profound, close relationship of love, understanding, obedience, cooperation, service, humility and all of those things coupled with glory and honor and riches and promise and wealth, and everything, brethren. You need to understand that comes through relationship with God!

That does not come through just a structured hierarchical thing, because God wants a spiritual relationship based on love and the family structure. That’s what God is producing! When we, as the

bride of Christ, deal with the people in the Millennium, that’s exactly the kind of relationship that we are going to have with them—a family relationship based upon love and the Spirit of God.

“...Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God because He has prepared a city for them.... [and Christ is preparing it right now] ...By faith Abraham, when he was being tried, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises offered up *his* only begotten *son*... [a type of Christ] ...of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac shall your Seed be called’; *because he* reckoned that God was able to raise him even from among *the* dead, from which he also received him in a figurative way” (vs 16-19).

His body was dead, reproductively speaking; Sarah’s body was dead, reproductively speaking, so, God performed a supernatural miracle! Abraham counted God, because of his relationship, as a friend. He was so close with God that he *knew* that if Isaac died, He would raise him from the dead. It would be as though he had never died. We need to understand that. This is the kind of relationship that God wants us to have with Him, to be a very *friend of God!*

Let’s look at the relationship God wanted to have with Israel. God did have a relationship with Israel, not as close as it was with Abraham, but nevertheless we need to look at this whole thing that God did with Israel in what is called the Old Covenant, that God desired a relationship with Israel.

Exodus 19:4—Moses went up on the mountain and this is the message that God gave him: “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles’ wings...” Just stop and think for just a minute, brethren, how absolutely carnal the response of the Israelites were, ***not believing God***

- after seeing all of these miracles
- after seeing the plagues brought upon Egypt
- after crossing the Red Sea
- after drinking water out of a rock
- after having manna given from heaven
- after quail given from heaven

—*and they still rebelled against God!* It was really something! That’s why it’s really important for us to understand. The Israelites never grasped the fact that God wanted a relationship with them.

Let’s see what God said He would do, v 5: “Now therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed...” Since God is the Creator, the creation is to always obey God. Don’t you believe that is true? Yet, even though He gives us free moral agency, He wants us to obey Him. What is the first commandment of all? *Here, O Israel, you shall love*

the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your mind, and with all your soul and with all your strength! That is a *relationship* commandment! We are going to see that, in fact, all the Ten Commandments are *relationship* commandments—how to keep and hold a relationship.

“...if you will obey My voice indeed and keep My covenant... [all aspects of it] ...then you shall be a special treasure to Me ... [in a special relationship] ...above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine” (v 5). God is saying, ‘Look, I have all the earth to give you.’ This is very similar to what He told Adam and Eve: ‘Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.’ He’s saying the same thing here to Israel.

Verse 6: “And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests... [in a special relationship] ...and a Holy nation.’.... [Above all the others, by a *created relationship* beginning with calling Abraham. Of course, God created Abraham and then supernaturally created Isaac. Then we have Jacob and all the descendants. That’s all by creation—isn’t it? Didn’t God create all of them? *Yes, He did!*] ...These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.” Moses came down, gave the message, people said, ‘All that the Lord has said we will do’ (vs 7-8). You know they had second thoughts of it a little later.

Here you examine the Ten Commandments from this light: Not only are we to obey them, but these are all designed to keep a pure and special relationship between God and His people.

- First one: *no other gods*
- Second one: *no idols and don’t worship them*
- Third one: *don’t take God’s name in vain*
- Fourth one: *remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy*, because that is the covenant day in which God is going to fellowship with His people, a special day from creation

Then God went on and said, ‘Okay, now I want you to be in a special relationship with your neighbor and here’s how to keep that relationship, beginning with the family:

- Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long on the land in which the Lord your God gives you.

That is one of the relationships that Satan likes to destroy. He likes to destroy the relationships any way he can:

- between God and the individual
- between husband and wife

- between children and mother and father

This is why God gave these, to preserve the *created* relationship, and it *is* a *created relationship!* It is not a hierarchical structure. Then He gives all the rest of the commandments:

- not kill
- don’t commit adultery
- don’t steal
- don’t bear false witness
- don’t covet

Then God also gave the statutes and judgments.

We come to Exodus 24, again all the people said, ‘All that the Lord has said, we will do.’ Then there was the offering of the covenant. The sacrifices were given and Moses sprinkled the book of the covenant, sprinkled the people and then Israel was married to God.

Immediately, right after that, Exodus 25:8, God said: “And let them make Me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them.” That God would have this special relationship with the children of Israel, all the way down through their generations. That’s what God desired to have.

You know the rest of the story. Let’s come over to Isaiah 54:5 and let’s see something very important we need to understand. The relationship with Israel was one that God intended to be based upon a marriage relationship, a *created relationship*. To show that this relationship was to be one without oppression, He did not desire them to have a king. It’s very important to understand that God gave them a system of judges. God would work through the judges and work with the people. Therefore, there was not great structure above the people—between the people and God.

When they sinned, yes, they would come to the priest. They would offer the sacrifice and so forth, but that was also just a facilitating thing by the priesthood in relationship to relationship with God, being married to Israel. That’s what God intended. When they sinned while Moses was on the mount, again they had to be further removed from that relationship. Somehow the children of Israel just didn’t want that relationship.

Isaiah 54:5: “For your Maker *is* your husband... [Just like God created Adam and Eve, God created Israel and married Israel.] ...the LORD of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer *is* the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called.” Not only does this have to do with Israel, but this has to do with spiritual Israel being the Church. God is creating a *spiritual relationship* now with the Church, which is going to be profound for

all eternity. In this relationship we need to learn now—today—during the Feast of Tabernacles and as we go on through the rest of the time until the return of Jesus Christ to maintain this relationship.

See how important this is? *This is why all of the things that God has done are profound!* Men come along and want a religion; they want a non-relationship with God; they want their 'religion and structure it the way they want to and take God's name and tag onto it and call it of God. It's not of God because they're not in a relationship with God, and they are not in a covenant relationship with God.

Israel was in a covenant relationship with God and God was their husband. Verse 6: “‘For the LORD has called you as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when you were rejected,’ says your God. ‘For a little moment I forsook you...’” (vs 6-7). That's how God looks at it when He turns His back on Israel, a small moment.

Let's see what Israel did, Ezekiel 16. Here's what breaks the relationship. Just like in a marriage of physical people, fornication and adultery breaks that relationship, because that relationship, as we saw, 'they two shall become one flesh.' Sexual immorality, fornication, homosexuality and all of that **breaks that relationship** of one flesh—the two becoming one. This is why homosexuality is such an abomination to God, because it's going contrary to the *created relationship* between man and woman that God ordained.

- He ordained it be in love.
- He ordained it that man is the head.
- He ordained it with male and female the way that God has designed it; that they become one flesh.

And we're going to see is a great 'mystery' with the Church! Paul wrote about that and that's all a part of what we're going to be doing when we're spirit beings in the Millennium.

What I want you to do, instead of thinking of it as Israel alone, think of it as about yourself and God calling you. It won't be exactly the same, but nevertheless God had to reach down and call you and bring you out of this world and bring you to Him and lead you to repentance and grant you His Holy Spirit. He established this relationship with you and then we need to ask: What are we doing with this relationship from here on.

Ezekiel 16:1: “Again the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations. and say, “Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem, ‘Your origin and your birth is of the land of Canaan. Your father was an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite. And *as for your*

birth, in the day you were born your navel *cord* was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you. And you were not salted, nor swaddled at all’”” (vs 1-4). In other words, just a reject.

Brethren, let's understand something: God has not called us because we are the strong of the world. God has not called us because we're the intelligent or the wise, or the elite, or part of the establishment. NO! God has called us because we're weak, because we're foolish, because God is going to confound the world by converting us and changing us. Spiritually speaking, we were in the same condition.

Verse 5: “‘No eye pitied you, to do any of these for you, to have compassion on you. But you were thrown out into the open field because your life was despised in the day that you were born.’” The Israelites were rejected—weren't they? Taken into slavery—weren't they?—by the Egyptians. *Yes!* They were born a nation in one day, when they came out in the exodus.

Verse 6: “‘And when I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you in your blood “Live!”... [That's what He's telling us today—LIVE! Live a physical life, and a spiritual life is ahead at the resurrection.] ...Yea, I said to you in your blood, “Live!”” It's the same way with us. In blood means that *you're in your sins*, spiritually speaking. You have to have that cleansed with the blood of Christ.

Verse 7: “I have caused you to multiply like the growth of the field, and you increased and grew up, and became exceedingly beautiful; *Your* breasts are formed, and your hair is grown, yet you *were* naked and bare. And I passed by you and looked on you, and, behold, your time *was* the time of love. And I spread my skirt over you and covered your nakedness....” (vs 7-8).

He married Israel, just like in Isa. 54. In Exo. 24 when they said, 'Yes, all that the Lord has said, we will do.' Sounds very much like the covenant of a wedding—doesn't it. Do you faithfully promise to love and obey and cleave and cherish? *Yes, I do!* Do you faithfully promise to submit unto your husband as unto the Lord? *Yes, I do!* That's what Israel said: *Yes, I will!* God said, *'I will.'*

“‘...And I swore to you and entered into a covenant with you,’ says the Lord GOD....” (v 8). Brethren, we've entered into a covenant with God! And we've entered into a covenant that only two things are going to happen to us:

1. enter into the Kingdom of God
2. go into the Lake of Fire

One of the two! And if we don't understand the

relationship that we need to have with God, then we're also going to diminish the reward that God has for us. God wants to give us great rewards. God wants to give us great blessings. But somehow our carnal nature is there and, 'Oh, no, we don't want to do this. God is just interested in thumbing down women.' Women say, 'I've got to have control of the man' and all that sort of thing. *NONESENSE!*

Put all that aside; that's the carnality of the world! That's not what God ever intended at all! That's not what God intended with Israel. Look at what God did to Israel. Look how much God *put up with* with Israel. I tell you one thing, God is not going to put up much longer with the Church of God and with the people of God and the way that they're going and doing in destroying each other and destroying relationship with God, having doctrines and teachings which take them away from God. We're into some very difficult things here.

Verse 8: "...And I swore to you and entered into a covenant with you," says the Lord GOD. "And you became Mine. And I washed you with water... [We're going to see we are washed with the water by the Word.] ...I washed away your blood from you, and I anointed you with oil. I also clothed you *with* embroidered work, and I shod you *with* leather sandals...." (vs 8-10). If He did this physically for Israel, brethren, think what God is going to do spiritually for the Church.

Let's just stop right here and let's go to Malachi 3, and let's see what God is going to do. God is preparing right now the spiritual things that He's going to give to us at the resurrection that we are going to have all through the Millennium and increase beyond there through all eternity. God has called us to the greatest thing that there is. Let's start out with how people view God.

Malachi 3:13: "Your words have been all too strong against Me," says the LORD. "Yet you say, 'What have we spoken *so strongly* against You?' You have said, 'It is vain to serve God...'" (vs 13-14). How do people say it's vain to serve the Lord? *They do it very simply, by saying, 'The commandments of God are not important.'* They say it is a religion. They bring in all the ways of the world. They through out the Sabbath, the Holy Days. We've seen that happen in the Church of God.

Brethren, let me tell you something. I believe that a lot of the things that are happening in the world today—in the United States today—are a direct result of the abominable behavior of the Churches of God and their relationship with God—they're destroying it!

- Where is the Church?
- Where are the people?

- Where are the ministers?
- Where is Truth?
- Yea, where is the relationship?

All angry and hostile against God, casting away His commandments behind them! Forsaking the Sabbath! Forsaking the Holy Days, and saying how great and righteous and good 'we are.' Utterly destroying the relationship just exactly as Israel did!

(go to the next track)

Let's continue on here in Malachi 3:14: "You have said, 'It is vain to serve God; and, what profit is it that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?... [God doesn't want you to walk that way.] ...And now we *are* calling the arrogant blessed....'" (vs 14-15).

That's what has happened in the Church, they looked to the world and say, 'Oh, you're Sunday religion is fine and

- even though you reject the commandment of God
- even though you reject the Sabbath
- even though you reject the Holy Days
- even though you reject clean and unclean meats

—we call you happy. Can we join you?

"...Yea, they that work wickedness are built up, they even tempt God, and are delivered.'.... [by Satan and this world; not by God for an eternal relationship] ...Then those fearing the LORD spoke together, *each* man to his neighbor. And the LORD listened and heard. And a book of Remembrance was written before Him for those who feared the LORD, and for those who thought upon His name.'" (vs 15-16). God is writing down. 'According to your works you shall receive your reward.'

Verse 17: "And they [that fear (*KJV*)—this fear means *loving awe and adoration* of the Lord] ...shall be Mine,' says the LORD of hosts, 'in the day that I will make up My own special jewels.... [God is making a crown of jewels for you today, and you're going to be part of that. This is all talking about the Millennium and your reward and your eternal destiny.] ...And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.'" You can refer right back to Abraham and Isaac. You can refer back to God the Father and Jesus Christ and raising Him from the dead and all of that.

Verse 18: "Then you shall return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between the one who serves God, and the one who does not serve Him."

I want you to understand that just as the

curses came upon Israel for sin, so are they coming upon the Church because of sin. Just as the blessings of God came upon Israel because of the covenant and what He gave them, so the blessings will come upon the Church and the eternal reward is going to be there, because it's based upon a covenant relationship. It's not based upon a structured hierarchy. We need to understand that. God has called us into a personal relationship with Him.

Ezekiel 16:11: “‘And I adorned you *with* ornaments, and I put bracelets upon your hands and a chain on your neck. And I put a ring on your nose, and earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head.... [we just saw about that crown] ...And you were adorned with gold and silver; and your clothing *was of* fine linen and silk and embroidered work. You ate fine flour and honey and oil; and you were exceedingly beautiful. And you advanced into a kingdom. And your name went out among the nations because of your beauty; for it *was* perfect My splendor, which I had put on you,’ says the Lord GOD” (vs 11-14). And the fullness of that was in the days of Solomon. The absolute fullness of the pinnacle of what God gave Israel! What did they do?

It was perfect through ‘My comeliness.’ In other words, God told them, ‘You are what you are because of what I did’; likewise with us today. We are what we are, and what we’re going to be, because of what God is doing.

“...which I had put on you,’ says the Lord GOD. ‘But you trusted in your beauty, and played the harlot because of your name, and poured out your fornications on all who passed by—on any who *would have* it. And you took from your clothes and adorned your high places with different colors, and played the harlot on them. Such things should not happen, nor should ever be!’” (vs 14-16). Destroyed the relationship between them and God. God had to punish them and send them off into captivity.

Not only did He have to put away Israel, but then Judah played the harlot and did even worse! Verse 44: “Behold, all who use proverbs shall use *this* proverb against you, saying, “As is the mother, *so is* her daughter.” You *are* your mother’s daughter, who despises her husband... [hated God] ...and her sons. And you *are* the sister of your sisters, who despise their husbands and their sons. Your mother *was* a Hittite, and your father an Amorite. And your older sister *is* Samaria, she and her daughters who dwell at your left hand. And your younger sister, who dwells at your right hand, *is* Sodom and her daughters” (vs 44-47). Sodom is Judah, and Judah did far worse!

Let’s see about a created relationship for a relationship that was established by choice. There

was a time when the two of Elohim were neither the Father nor the Son. In the day that Jesus was begotten in the womb of Mary then one of Elohim became the Son and other became the Father. We find a prophecy of this in Psa. 2. This is also a relationship and then we’re going to examine the relationship of Christ. Then we’ll examine the relationship of the Church and see what we need to be doing.

Psalm 2:7: “I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You.’” That’s the very day that the One of Elohim Who became Jesus Christ was impregnated in the womb of Mary. Then that established an entirely new relationship between the two of the Godhead. One now is the Father; one was the Son.

Let’s see how this developed, and let’s see how important this was, and what a profound thing that this was; what God told the angels to do when Jesus Christ was born. Jesus Christ then was to become the very image and glory of the Father, though He became a human being. And He became a human being so that God could establish a relationship with the other human beings that He called. God also, through this relationship of Jesus Christ, was sent to His own unto Judah and they rejected Him and they killed Him. They did worse than Israel.

Hebrews 1:2: “Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person... [After He was resurrected; but even while He was on the earth He told Philip, ‘If you’ve seen Me, you’ve seen the Father.’] ...and upholding all things by the word of His own power...” (vs 2-3). Because of the relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ. All these relationships are

- based upon love
- based upon belief
- based upon faith
- based upon trust
- based upon obedience

And we’ll see that relationship between Christ and the Father existed in that way.

“...upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself... [That’s why the relationship between you and Jesus Christ is so important] (because He, by Himself): ...purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any of* the angels...” (vs 3-4). Maybe you’ll understand why the rebellion of Satan the devil was so bad. He *rebelled* against the *created relationship* that God

had made. That's why no homosexual is going to be in the Kingdom of God unless they repent. They're rebelling against the *created relationship* that God made—male and female.

Verse 4: "Having been made so much greater than *any of* the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'?... [That's when the relationship became the Father and the Son—when Jesus Christ was begotten.] ...And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, 'Let all *the* angels of God worship Him'" (vs 4-6). And they did! All the angels praised God at the birth of Jesus Christ.

Let's go back and see a little bit more about this relationship that Jesus Christ wanted to have with those of Judea and eventually the whole world. Let's see what happened. We know that in the beginning of it 'was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God,' and the Word created everything. That's referring to Jesus Christ.

John 1:11: "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him." This does not mean just *to receive*. This means *to welcome* as in your bosom. This means they did not receive Him in the kind of relationship that God wanted them to be. They rejected Him and killed Him!

Verse 14: "And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us... [this is all a part of the Feast of Tabernacles. Christ did this to establish the profound relationship that He wants us to have with Him now. Let's see the relationship that He had with God the Father.] ...(and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth."

We've all received of His fullness and continue to do so. Let's look at this relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ. Let's come to John, the fifth chapter, and let's see that when you are in this special *created relationship*—which Christ was with the Father, through being made a human being, after He was God and divested Himself of God to become a human being, this created a special and a different relationship. This is the model and type for us.

John 5:19: "Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself, but only what He sees the Father do....'" That's very important for us to understand. That's very important in our relationship with God, that we want to do what God wants us to do. We don't want to do our will or our ways, but we want to do God's way. To love God

and to do it with all our heart, mind, soul and being.

"...For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son..." (vs 19-20). The Father is loving—present tense participle—the Son on an ongoing basis. They had a relationship based upon love. This is the relationship that God wants us to have with Him and the Son, based upon love. This is the relationship that God wants us to have in our marriages, with the husband the head and the wife the helpmeet, based upon love.

"...and shows Him everything... [If you love God, God also is going to show all things and do all things for you—is He not? *Yes, He is!*] ...that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder" (v 20).

Verse 30: "I have no power to do anything of Myself..." Let's understand something, that that's very profound and realize as far as human beings go, because *we have nothing we didn't receive*; everything we do has to come from God. If it all comes from God then why do we act as though we have something that didn't come from God? Everything we have comes from God,

our life—physical:

- every physical thing in the world because of God's creation
- every physical thing that we have because of God's blessing

spiritual:

- with the Spirit of God because of God's calling
- the forgiveness of sin because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

Why then should we be pretentious and presumptuous to go out and do things that God doesn't want us to do. Jesus didn't do that, because He had this relationship with God the Father. Should we not also have that same relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ? *Yes!*

He says, v 30: "...but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me." So, God expects us to have that kind of great and wonderful and loving relationship.

Let's see how we are to live based upon this relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ Who are now one, and based upon our relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father.

John 6:57: "As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me." That is the covenant, brethren, that we have made.

- that we will live by Him
- that we will walk in newness of life

We have pledged our death in a covenantal baptism to so do. There it is right there.

John 12:48 is especially true for anyone who is going to be teaching, a minister. People send me tapes all the time, and I listen to them and there are so many false ministers out there who sound so good and use the Scriptures in a very clever way, yet, they don't understand the Bible, they don't understand the Scriptures, and they are not preaching the Truth. they are only using and manipulating the Truth of God to their own end. That's just the way that it is.

Here it tells us what Jesus did, and everyone who presumes to name the name of Christ in teaching ought to do. John 12:48: "The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken from Myself..." (vs 48-49). These words in the Bible, brethren, are from God the Father! Are we going to take lightly what God the Father inspired to be in the Bible? Remember what we covered about how profound the Word of God is, how great the Word of God is.

Do you think anyone is going to receive eternal life that is going to reject the words of Christ, that is going to deceitfully handle it and deceitfully teach it, use and manipulate? *Of course not! They won't be there!* They'll be part of Matt. 7:21: 'Lord, Lord, haven't we don't this and haven't we done that and haven't we done the other things?' And Christ is going to say, 'I never knew you.'

Verse 49: "For I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me." (vs 49-50).

Brethren, let that so be with anyone who pretends to name the Word of God. Even if God didn't send you, if you preach the Word of God, He would still honor that. But don't presume upon yourself to be a teacher, because the teacher is going to receive the greater judgment, and we're going to see that being executed all along now as we go down the road—no doubt about it!

Let's understand the relationship that God wanted us to have, John 13:1: "Now before the Feast of the Passover, knowing that His time had come to depart from this world to the Father, Jesus, having loved His own who *were* in the world, loved them to *the* end." Brethren, I want you to take the verse, 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only

begotten Son that whosoever... [I want you to put your name there, that YOU, that He died for YOU] ...that you might believe on Him and have everlasting life.' God loves YOU! God wants a relationship based on love with YOU! That's the only eternal relationship that is going to bring us into the Kingdom of God—please understand that!

Let's understand what God wants us to do and how we are to be with each other, John 14:3: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also."

Verse 15: "If you love Me... [It's based on a relationship. Relationship is based upon love, and there is obedience]: ...keep the commandments—namely, My commandments."

Verse 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me... [Again, a relationship, *a created relationship, a spiritually created relationship*. We are being created in the image of Christ—are we not? *Yes!* It's a *created relationship* that God is doing.] ...he will keep My Word..." This is not, 'I am God, you obey and this is a hierarchy and this is a man that I have put in charge and you obey him unto death. NO! NO! NO! And we're not going to do that when we rule and reign with Christ.

We are going to teach in love. We are going to say the same thing to those that are given under our charge that "... 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the Word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me'" (vs 23-24).

Verse 31_[transcriber's correction]: "Yet, *he comes* so that the world may know that I love the Father, and that I do exactly as the Father has commanded Me. Arise, let us go out." Because He loved the Father, He did what the Father said. It is a relationship!

Before the Feast I did two sermons on *Why God Hates Religion*. If you have that go back and review that and see that again. God wants us in a relationship with Him.

John 15:7: "If you dwell in Me... [dwelling in Christ. Christ in us and the Father in us now we abide and dwell.] ...and My words dwell in you..." You must have the words of God living in you. It is the *living* Word of God. This is what we're going to teach the people in the Millennium. We're going to teach them the same exact relationship.

"...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you. In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be

My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love” (vs 7-9). It’s a relationship, *a created spiritual relationship!*

That’s what’s so important. The Church is not like a church of anything like it is in the world. The Church is the gathering together of the called out ones of Jesus Christ to have a *brotherly fellowship* and a *brotherly relationship* based upon loving God and loving each other. That is profound, brethren, and we need to understand that. We need to understand that men and circumstances and Satan has come in to divide, to conquer, to slice, to kill and destroy that love, and to do away with that relationship.

What you need to do is get on your knees and go to God and repent and ask God to help re-establish that relationship with you:

- let His love come to you
- let His Spirit come to you
- let His Word come to you
- let that relationship be developed

Then let’s also understand why the Sabbath Day is so important. The Sabbath Day is a day when we fellowship with God the Father and we each other because of this *created relationship* that God has made. That puts a whole different perspective on everything—doesn’t it? *Yes, it does!*

“As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love... [because it’s an ever ongoing thing] ...just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love. These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you... [because of the relationship] ...and *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you” (vs 9-12).

Brethren, I want you to use that as a theme for this coming year. Let all the fellowship groups, let each other, let husband and wife, let children and fathers and mothers understand this, and begin to develop the love that they need to have instead of all the carnal competition and stupidity that is brought in from the world. Let’s see if we can change that and really understand it in a greater, greater way.

Verse 13: “No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends. **You are My friends**... [that is a relationship; *a created relationship* because of God’s calling] ...if you do whatever I command you.”

Now, let’s go a little bit further. This relationship is so great, it is profound and it is so personal, and it is a personal thing between you and Jesus Christ and God the Father. Our relationship as

brethren is a personal thing. That’s why we need to love each other and set aside all the carnal stupidity and things that we have experienced and gone through.

- Can there be a group of people somewhere on the earth that love God and love each other?
- Can there be a group of people who want to serve God and love Him with all their heart, mind, soul and being?
- Can there be a group of people who will respond to the love of God?

John 16:26: “In that day, you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you... [In other words, God the Father Himself is going to answer that prayer.] ...because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God” (vs 26-27). That’s profound, brethren. We need to understand it.

Let’s come to Ephesians and let’s see some important thing that we need to grasp as we have never grasped before. To understand as we have never understood before.

Ephesians 2:8: “For by grace you have been saved...” Because of God’s love and grace is the foundation of the relationship that we have with God. That foundation of the relationship is so great, brethren, that God the Father will impute and give to you the equivalent righteousness of Jesus Christ Who never sinned! God wants that relationship. That’s how great the grace of God is.

“...through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God... [So there can be a profound relationship that we know that God loves us and we love God.] ...not of works, so that no one may boast.... [of anything that a man can do] ...For we are His workmanship...” (vs 8-10).

God is working! God is creating in us, developing that relationship and developing that character that He wants us to have. This is profound, brethren! I want you to understand that God is working in you. I want you to realize that all of those that have the Spirit of God, please stir up the Spirit of God as Paul said. Let that relationship be established. Let it be maintained. Understand that this is the most precious and greatest thing in your entire life.

Verse 10: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them.”

Let’s see what God has done to provide this

relationship. Let's see what He's done to make it possible. Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ." Brethren, He's going to give us all the spiritual blessings that be. **Think on that!** Because of a relationship! Because God has called you!

Verse 4: "According as He has personally chosen us for Himself... [that's why it's a personal relationship. God the Father Himself called you! God the Father led you to repentance. Jesus Christ is the sacrifice. God the Father and Jesus Christ together, with the Holy Spirit, are in you as it was there in John 14.] ...before *the* foundation of *the* world... [that was God's plan] ...in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love." That is a relationship.

Verse 5: "Having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ..."—which then is a *family relationship*. When we rule and reign with Jesus Christ, it's going to be a *family relationship*. It's going to be very similar to what the judges were in Israel.

- We're going to be on the sidelines teaching and helping the people.
- We're going to be judging them.
- We're going to be loving them.
- We're going to be serving them.
- We're going to be teaching them about the relationship of God the Father and Jesus Christ with us.

They're going to have a relationship with us, and we are going to teach them that relationship of the family, husband and wife, father and mother, children. The whole world is going to be changed in a new relationship with God.

Verse 5: "Having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ according to the good pleasure of His own will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*" (vs 5-6). Accepted in this relationship.

Verse 7: "In Whom we have redemption... [We had no relationship before we were called, and we were redeemed]: ...through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence; having made known to us the mystery of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself" (vs 7-9). That is, brethren, that you would have a relationship with Him.

Let's see the comparison between the husband/wife relationship and the Church. Let's

understand how profound this is and how we need to be using this, developing this, looking to it. I want you husbands to ask yourself: Are you serving your wife this way? And you wives: Are you submitting to your husband in the way that God says? Ask yourself and begin right here with this.

Ephesians 5:22: "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord... [What does that mean? Exactly what it says: **as unto the Lord!**] ...for the husband is *the* head of the wife... [by creation] ...even as Christ *is the* Head of the Church... [by creation] ...and He is *the* Savior of the body" (vs 22-23).

So, the husband is to have a sacrificial love toward his wife and family. If you have that kind of submission to your husband in loving him, and that kind of love from the husband to the wife and not to put down, not to control, and not to ridicule, but to love and to serve, I tell you what, many of your problems will just evaporate. Why have competition and hatred within the family one toward another. That's going against God!

Verse 24: "For even as the Church is subject to Christ, in the same way also *let* wives be *subject* to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and **gave Himself for it**" (vs 24-25). Are you doing that, husbands, in that way? Are you serving and loving? *or* Are you nasty and cantankerous and an oppressive dictator?

I heard a minister give a sermon that a marriage is a hierarchy. NO! It's not a hierarchy! It is a *created relationship!* Neither is it a partnership. It is a *created relationship!*

"...and gave Himself for it so that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with the washing of water by *the* Word; that He might present it to Himself *as the* glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame" (vs 25-27).

That is looking toward the perfect relationship. The bride and Christ are going to work down through the Millennium in this relationship and teach the whole world the same relationship. When we understand why there's going to be the wicked at the end and they do what they do, maybe if you understand about this relationship, the way that it is, you'll understand why the wicked have to die.

Verse 28: "In the same way, husbands are duty-bound to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself; for no man has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord *does* the Church" (vs 28-29).

If you want to be rebellious then God has got to correct you and put you down. But if you love God, then God the Father and Christ are going to nourish you and cherish you and be in a loving relationship. He has to correct those who are out of the relationship with God. Please understand that.

Verse 30: “For we are members of His body—of His flesh and of His bones.” This refers back to the very creation of Eve from the rib of Adam, one of his bones. Meaning that Christ is creating us right out of the innermost part of His being—spiritually speaking. That we can have this eternal relationship as the Church being the wife and Christ as the husband forever and ever through all eternity, brethren.

- This is what it’s all about!
- This is what the Church needs!
- This is what the world needs!
 - ✓ The created relationship based upon the family structure as God has made it evident.

Verse 31: “For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall be one flesh.” God wants us to be *one spirit*. That’s why it’s so important. That’s why when the Millennium comes, the earth is going to be

- filled with the knowledge of God
- filled with the loved of God
- filled with the Truth of God

That this relationship can be for all people!

Verse 32: “This is a great mystery... [very hard for people to understand. The mystery is that it’s a *personal relationship!*] ...but I am speaking in respect to Christ and the Church.”

Let’s see that the Church being the bride is going to be married to Christ. Between Christ then and the Church we are going to bring children into the Kingdom of God and then Christ will fulfill that which is said of Him being the Everlasting Father. Till this point He has no children. We are all children of God the Father. But then Jesus Christ will have His own children brought in through His own wife, through the Church being the bride of Christ.

Revelation 19:7: “Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” That’s what we need to be doing now, making ourselves ready. Not fighting, arguing, squabbling and going against God and fighting each other and hating each other.

- Brethren, can we all stop that?
- Can we all agree with Christ and God

Father and love each other?

This is why as brethren we need to have that special love for each other. God loves us! Do you see how that knocks down a lot of barriers and gets rid of a lot of carnality when you understand that it is a *created relationship*?

Verse 8: “And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write: Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” (vs 8-9). It’s going to happen!

Let’s see what we’re going to do. This is what we’re going to do all through the Millennium. Revelation 22:17: “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’”

- We will show you the relationship.
- We will show you the love.
- We will show you the way of God.
- We will show you how you are to be one with us and one with God.

“...And let the one who thirsts come; and let the one who desires partake of the water of life freely” (v 17) That’s going to be our message.

There’s a special prayer that Jesus gave for the Church. It is a *relationship prayer*. It is something that we need to understand, that we can make ourselves ready as the bride. But in making ourselves ready it is Christ *in us* Who is doing it. That’s how it’s going to be through all the Millennium. This is very profound for us to understand. Jesus came and He finished the work which He had to do.

John 17:4: “I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work that You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed” (vs 4-5). God is going to give us that same glory. God the Father is going to give us the glory that we are going to see Jesus as He is. The glory that God has called us to is so great and so marvelous, brethren. He’s called us to the mission to redeem the world from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

- to bring the Millennium to the world
- to bring the Truth to the world
- to heal all sickness, all disease
- overcome every war and difficulty

because we have that relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. He said, ‘I pray not for the world, but I pray for them.’

Verse 20: “I do not pray for these only, but

also for those who shall believe in Me through their word... [That's us! Jesus Christ is praying for you! For all of those who have the Spirit of God, for this very thing]: ...**that they all may be one...**" (vs 20-21). In that relationship with God! See how beautiful and perfect and marvelous that that is going to be, brethren. We'll see on the Last Great Day when we understand about New Jerusalem, how perfect that that is going to be.

"...even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us... [In an eternal relationship forever and ever, brethren. I want you to understand that! I want you to grasp that! I want you to realize how important this is!] ...in order that the world may believe that You did send Me" (v 21). And we're going to help the world believe when Christ returns—aren't we?

Verse 22: "And I have given them the glory that You gave to Me... [Yes, if you have the Spirit of God you have been glorified to the extent that you have the Spirit of God! A marvelous thing, brethren.] ...in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one." In that eternal relationship forever and ever.

Verse 23: "I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one... [In that *eternal relationship*.] ...and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world. Righteous Father, the world has not known You; but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me. And I have made known Your name to them, and will make *it* known; so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (vs 23-26).

That, brethren, is the relationship that we are going to teach the world.

- May we learn it today?
- May we grow in that love today?
- May we serve and love each other and love God with all our heart, mind soul and being?

Love each other as Christ loved us. If we do that, brethren, then we will be able to bring to the whole world the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred. R. Coulter

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- 1) Genesis 1:26-31
- 2) Genesis 2:2-3, 7, 9, 15, 17-24
- 3) James 2:23-26
- 4) Hebrews 11:8-12, 16-19
- 5) Exodus 19:4-6
- 6) Exodus 25:8
- 7) Isaiah 54:5-7
- 8) Ezekiel 16:1-10
- 9) Malachi 3:13-18
- 10) Ezekiel 16:11-16, 44-47
- 11) Psalm 2:7
- 12) Hebrews 1:2-6
- 13) John 1:11, 14
- 14) John 5:19-20, 30
- 15) John 6:57
- 16) John 12:48-50
- 17) John 13:1
- 18) John 14:3, 15, 23-24, 31
- 19) John 15:7-13
- 20) John 16:26-27
- 21) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 22) Ephesians 1:3-9
- 23) Ephesians 5:22-32
- 24) Revelation 19:7-9
- 25) Revelation 22:17
- 26) John 17:4-5, 20-26

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- Matthew 7:21

Also referenced: Sermon Series:
Why God Hates Religion

Divorce or Not?

Fred R. Coulter

Today we live in a crazy, mixed-up world and so many different and strange things are happening, and it really causes a lot of problems. What I want to focus in on today is *to divorce or not*. It seems as though this whole world being plagued with divorces and weirdness and strangeness, even in the Churches of God. One of the largest Churches of God now is saying that you can divorce for almost any reason, as long as it's a legitimate reason. What do you mean 'legitimate reason'?

Let's go back to Luke 17 and let's see where Jesus was talking about this day; talking about this time where all of the strangeness and stupidity that human beings are doing is going on.

Luke 17:26: "Now as it was in the days of Noah, so also shall it be in the days of the Son of man.... [Just before He returns He describes them.] ...They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day *that* Noah went into the ark, and the Flood came and destroyed *them* all" (vs 26-27). Then He also talks about Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah and all the things that were going on there. We also know that Jesus called His generation 'an evil, a wicked and an adulterous generation.'

When you pick up the paper, you find some very strange things going on. Here is an article: When Couples Call it Quits: It talks about the different divorce situations that people go through. Here was a situation where there was a marriage that was ready to be divorced and the divorce lawyer took on this client because her husband now fancied himself as Elvis Presley and dressed up like Elvis Presley, looked like Elvis Presley and tried to walk and talk and sing like Elvis Presley. What are you going to do with this stupid show of vanity and nonsense?

Then there was one where a black man came and said, 'I need to have custody of my son.' But the problem was he was married to a white woman before, and since they divorced she married a white man and he's saying, 'Well, I've got to teach my son multiculturalism; how can he learn it by being half-black and living in a white family.' You've got that strangeness.

Then you have another one where in Los Angeles a woman went to consult an attorney about divorce and she wanted to know should she divorce her husband before or after the sex-change operation. You talk about weird and strange, that sure is there!

Then there was another one where it relates where there was a so-called 'amicable' divorce and everything was just peaceful and fine in divorcing and separating until they came down to this little treasure trove of a teacup. Then everything all started coming unglued at that point.

Then it goes on with some of the things concerning the different problems that they have in marriage and divorce. It brings up this:

More people are willing to dissolve their marriage as they would a business partnership.

Because there's no love, no commitment, 'no knowledge of God in the land.' Some of them try and have the situation where they downplay the emotional side. It seems that no matter how clean—from a divorce lawyer's point of view it looks like on paper—there are still emotions involved. It points out one of the things that really is a key into why there are so many divorces: it's the women's changing role. It says concerning that:

"The common order in the past was that the mother had custody and the father had visitation rights," said Judge Stewart. "Now there's a tendency to work out a co-parenting plan." That seems to be a workable solution say lawyers until one hooks up with a new lover, a new mate, then it all comes apart.

Now they have to where in marital relations women are ruling over men and it really gets to be quite a desperate and difficult situation. Divorces are also being instigated with more frequency by women because Satan likes to play upon the women.

- it's unfair
- your husband is cruel
- women's rights

and all this sort of thing going on.

Unlike women of past generations, they are less likely to tolerate unacceptable behavior in their husbands.

Of course, what is acceptable and not acceptable becomes another question. All the standards are being moved around and changed. It's kind of like 'button, button, where's the button' under the little walnut shells—guess where the button is and that's what the rules of marriage are.

As women become more educated or earn higher wages and become more prominent in the business world, they sometimes

outgrow the men that they married in their youth.

That's another whole problem. Marriage was not meant to be as an ecstatic 17 or 18-year-old all through your life. So, that becomes another problem.

Modern women are more apt to leave men who can't get past a drug or alcohol problem or couldn't remain faithful.

What is the reason for divorce? Can people in the Church divorce and remarry? *That all depends*, so let's see what the Bible says about it, and let's find out what it is to divorce or not. There are some people that say there should never ever be any divorce at all, that Christ will not sanction any divorce once a person is in the Church. Well, let's see if that may be true or not true.

Matthew 19:3: "Then the Pharisees came to Him and tempted Him, saying to Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?'" Because he's unhappy with her; she cooks a meal wrong; doesn't wash his laundry; because she challenges his authority; because she fights and picks at him all the time. Can a man put away his wife for *any* cause? We can ask today, can a woman put away her husband for *any* cause?

Verse 4: "But He answered them, saying, 'Have you not read that He Who made *them* from *the* beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause... [For the very fact of the creation of God] ...shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, **what God has joined together, let not man separate**'" (vs 4-6). That becomes a very important key. **What has God bound? If God has bound it, man is not to put it asunder or give divorce.**

Verse 7: "They said to Him, 'Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?'" Originally, even in the commands of Moses it was for uncleanness and that uncleanness was not any little mark or blemish or anything. It was uncleanness because of a sexual disease more than anything else.

Verse 8: "He said to them, 'Because of your hardheartedness, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.'" We will see that a lot of the problems that are happening within the Church today is because of the hardness of the heart of the individuals involved. Not because they may or may not have grounds for divorce—most of them don't.

There's even one Church of God that says if your mate leaves this Church of God and joins

another Church of God—which believes in Christ, believes all the same things that this Church of God does—because they're not in this corporate structure, therefore you can divorce the one in the other Church of God and marry someone in this Church. ***I tell you, that is causing people to live in adultery!*** That is not correct! That is absolutely wrong and completely intolerable and not according to the Word of God. You need to define what is a believer and a non-believer. It's not based if you're in this corporate structure or in another corporate structure. It is what is the Word of God! So, from the beginning God did not want there to be any divorce.

Verse 9: "And I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, **except it be for sexual immorality...**"—'pornea'—any sexual immorality whatsoever, even including adultery. Why was 'pornea' the word that was chosen here, used by Christ, or was preserved and written for us in Greek? *You couldn't say that you put them away just for adultery alone!* Even in that time there was homosexuality, bestiality, adultery and all of these things are wrapped up in the term 'pornea.'

To prove this to you, let's go to 1-Corinthians, the fifth chapter. There are some people who say that 'pornea' only means *sex before marriage*. That is not correct! Absolutely not correct! It can include it, but it's not restricted to that. Unfortunately the English word for *fornication* generally means *sex before marriage*. But the Greek word 'pornea' does not mean the same as the English word *fornication*.

Here we have a situation of incest in 1-Corinthians 5:1: "*It is commonly reported that there is sexual immorality* ['pornea'] among you, and such immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—*allowing* one to have *his own* father's wife."

It's called 'pornea' and it includes the act of both the male and the female—correct? *Yes!* The man was committing incest with his stepmother—called 'pornea.' She was committing incest with him—called 'pornea.' Her act was not called 'adultery' because it's sexual immorality. To restrict it just to the English meaning of *fornication* is not correct. It's completely incorrect.

Let's go back to Matt. 5 and let's see what else Jesus said about this. Since God is the One Who binds a marriage, who is the only one who can loose it? *God!* What is used to *loose* a marriage? *The very grounds that Jesus said would loose a marriage!*

Matthew 5:31—Jesus said: "It was also said *in ancient times*, 'Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.' But I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, except for the cause... [Here is the reason for divorce allowable by

God] ...of sexual immorality... [‘pornea’—which includes any immoral sexual act] ...causes her to commit adultery; and whoever shall marry her who has been divorced is committing adultery” (vs 31-32). That’s why Jesus said it was an evil, wicked and adulterous generation, because of what they were doing.

The only way a marriage can be loosed within the Church—we’re not talking about in the world, because the world, with the hardness of their heart and all of their morals and things that are so bad that they will divorce for any reason. We’re going focus in on what about it within the Church. How does God look at it? What is it that is something that God *looses*? It’s got to be the ground on what Christ said, and it has to embody ‘pornea’—not just for any reason at all, but for ‘pornea’ or sexual immorality.

- That does not include arguments.
- That does not include problems with finances.
- That does not include where you want to live.
- That does not include what kind of work that you have.

None of those are involved in ‘pornea.’

Let’s understand something also about marriage: ***Marriage is a legal and a binding contract, which is not loosed or bound necessarily because of love or the lack thereof.*** Many people say, you’ve got to have love to make a marriage binding. No, you have to have love to make a marriage work. A marriage is binding by God whether there is love or not, as long as it is entered into legally and

- there is accepting of one another
- there is co-habitation with one another
- there is living together as husband and wife

Nothing in the Bible says that if you don’t get along with your wife put her away. Nothing in the Bible that says if you don’t get along with your husband put him away. After all, what guarantee do you have that you’re going to get along with anybody in the marriage estate? Maybe the difficulties that you have are a result of problems in selecting a mate in the first place, but that doesn’t give grounds for divorce.

Let’s look and see how God even obeyed His own law in relationship to the covenant that He had with Israel. I tell you, if there was any cause to put away Israel, God had plenty of cause to put away Israel—didn’t He? What are some of the rules of Bible study? *What does it say! What does it not say! Etc.*

Romans 7:1: “Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law) that the law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?” This doesn’t say that you run your life by emotions and you can make legal decisions based on emotions. You cannot! Decisions of law are based on law, not emotions.

I think there would be a whole lot more people much more willing to work things out and get along if they understood that they were bound by God, and they don’t have an excuse, a reason, to divorce, and before God they need to work out their problems. Divorce is not the solution! You are bound by the Law of God. What is the Law of God? *Spiritual! Holy! Just!* Isn’t it? *Yes!* That’s what He says (Rom. 7:12_[transcriber’s correction]).

Verse 2: “For the woman who is married is bound by law to the husband as long as he is living; but if the husband should die, she is released from the law *that bound her* to the husband.” It works both ways. You can substitute the words back and forth.

Verse 3: “So then, if she should marry another man as long as the husband is living, she shall be called an adulteress...” That’s exactly what Jesus said; except for the cause of sexual immorality there is no divorce that is granted. In other words, we need to ask the question not whether to divorce or not divorce, but what are the grounds that God looses a marriage? And we will see that even by choice then—even by choice and example of God—that even that can be overridden.

“...but if the husband should die, she is free from the law *that bound her to the husband*, so that she is no longer an adulteress if she is married to another man. In the same way, my brethren, you also were made dead to the *marriage law of the Old Covenant* by the body of Christ...” (vs 3-4).

In order to loose the whole Old Covenant—even though God put away Israel, even though God put away Judah, gave her a bill of divorcement—did God enter into a covenant with anyone else until He legally ended that covenant marriage relationship? *No, He did not!* God, because He’s loving and kind and merciful did not destroy all of Israel, which He could have. That would have loosed the covenant, but He didn’t do it that way. He came Himself and He died to *legally* dissolve and end that covenant relationship with Israel and Judah. That’s very key and profound, and you need to understand that in relationship to what God has said viewing marriage and divorce.

He Himself even lives by His own law. He did not go out and commit adultery after having divorced Israel and Judah, by entering into a

covenant relationship with another nation or another people. He Himself sacrificed Himself to die so that that relationship could be ended legally and properly so God would keep His own laws. Did He have every reason to put her away? *Yes, He did!*

1 Corinthians 7 tells an awful lot concerning marriage and divorce and what there is in the Church. We'll go through this in quite detail. Most of the chapter is the divorce and remarriage and problem chapter as it were.

1-Corinthians 7:7: "For I wish *that* all men might be even as myself..." You can understand why the Apostle Paul did not have a wife. There may have been a time when he had a wife before God called him, because he was a rabbi in Judaism, but that is really neither here nor there. He did not carry around a wife, because you examine his whole life and how terrible it was going here and there and preaching the Gospel. But he said he wished "...*that* all men might be even as myself..." so that they could devote themselves to God.

"...But each one has his own gift from God; one *is* this way, and another *is* that way.... [Not everyone is able to be eunuchs for the Kingdom of God as Jesus described it.] ...Now I say to the unmarried and to the widows *that* it is good for them if they can remain even as I *am*" (vs 7-8). We find out a little later that he commanded the widows to marry and the young women to marry, because when he was writing 1-Cor. 7, we understand that they were expecting the Lord to return at any time.

Verse 29: "Now this I say, brethren: the time *is* drawing close. For the *time that* remains, *let* those who have wives be as if they did not have wives." In other words, He thought that it was so urgent the return of Christ was so near, 'don't get bogged down into the problems and difficulties and things of marriage. Look to Christ for He's going to return now. Didn't happen that way.

Verse 9: "But if they do not have self-control, let them marry... [Even here he had to give an escape hatch for it—right? *Yes, he did!*] ...because it is better to marry than to burn... [that is to sin, live in adultery, commit fornication and so forth.] ...*with sexual desire*. And to those who are married I *give this* charge, *yet* not I, but the Lord..." (vs 9-10). Here are people who married who were in the Church. People who believe that Jesus Christ is Savior. People believe who believe that the only way of salvation is through the name of Jesus Christ.

Notice what he says, and this is the command of the Lord, v 10: "...Do not let *the* wife be separated from *her* husband." Which is the same problem we are having today I just read from the newspaper. Same problem they were having in

Corinth, because they had the great Babylonian liberated society back then, too.

Notice what he says if it does happen that there is separation, v 11: "(But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried... [If it gets down to irreconcilable differences and there is not sexual immorality involved causing the problem and there is a separation, you are not to remarry. It's exactly what Paul says, 'I'm not saying this, but the Lord is saying this.'](you're not be remarried):*or* be reconciled to *her* husband.) And *the* husband is not to divorce *his* wife."

Very key, important thing! Too many times people come to loggerheads and it's hardheadedness that causes the difficulties with marriage, rather than sexual immorality. There are times, even within the Church, that sexual immorality takes place. It's possible then to 'put away' a mate because of that. But it's also, upon repentance, to accept them and bring them back. That's also possible.

Just because sexual immorality does occur does not mean that divorce is necessarily automatic. It is the choice of the offended mate. That is the choice. God said under these circumstances 'I will allow divorce.' We're going to see that even God gave us an example in the book of Hosea on how he handled that. That's pretty clear cut.

Verse 11: "(But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband.) And *the* husband is not to divorce *his* wife. Now to the rest... [those not in this category] ...I, not the Lord, say *this*: If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she consents to dwell with him, let him not divorce her" (vs 11-12).

Today we have a little bit different problem: What is *believing* in Christ? What is *not believing* in Christ? Back then it was very clear. You had Christ and the way of the Bible, or you had paganism, with no in-between. Today, there are a lot of Protestants who believe in Christ. We're not going to judge God and say that they cannot come into the Kingdom of God if God so decides that they will. I'm not convinced that all Protestants are going to be able to come into the Kingdom of God. However, I'm not so convinced that all Protestants are going to be excluded either.

What if you have a situation where you have a Baptist wife who believes in Christ as Savior but maybe doesn't keep the Sabbath and Holy Days? Are you going to count her as a non-believer? Are you going to judge God and say she is a non-believer just because in keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days you feel you are a greater believer? I wouldn't want to make that judgment. I would never advise anyone under those circumstances that you could divorce and

remarry. If your problems are so difficult that you have to separate for a while, that's one thing.

If one of them has been in the Church for a long time, maybe you've been married for years and years—25-35 years, maybe 40 years—and you've never really gotten along, does that loose your marriage? *No, it doesn't! It doesn't loose it!* You need to think about that, because you've taken upon yourself an awful lot if you put yourself into that category.

"...If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she consents to dwell with him, let him not divorce her" (v 12) to marry someone in the Church. That's the next thought that comes along.

Verse 13: "And *if* a woman has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to dwell with her, let her not divorce him." This shows that there are binding marriages that God has bound which are not necessarily under the sanctity of the Church.

Were all these people pagan before? *Sure they were!* I've heard people say that God doesn't enter into a pagan marriage. It's not whether it's pagan or not; it's a marriage. Who created male and female? *God did!* Who binds them? or Looses them? *God does!* Is God interested in all human beings? *Yes, He is!* Many of these excuses that people have had in the past, that's what they are, they're excuses. Human rational, human justification to get your own way.

Verse 14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband; otherwise, your children would be unclean, but now they are Holy. But if the unbelieving *husband or wife* separates, let him *or her* separate.... [If they just up and leave. Once there is conversion, at the time of conversion then he says]: ...The *believing* brother or sister is not bound in such *cases*; for God has called us to peace" (vs 14-15).

Then he says there's still room for doubt here. You don't know, v 16: "But how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?" In other words, by your loving attitude, by your kindness and everything, by your patience and forbearance lead them to a situation that they would become converted and be saved.

Verse 17: "Let each one walk only as God has apportioned to him, according as the Lord has called him; and this is what I command in all the Churches. Was anyone called being circumcised? Do not let him be uncircumcised. Was anyone called in uncircumcision? Do not let him be circumcised. *For* circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; rather, the keeping of God's

commandments *is essential*. Let each one abide in the calling in which he was called" (vs 17-20). There are certain circumstances you can't change.

Verse 21: "Were you called *as* a slave? Don't let yourself fret. But if you are able to become free, by all means do so. For he who has been called in *the* Lord, *though he be* a slave, is a free man in *the* Lord. In the same way also, he who has been called as a free man is a slave of Christ; *for* you were bought with a price. **Do not become slaves of man**" (vs 21-23). Don't be used, don't be manipulated by men, by their ideas and so forth. You're bought with a price by Christ.

Verse 24. "Brethren, in whatever *state* each one was called, let him remain in that with God." And he goes on talking about the category of the unmarried virgins and, of course, that would apply to the unmarried chaste men.

Verse 25: "Now concerning virgins, I do not have a command from *the* Lord; but I give *my* judgment, as one who has received mercy from *the* Lord to be faithful. Therefore, I think this *judgment* is good because of the present distress... [That is for the present time and difficulties that we are in.] ...that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is. Have you been bound to a wife? **Do not seek to be loosed**. Have you been loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife" (vs 25-27).

Yet, people are doing both of these things at the same time. They find themselves, if they can't get along with their husband or wife, and they're not really willing to try and do the things to be reconciled as Paul said. So, they're seeking to loose and seeking to remarry. I tell you, it's getting crazy, even within the Church.

Verse 28: "However, if you have married, you have not sinned; and if a virgin has married, she has not sinned. Yet those *who marry* shall have distress in the flesh, but I *wish* to spare you." Of course, some the circumstances that were there because of the historic setting that they were living in were pretty trying times.

Verse 29: "Now this I say, brethren: the time *is* drawing close. For the *time that* remains, *let* those who have wives be as if they did not have wives; and those who weep, as if they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as if they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as if they did not possess; and those who use this world, as if they did not use *it* as their own; for this world in its present form is passing away. Now I desire you to be without anxiety.... [or carefulness or worry] ...The man who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord" (vs 29-32). He's only saying this for that short period of time that they were in.

Verse 33: “But he who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how he may please *his* wife.” And you have to; that’s not saying it’s wrong. You must! If you’re married, you’re to provide for your family and provide for your wife.

Verse 34: “There is *also* a difference in *attitude* between a wife and a virgin. An unmarried woman is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be Holy both in body and *in* spirit. But she who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how she may please *her* husband.” Nothing wrong with either one of those. This does not sanction virginity forever, to have nuns and have priests on the other hand. This was just for that short duration of time.

But, it is true many times when you want to get closer to God—what happens? *You really can’t do it the way you ought to, because of the family and the children and everything.* Paul says a little earlier that if you want to get close to God and fast for a season, go ahead and do that, that’s fine, but come together again as husband and wife.

Verse 35: “Now, I am telling you this for your own benefit; not to place a snare in your way, but to *show you what is* suitable, *so that you may be* devoted to the Lord without distraction. But if anyone thinks *that his* behavior toward his virgin is not right... [In other words, if they’re engaged and the passions are running hot and he can’t contain himself] ...and if she is in *the prime of life*, and so *thinks* he ought to *marry*, let him do as he desires; he is not sinning. Let them marry” (vs 35-36). It’s better to marry than burn!

Sin is still sin all the way through. And people have taken this to give every kind of excuse under the sun to marry/to not marry; to divorce/to not divorce; and really not see what the Apostle Paul is saying. This is really quite a profound chapter in relationship to marriage and divorce and so forth.

Verse 37: “However, he does well who remains steadfast in *his* heart, not having the need to *marry*, but has control over his own desire, and has determined in his *own* heart to keep himself chaste. So then, the one who marries does well, but the one who does not marry does better” (vs 37-38)—for the present distress.

Wouldn’t be too convenient to marry right in the middle of war. It wouldn’t be too convenient to marry right in the middle of famine. But if you marry, you haven’t sinned. He’s not abolishing marriage. What he’s doing is saying to keep everything in perspective, because when you marry you do have responsibilities. When you’re not

married, you still have responsibilities.

Verse 39: “A wife is bound by law for as long a time as her husband may live....” It’s not based on love. Be nice if everything were based on love, but that is not the basis for dissolving a marriage. It is law! The Law of God which is what binds and looses a marriage. By the decree and determination of God, not by any whim of men.

“...But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whomever she desires, (*but only in the Lord*)....” (v 39). I’ve seen where that doesn’t happen and it creates problems and difficulties, too.

What if you have an unbelieving mate that leaves?

(go to the next track)

You come home one day and say, ‘I’m following God, I’m going to keep the Sabbath, I’m going to do all of these things, and they say, ‘Hey, I can’t stand that. Good-bye!’

All right, you are free to marry according to what the Apostle Paul said here. That’s a very narrow circumstance—isn’t it? *Yes, it is a very narrow circumstance!* What if you’ve lived with an unconverted (so-called) mate for years and years—maybe you’ve been in the Church 20 years, and you’ve had your ups and downs. What if there have been threatenings to go, come or stay, whatever—does that give you cause to up and leave? *Well, I don’t quite think so, because you have an obligation the longer you have been married!*

Let’s see where we have that, and let’s see where God says concerning this. Let’s go to Malachi, the second chapter. There are just too many people going around and swapping husbands and wives. I even know of a case of a man and a woman being in the Church, being baptized, got married. He was ordained as a minister; and another man and his wife, same circumstances. They knew each other. They decided that they wanted to swap wives.

Couple #1 is going to divorce and the wife of couple #1 marries the husband of couple #2, and the wife of couple #2 marries the husband of couple #1. ***Obviously, they are living in adultery!*** You cannot sanction that at all in the Bible or say that that is a proper, legally loosed marriage by the definition of God. Let’s talk about marriage and divorce as God does. First of all he starts out with the priests and he says that you have corrupted God’s way:

Malachi 2:6: “‘The Law of Truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips. He walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and turned away many from iniquity, for the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and *the people* should seek

the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But you have departed out of the way... [That's what's happening. People are leaving the way of God to do their own thing, to go their own way.] ...you have caused many to stumble at the law.... [There sure are a lot of ministers that are causing many people to stumble at the Word of God so that these people can be given a license to fulfill their own lust.] ...You have corrupted the covenant of Levi,' says the LORD of hosts" (vs 6-8).

We can say today you have corrupted the covenant of Christ by giving allowance of divorce and remarriage when God did not say those were the grounds.

Verse 9: "Therefore I have also made you contemptible and base before all the people, just as you have not kept My ways but have been partial in the law." And have not people done that, been partial in the law? 'Oh yes, we'll loose this marriage. Just because they belong to another church over here, that means you can go ahead and put them away, because you found another man or another woman here in this congregation. What are you going to do when they get down the road and they say they don't love each other and they're going to put them away, too.

You just start the whole wellspring opening up to human lust and human desires, rather than asking what is God's way first. Then you be 'partial in the law.'

Verse 10: "Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously, each man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" There is treachery! There has been treachery in the ministry toward the people. We're going to see treachery in marriage.

Verse 14: "Yet you say, 'Why?' [Why is God giving us all this correction and so forth]. ...Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, **against whom you have dealt treacherously**..." Do you think that God is not going to hold you responsible if, after you've been married for 20-30 years or longer? That just because you have family spats and fights—maybe even every day—what if you argue every day, is that going to loose the marriage? Has there been sexual immorality so that you have where that God looses the marriage? *No!* What if it's most difficult to get along? Does that still loose your marriage? *I would not want to say that it does!* I don't see that in the Bible. Have you not provoked some of these things yourself? You husbands or you wives toward your mate so that you can create a cause? *A lot of you have!* A lot of you have created the cause so that you can come crying and wimping to the minister and try

and get some sort of excuse so that you can divorce and remarry. I tell you, just as Christ said, you are causing people to live in adultery. That's not the way that God intended.

Are you going to allow people to deal *treacherously* with the wife or the husband of their youth just to satisfy the hardness of their hearts? *I don't think you're going to tell God what to do!* No way!

"...—yet she *is* your companion and your covenant wife. And did He not make *you* one?... [In other words, when you were married, were you not bound as one?] ...Yet the vestige of the Spirit *is in* him. And why one? That He might seek a Godly seed. Therefore guard your spirit, and do not act treacherously *against* the wife of your youth." (vs 14-15).

That becomes very profound and it becomes very corrective, too—doesn't it? *Yes, it does!* Did God mean that because you're converted, maybe have a wife or a husband who is not necessarily converted—maybe a Protestant—that that gives you the right to have the attitude to dump her or dump him just simply because you can't get along? Is that sexual immorality? *No!*

What is the command of the Apostle Paul? *Remain separate! Remain unmarried! or Be reconciled!* That's what you ought to do. Too many people dealing *treacherously* because they live in this Sodom and Gomorrah and they think that they're going to have the happiness of the Kingdom of God right now. If you think you're going to have the happiness of the Kingdom of God right now, you may have another thought coming!

Maybe you ought to take the other tact. Maybe you ought to look at it, maybe this marriage is binding. I've been married for X number of years, no sexual immorality has been connected with this marriage, so therefore, it's binding before God. Now, I better find a way to get along! Whole different attitude—right? *Yes, indeed!*

"...do not act treacherously *against* the wife of your youth" (v 15). That goes above and beyond many different things that are contained in the Word of God.

Let's see what if there is sexual immorality involved, does that necessarily loose a marriage? It can be grounds for loosing a marriage. Remember what the Apostle Paul said, 'What? Know you not that he who is joined to a harlot is one flesh?' He's referring here to the book of Hosea.

- Here's a prophet of God—right?
- Called of God—right?
- Preached the Word of God—correct?
- Wanted to serve God—yes?

- Having the Spirit of God—yes?
- *Absolutely!*

Let's see what God tells him, Hosea 1:1: "The Word of the LORD that came to Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. The beginning of the Word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, 'Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredoms... [He said go marry a whore; plain as day! Does that offend you? I don't know how to please you, but there it is in the Bible.] ...and children of whoredoms, for the land has utterly committed great whoredoms, departing from the LORD.' So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, who conceived and bore him a son" (vs 1-3).

The long and short of it is this: God bound Hosea to a whore—they lived together and they had three children—to show that these are not 'My people' that these are children of whoredoms and to teach a lesson.

Furthermore, when you come to Hosea 3_[corrected] you find something else really incredible. Here are some grounds for committing divorce, even though he was married to a prostitute. Here's what God said to Hosea to teach a lesson. I'm not saying that every marriage that goes through this is bound by God. What I'm saying is, just because it may happen does not necessarily mean that the marriage is automatically loosed. That's what you need to understand, because too many times people will go ahead and *create their circumstances to fit a Scripture in the Bible* so they have cause to do what they want to do in the first place. That's at the heart and core of a lot of the divorce and remarriage that's going on with people within the Church of God.

Here's what God said; God said this! This may be shocking to you, but He did say it, Hosea 3:1: "And the LORD said to me, 'Go again. Love a woman beloved by a friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who turn to other gods, and love raisin cakes.' So I bought her for fifteen *pieces of silver*, and *for* an homer of barley and a half homer of barley" (vs 1-2). He went out and paid a prostitute to 'lay with him.'

- *Think on that!*
- *You think on that!*
- Maybe you never even thought it!
- Maybe you never even read it!

God was going to teach a lesson with it.

Someone will say, 'Oh, it's there! Oh good, I can go! I can go out on the town on Saturday night and I'll find a woman. Yes, it's in the Bible! Yes, God said...' NO! Someone will surely say they can

go out and commit adultery by paying 15 pieces of silver and get ourselves a woman of the street and lay with her. ***It's not what it's saying!*** The principle here is that even though there is sexual immorality, it may not be sufficient cause to end the marriage. That's what it's saying. Maybe *a* cause, but I tell you what, after God put Hosea through that:

- Do you think God is going to look kindly upon people who lightly treat their marriages?
- Do you think that God is going to look kindly on people who are not willing to help reconcile someone who is caught in a time of weakness?
- Do you think that God is going to look kindly upon you divorcing someone just because you have fights?

I've had fights with my wife! It's not okay inasmuch as I don't like them. She doesn't like them, but it's happened. So what do we do? Get all in a huff and run off and get mad and live with anger forever? *Of course not!* You can look back there and see even where Abraham and Sarah had their little tiffs now and then. Those things happen.

We're talking about what *binds* a marriage. We're talking about the grounds to *loose* a marriage. We're talking about it may not be so broad as one may think, and it may not be so easy as one may think. Today we're living in a situation that, with all the AIDS that is going around today, and with the difficulties and problems of sexual immorality and disease, that even if you are willing to accept a mate back after having committed adultery or fornication, you'd better have a test before you do anything.

I'm telling you, if it is AIDS—and it's going to happen to someone in the Church, I just know it's going to happen to someone in the Church. I know it's already happened to someone who has been in the Church who either were homosexuals and never really gave it up, or became homosexuals after being in the Church, and they died of AIDS. That I know! I know of at least one verified case myself. So, it could happen within the Church!

If it does happen, and you're still of a mind to be reconciled, you'd better get some kind of test so you know what you're into and you know what the circumstances are. Maybe you'd better give yourself a little time so that you know whether it is really there or it really is not there. We're living in a treacherous world! We have to talk about these things at this level because this world is so evil—unfortunately!

Let's see what all of this leads to; see where all of this permissiveness comes to; the end result.

The Bible says ‘consider the end.’ And it seems so innocent when it begins.

Hosea 4:1: “Hear the Word of the LORD, children of Israel, for the LORD *has* a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, ‘There is no truth... [no Truth of God, no morality, no understanding of anything] ...nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and the committing of adultery they break out; and blood touches blood” (vs 1-2).

- Have we solved anything with all the divorce and remarriage in the land or in the Church? *No!*
- Have we solved anything by condoning children outside of wedlock? *No!*

We’ve bred a whole breed of bastards for a generation that just keeps people in poverty and swill and crime and wretchedness, and part of it by their own choice because they don’t want anyone saying that if you have children you’d better be married. You look at the society around us, and then we bring that society into the Church and we be like the society. We put away our wives and put away our husbands. I tell you God is not going to stand for that, and don’t you think for any one minute that you’re going to come before God and wipe your face clean and say, ‘God, I found it in Your Word.’ God is going to say:

- Where is your endurance?
- Where is your patience?
- Where is your understanding?
- Where is your forgiveness?
- Where is your love?

There better be a lot more than just thinking twice about it.

Verse 3: “Therefore, shall the land mourn, and everyone who dwells in it shall languish, with the beasts of the field and with the birds of the heavens. Yes, the fish of the sea shall also be taken away. Yet, let no man strive, nor reprove another, for your people *are* as those who strive with the priest. And you shall stumble in the day, and the prophet also shall stumble with you *in the* night, and I will destroy your mother. **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...**” (vs 3-6). And partly in the Church because ministers are not willing to stand up and tell people what the Truth actually is.

It’s just like anything else, I tell you one thing, if the Jews and the Arabs can sit down and start working out their family feud—even though it’s nearly impossible—surely a husband and wife ought to be able to sit down and work out their own problems and difficulties, you would think. I mean, can it be so totally irreconcilable? *or* Are you

making it irreconcilable? Is your heart tender and humble before God? *or* Is it hardened because you want your own way? I tell you, God is going to judge you on your own heart.

If things are so bad that you can’t live together, and you have to separate, you’d better absolutely know before God if you have ideas of getting remarried. You’d better know before God that God has loosed that marriage. Otherwise you’re going to be living in adultery and it says that ‘no whoremonger or adulterer is going to be in the Kingdom of God’ (Rev. 21:8).

“...Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being as a priest to Me. **Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children.**” (v 6). You need to think about that very deeply in relationship to your own circumstances.

Loosing a marriage is not all that easy and simple! There are too many people going around and taking the Word of God, making a judgment on their own to go ahead and do what they want to do in the name of God, when God never gave it and God never sanctioned it, and God had no part with it. All they’re doing is going to end up living in adultery. We can’t be acting and behaving like the world and expect God to give us salvation. It isn’t going to happen! We’re to be called out of this world. We are to live differently than the world. We are to live with the Spirit of God, not with the hardness of our own hearts. Divorce and remarriage is a very serious thing.

Let’s cover one other aspect of it. It’s possible that this could happen. What if you have someone that becomes a drug addict? *Possible today!* What if they totally, absolutely give up on God and fail to provide for the family? Now what are you to do?

Here is a principle, 1-Timothy 5:8: “But if anyone does not provide for his own *needy* relatives—and especially *members of his* household—he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

I’ve seen a minister take that and say, because a man was unemployed, you can divorce him, because he’s not providing for you. It’s not what that says! This means in an extreme case of total dereliction. I have yet to run across a man who isn’t willing to get out and work and provide for his family—who is in the Church.

Now, we’re coming across some tough economic times; maybe there is going to be unemployment. Maybe you are going to lose your home. There are going to be some, bound to happen! Is that cause for divorce? *No, it is not cause for*

divorce! This is only in the case of total dereliction. Maybe if they run off and they're a cocaine addict and they blow their minds and they're a heroin addict and they 'shoot up' all the time, steal money, waste everything and destroy the family, yes, then God would loose that because they're worse than an infidel (unbeliever) and have denied the faith—absolutely! But, those are extreme circumstances.

Not just any cause that comes along. So to divorce or not divorce, I tell you what, you'd better really know your Bible and you'd better do a lot of fasting and praying before you undertake what you may have in your hardness of heart to do, and you'd better be sure about the minister who is giving you counsel. Maybe he is not really giving you the Word of God the way that it ought to be given. Maybe he is leading you into a situation where he is going to bring upon you the judgment of adultery for putting away your wife and 'dealing treacherously with the wife of your youth.'

You need to understand that! We're talking about eternal life here. We're not talking about sex or not sex. We're not talking about arguing or not arguing. ***We're talking in the final analysis what about salvation and eternal life.*** That's where you really need to understand and know the Word of God and not take upon yourself to divorce just simply because of circumstances that are a little difficult.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*
by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 17:26-27
- 2) Matthew 19:3-9
- 3) 1 Corinthians 5:1
- 4) Matthew 5:31-32
- 5) Romans 7:1-4
- 6) 1 Corinthians 7:7-8, 29, 9-39
- 7) Malachi 2:6-10, 14-15
- 8) Hosea 1:1-3
- 9) Hosea 3:1-2
- 10) Hosea 4:1-6
- 11) 1 Timothy 5:8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 7:12
- Revelation 21:8
-

Divorce & Remarriage Question

Fred R. Coulter

Look what Christ had to go through. Whenever we get to feeling sorry for ourselves and we get that picked on feeling—I've had that; you've probably all had that—'Why, Lord?' I tell you what, Christ didn't deserve any of it—did He? But He did it willingly.

Hebrews 5:7: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death... [Christ's life in the flesh was difficult.] ...and was heard because *He* feared *God*. Although He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience from the things that He suffered" (vs 7-8). So, when we have suffering, we need to learn. Christ learned. As a matter of fact, through becoming a human being God was perfected. Not that God was ever not perfect, but through what He did He was perfected even more.

Verse 9: "And having been perfected... [through all that He went through] ...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him." I hope this will help us, encourage us, let us know that we are doing what God wants and that the things come the way that they come. The only thing we can say is, 'Your will be done, God.'

During the break the thing came up concerning divorce and remarriage. I'll cover some of the aspects of it. Not every detail of it, but some of the overall principles which are important. There are grounds for divorce. They're very narrow, but there are grounds for divorce.

Matthew 5:31: "It was also said *in ancient times*, 'Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.' But I say to you..." (vs 31-32). Of course, what they did was put them away for anything—burn the biscuits, whatever; just put them away. That's much of what we have today. A lot of them, they don't even get married, they just live together, which causes great confusion. They never learn to overcome. They never learn to work as a husband and wife. Every marriage is going to have it's ups and downs. That's just the nature of us as human beings.

We would all like to have a perfect marriage—wouldn't we? Where everything is just fine, no problems, no harsh words, no arguments, you agree on everything, loved each other. You've lived on this plane right here, about ten miles above everybody else. That's what we would like, but 'life is like a bowl of cherries'—remember, they have pits! Of course, when we have ups and downs in our marriages, this is to help us to learn to trust God

more, to learn to love each other more. It's easy to say 'I love you' when everything is going smooth. It's hard to say, 'I love you' when it's tough, and especially when you feel you've been picked on, whether a man by his wife, or a wife by her husband.

Verse 32: "But I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife [or husband], except for the cause of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever shall marry her who has been divorced is committing adultery [fornication (*KJV*).]" There are grounds for divorce and here it is. *Fornication* in the Greek comes from 'pornea': *any kind of sexual immorality*.

Today, you've got hundreds of different kinds of sexual immorality. Why is that grounds for divorce? Let's come to Matthew 19 and we will see. All of that is part of understanding the marriage estate. All of that is understanding why God made us male and female. If we understand that, and use that as the goal in our marriages, then we can overcome the difficulties

- we can grow in love
- we can grow in grace and knowledge with God
- we can love each other
- we can accept each other

Part of the problem comes about many times this way: You are perfect but your mate is not! If your mate were perfect then everything would be just fine. But the only trouble is, both the husband and wife think the same thing, so they never really make any progress.

The whole purpose of marriage is this: Matthew 19:3: "Then the Pharisees came to Him and tempted Him, saying to Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?' But He answered them, saying, 'Have you not read... [I love it every time He says that to the Pharisees, because they prided themselves on knowing the Word of God, but they don't read it.] ...that He Who made *them* from *the* beginning made them male and female, and said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and **the two shall become one flesh**"?' (vs 3-5)

The whole purpose is to establish a family unit, to bring children into the world. As husband and wife as doing so, you are participating in the creation of God.

Here's what William Tyndale wrote in his book, *The Obedience of a Christian Man* (about 1530s)—talking about children:

God which works all, in all things, for a secret judgment and purpose and for His Godly pleasure, provided and hour that your father and mother should come together to make you through them. He was present with you in your mother's womb and fashioned you and breathed life into you for the great love He has unto you. And provided milk in your mother's breast for you, against preparation for being born. Moved also your father and mother and all others to love you, to pity you, and to care for you.

David Daniel said, 'That's a tender beginning.'

When we understand that husband and wife are to come together as one flesh, it is to learn the character of God, to participate in the creation of other people. That's really quite a thing—isn't it?

If you want something which will humble you, and if anyone gets all excited about how 'great they are' just do this: Take a pen, make a little dot with your pen. You might not even be able to see it very well. That's what you were at one time!

God has a fantastic and terrific plan—doesn't He? Even in spite of the fact that most people don't want God in their lives, God still blesses them with children and things like this, because it's God's purpose to expand His Kingdom for those who will come into the Kingdom of God down through time.

All of this is worked out in marriage. But today we have all the perverted things—don't we? Living in Sodom and Gomorrah, we have men with men, women with women—all of those things are perverse and against God. So much so that they're even coming out with a Bible where God is called 'father/mother.' It's already printed—it's *The Inclusive Bible*.

When we live in a society that is so perverse as it is today, and so much sexual immorality going on, that those are the grounds for divorce. Also, we have a situation like this: Not only is there sexual immorality, but you also have the problem of violence—and violence would also be a ground for divorce. It's very akin to sexual immorality. When there are no grounds for divorce, and there is a separation, then God does not expect that person to remarry, especially in the Church.

The Apostle Paul made it clear, 1-Corinthians 7:10: "And to those who are married I give this charge, yet not I, but the Lord: Do not let the wife be separated from her husband. (But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband.) And the husband is not to divorce his wife" (vs 10-11).

This shows that God wants us to work out our marital problems. Sometimes they may get very strained. But you build character when you learn how to work out your problems, when you learn to love each other in spite of the difficulties. When you learn to accept each other and each other's weaknesses. You learn to overlook many things. In that way you can increase in loving each other, having a stable marriage and all of those things come with it, but you have to work at it.

It's not like Rex Harrison when he sang the song in *My Fair Lady*: 'why couldn't a woman be more like a man?' A woman can't! She wasn't made that way! A lot of women probably think: 'why can't a man be more like a woman?' *God made us opposites!*

In the marriage estate we are to come together as one unit, to become one flesh. That's what God has provided. That's why He said, 'be reconciled.'

Verse 12—this talks about some other things concerning marriage: "Now to the rest, I, not the Lord, say this: If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she consents to dwell with him, let him not divorce her. And if a woman has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to dwell with her, let her not divorce him" (vs 12-13). This is an important thing in understanding.

In the past, too many people have wanted to get rid of their wives or husbands so they create problems just for the specific reason of getting rid of the husband or wife. I even know of a case where two ministers divorced their wives and literally swapped wives. There's no grounds for that. That's just plain living in adultery.

So, if you have an unbelieving husband or an unbelieving wife, love them! Encourage them! Maybe you can inspire them to want to find out about God, because your behavior toward your husband or wife is so much more improved because you're converted. Sometimes that's difficult to do, but if we take it as a challenge and if we look at it that way, and realize that God will bless us in it. That doesn't mean that it's going to come smooth and easy. It may be difficult. But nevertheless, I've seen that happen many, many times.

Never take the attitude that 'my wife is unconverted' or 'my husband is unconverted'—then you begin to treat them harshly. Don't do that! If God hasn't called them, don't worry about it. Let God do so in His own time.

One thing for sure, only God can convert a person, so you can't convert your husband or your wife. But if you have the right example, maybe—

because they see the change in your life—that your husband or your wife will respond to that.

Verse 14: “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife... [God gives a special blessing.] ...and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband; otherwise, your children would be unclean, but now they are Holy.”

What happens when there’s divorce and there are children involved? *Creates great problems*—doesn’t it? *Yes, it does!* This is why God wants us to make every effort. This is why God does not give divorce at the drop of a hat. I tell you one thing, through the years of being married, when you overcome—when you’re able to overcome the problems and difficulties that you have as husband wife and learn to love each other more—there is a great satisfaction in your own life, as well as a great satisfaction for God. God is pleased when that happens.

Verse 15—another category: “But if the unbelieving *husband or wife* separates...” This is not to have the believer make the husband or wife depart. This is not for the believer to depart because of the unbeliever. This is where the husband or wife would say: ‘I can’t stand this; I can’t put up with this and I’m out of here.’ Sometimes that will happen.

When that happens, it says: “...let him *or her* separate. The *believing* brother or sister is not bound in such *cases*... [that marriage is not bound in such cases] ...for God has called us to peace. But how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?” (vs 15-16). We don’t know!

There again, we have to *walk by faith*, let God intervene and help us, hold your tongue, don’t get mad. Remember this: ***Anger never produces peace, nor does it produce love.*** This is why God has it that way.

What if a person is married and divorced before God calls them? In such cases like that, that marriage would not be binding, because you have not been called to the knowledge of the Truth until after the divorce occurred. Therefore, you would be free to marry within the Church.

God also works it out that you have to come to a point, one way or the other, where there are so many problems out there with people in the world—with their marriages, with their children and things like this—that when God calls them, there comes a point that you have to say, ‘Okay, you repent, all of that is in the past. That is, buried in the watery grave of baptism. Because of that, if you marry again, don’t make the same mistakes. That’s the best I can do in just an overview of divorce and remarriage.

Each particular person’s circumstance may be different—one from another. That’s why in going over divorce or remarriage, each one has to be handled individually.

Verse 39: “A wife is bound by law for as long a time as her husband may live. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whomever she desires, (*but only in the Lord*.)” It’s the same way with husband or wife. If your wife dies, the husband is free to marry. If the husband dies, the wife is free to marry. Marriage in the flesh is until death, with the exceptions that I’ve covered.

Questions:

- What is ‘only in the Lord’? *That refers to marrying someone who is converted, I am sure!* I wouldn’t think it would refer to anything else other than that.

Although, I would say this—since this is judgment—I’ve seen a case where there’s just no one in the Church to marry. What do you do in a case like that? What if you meet someone who is very amiable to what you believe and that person is willing to marry you and accept what you have and what you are? *In that case then, that is still ‘in the Lord’* simply because even though they are not converted, they accept what you are doing and are willing to live with you.

That comes under the ‘in the Lord’ if you have an unbelieving wife or husband that is pleased to dwell with you. That is still ‘in the Lord.’ There are some cases—especially where we are scattered—who are you going to meet? Who are you going to marry? As Paul says, ‘It’s better to marry than burn.’

So, you have all of that! See how each thing becomes a separate judgment when you come down to it.

- ‘Whosoever should put his wife’ does that also apply to the woman who puts away her husband? *Yes, it would!*

Today, yes it would. Back then it was very hard for a woman to get a divorce, so that’s why it’s referring to the man.

- What about in the case of an alcoholic or someone that is on drugs and things like that? *Yes, that’s real difficult situation indeed!*

There could, with that, be grounds for divorce and possible remarriage, but it would have to be gone into on an individual basis in order to get all the circumstances involved.

What if you marry someone who didn’t tell you that they had been a druggie ‘all my life’?

Well then, they've lied to you. Is God going to bind you to a lie? *No, He's not!* But, if in these situations when they come up, when those situations do arise, then you can't be delaying a separation from those situations.

I know a case of a woman who knew that her husband was a philanderer and slept with almost anything that walked by. She accepted it! I told her that since she accepted it, 'you're bound!' If you accept that kind of behavior and live with it and know it, and continue with it, then God will bind you to it.

As God told Hosea to go marry a harlot and have children of a harlot.

➤ What about abusive? *That depends on the definition of abusive!*

To some people abusive means one thing, another it means another thing. It's not possible to make a judgment just by saying they're abusive.

Physical abuse—as I said before, if there is violent, physical abuse, then that's possible that there could be grounds for divorce. But again, that's an individual case.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*
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Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 5:7-9
- 2) Matthew 5:31-32
- 3) Matthew 19:3-5
- 4) 1 Corinthians 7:10-16, 39

Also referenced: Books:

- *Obedience of a Christian Man* by William Tyndale
- *Inclusive Bible*

Husband/Wife Relations I

Fred R. Coulter

We live in a society that I would like to describe as a Babylonian bias against God. Everything that this whole society of Babylon is set out to do focuses in on destroying the knowledge of the true God and destroying the family.

The way the family is destroyed is because of equal rights (so-called) and the ‘femi-nazi’ NOW gang and all of the things that they portray to this world. All the media, and everything is designed to destroy the knowledge of the true family. Just look at your television and you can see all these ‘soap operas’; even this stupid one called ‘Married with Children’ which is a terrible and awful television program. All of these things are designed to make women take the role over the man. It’s all designed under the guise of fairness, under the guise—if you know the Word of God—that God was not right in giving the rules and giving the format for marriage.

So, we find—true to the prophecy in Isa. 3—that this is true not only here in the United States, but in so many other countries. Some of these things I’m going to mention as we go through, because of the crassness of the society around us, and all the things that have taken place here recently—especially with the Magic Johnson incident and the Willy Kennedy Smith incident—the whole society has been desensitized and more crass because of it. I’m not going to be crass; I’m going to be very straightforward.

It is known that the leaders that the National Organization for Women (NOW) are lesbians. Their goal, instead of the liberation of women, is the enslavement of women into *their* standards. Their interpretation of rape is any sexual relations—even in marriage—with a man. Many of you don’t even know that, and they won’t proclaim this aloud, but that is their secret agenda, that is their secret goal and that’s why all of these things are portrayed that they are.

Here in Isaiah 3:12 we see that God prophesied the turning of the world upside down. You just analyze and think about it. Anything that destroys the family and marriage—as God designed in His Word, as God instructed us as human beings His creation—results in

- ruin
- anarchy
- poverty
- depravation
- misery
- unhappiness
- mental disease

—and every other thing that you would want to name under the sun can focus right down in to the destruction of the family, which means *destroy the husband/wife relationship* and let the woman rule over the man.

One other thing about this women’s liberation thing that most people don’t understand: Women say they want equal rights, so then when they *supposedly* get equal rights, they say ‘now I’m a woman and must be treated as a woman.’ If you want the same rights as a man, why then do you insist on being treated as a woman? What is really happening is that ***they want all the rights of men and all the rights of women combined together in women’s rights and to rule over men!*** That’s the whole goal of the women’s liberation movement.

We see this, Isaiah 3:12: “*As for My people, children are their oppressors...*” You can’t even discipline them anymore because they run down to the social services and have you arrested for child abuse. Here in Los Angeles they can’t even have a football game because too many gangs in high school come all loaded up with their weapons and end up shooting each other. Wonderful society that we have now that we let children oppress us—right?

“...and women rule over them...” (v 12). That’s Satan’s key and leverage into the destruction of every society. You can go the other way and you can say, ‘All right.’ Are there societies where the men rule over and treat women as vassals and serfs and slaves and oppress them? *Yes, that is true!* That’s the other extreme of it.

For those who point out the difficulties and the wrongs of the women’s liberation movement thing. They always point to this extreme, so therefore, you will take your eyes off *their* extreme. We’re going to get our eyes off of both of these and we’re going to focus in on what the Bible has to say.

“...Oh, My people, those who lead you **cause you** to err... [They cause people to err; they cause people’s lives to become miserable, empty and rotten, because they are given the wrong advice; they are given the wrong instruction.] ...and destroy the way of your paths” (v 12).

This is the way that the society is today. This is what we are confronted with even as Christians. Living in this world and being bombarded by it all the time even we tend to get our ideas out of kilter with what God wants, and we get it out of sorts with what God wants. Let’s look in the Bible, let’s go to the Bible and see what God has to say.

Let's understand something very important concerning what God did. God made man and woman. There is one thing that is absolutely true, we can just use the Scripture which says that no man, no one, no person 'can serve two masters.' Therefore, I do not countenance—the Bible doesn't countenance—where that God made woman equal with man. That does not give man authority to destroy the woman or to oppress her, but they're not equal.

A lot of women will say, 'That's not fair!' Well, you show me one thing that is 'fair' in life. There's a difference between what is right, just, and fair. The whole Soviet Union collapsed because *fairness* didn't work. Fairness doesn't work! When people say that, many times they have a mistaken understanding of what God originally intended.

We see here, Genesis 1:26: "And God said, 'Let Us make man [mankind] in Our image... [We'll see how God created and how specifically God did it, and for some very important reason.] ...after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.' And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female" (vs 26-27).

There's one thing for sure, in spite of what people like to try and think and do and change and work things around, you are what you are by creation. You're either made male or female! None of us have any say-so as to what it's going to be. You can say in the first place that God isn't fair, because He didn't ask us—if you want to look at *fairness*. Rom. 9_[transcriber's correction] says 'Is the thing made going to say to the Maker, what are you making?' I don't like what You're making. Is that going to have any standing anyplace? *Of course not!*

We find here with the creation of Eve, we know that Adam was made, Genesis 2:7: "Then the LORD God formed man *of the* dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." God made the man first. We have no control over that. God did it! For people to argue about that, what is it going to accomplish? Is it going to change God? Is it going to make your marriage better because you argue against God, what He's done? *Of course not!*

Then we find where God made woman. There wasn't anything of all that God created that was compatible and suitable for the man. After Adam named all the animals, then we come to:

Verse 20: "And Adam gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the air, and to every

animal of the field, but there was not found a helper compatible [suitable] for Adam"—compatible

- mentally
- intellectually
- emotionally
- and every other way

for the man. We know that we have literally a situation where the man is not complete without the woman, and the woman is not complete without the man. God made it that way, and that can't be changed. Once we get some of these basic foundations in mind, and we get some of this thinking out of our brains, which are not correct, then maybe we can make some progress in husband/wife relations and get along in this world in the way that God wants us to.

Verse 21: "And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall over Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs, and *afterward* closed up the flesh underneath. Then the LORD God made the rib (which He had taken out of the man) into a woman, and He brought her to the man" (vs 21-22).

In order for there to be equality the way that a lot of people think there should be equality, you would have to have God making the man from the dust of the ground and the woman from the dust of the ground *at the same time*. Then you could say that *by creation* they are equal. Lack of equality does not necessarily mean inferior. That's something that needs to be understood concerning husband/wife relations. We're getting the basics out of the Bible.

Verse 23: And Adam said, 'This *is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. *She* shall be called Woman because *she* was taken out of Man.' For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife—and they shall become one flesh" (vs 23-24). That is the whole basis for marriage; the whole basis as to why God made us male and female. Out of it we can rise to the very heights of

- love
- joy
- oneness
- goodness
- profound closeness
- deep love

OR we can have

- misery
- wretchedness
- profound unhappiness
- arguing and fighting

and all of that sort of thing. That can all come.

We're going see quite a few things in the book of Proverbs, but before we go there, let's just

mention here the whole situation with the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and the woman bringing the fruit to Adam and so forth. There is a lesson for us there. The very first sin was that Adam allowed his wife to usurp the creation of God from Him. The whole society has paid for it from that time on. It says the woman was ‘deceived.’ Adam was not deceived; he knew what he was doing. Then we come over to Gen. 3 and we see what happened to Adam and Eve. Women tend to focus in on the curse that was brought to Eve and overlook what God said to Adam.

Genesis 3:16: “To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly increase your sorrow and your conception—in sorrow shall you bring forth children. Your desire shall be toward your husband, and he shall rule over you.’” And that’s the whole key that women do not like. It’s created this fight and tension all the time.

I’m sure that anyone who is married has had some problems and difficulties in this age, as well. Especially when you get to a situation where we have all these modern conveniences and things that the man does not have to go out and do the physical hard work to make what he has to make, to build what he has to build, and the whole roles have been changed. So therefore, this gives more impetus to women to thinking that they are equal or better than men. For men then to take the other hand, and many of them become brute beasts and just beat up on women, abuse them, abuse their children and all that sort of thing.

When we’re talking about how to have a Godly marriage, those things on both sides are put aside that those things should have already been overcome, or at least understood. I don’t know of any situation where, in the years that I’ve been in the ministry—except for people just coming into the Church—that I’ve had to go counsel concerning battered wives. I remember one that I had to go counsel concerning a battered husband. So, it can work both ways.

We tend to forget what was brought here also upon the man, v 17: “And to Adam He said, ‘Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it!”—the ground is cursed for your sake. In sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life.’” There are certain residuals of this that carry over *even today*. Life is tough; earning a living is difficult; and we have to get out there and work and slave and all this sort of thing to just try and make ends meet. That’s part of what was brought upon a man.

We need to understand that *in Christ* many of these things can be meliorated to a great degree

and we need to focus in on how we as Christians can get along with our husbands and our wives and our children. I know that given the world that we are living in, I don’t think that there’s going to be one really, absolutely perfect marriage around. That may create some problems for perfectionists. That may even accelerate and cause more problems than there really needs to be.

Now let’s go to the book of Proverbs, because the book of Proverbs has a lot of instruction for us. As we’re going through, I want you to understand that certain key things are directed toward women. Most of the book of Proverbs, women, is directed toward men; they need to understand that. In highlighting some of these things concerning women does not mean that I’m picking on women. It does not mean that I’m overlooking the man, but it just is. Most of the book of Proverbs—if you read it and you are really honest with it, has to do with the man, telling him how to live and what to do and how to handle his life.

I can vouch for this, it is true—Proverbs 18:22: “*Whoever* finds a wife finds a good *thing* and obtains favor from the LORD.” That is so absolutely vital and important, and absolutely true! It’s tremendous! When God made Eve, He made her completely compatible and suited for the man. Obviously then, the man was pre-made to be compatible and suitable with his wife. That was the whole lesson of God taking all of the animals and passing them by Adam, to name them, so that he would see

- that he needed something special
- that he needed something good
- that he needed something directly from God which also came directly from himself

That’s really something to keep in mind!

You husbands keep in mind that God created your wife for you. You might say, ‘Well now, the way we met...’ and all this sort of thing. Well, there are many, many different circumstances in life that we can look to that we really don’t understand that in the initial analysis God worked it out for us. Later on we can see that, but maybe right at first you can’t.

If you look upon your wife as something that is good, as something that is a blessing, something that gives you favor with God. How is it going to give you favor with God?

- Is it going to give you favor with God because you’re a dictator? *No!*
- Is it going to give you favor with God because you’re inconsiderate and brash and crude? *No!*
- Is it going to give you favor with God

because you run around in your shorts and underwear and smell and stink and don't shave and belch and all that sort of crude, crass bodily processes? *No!*

Handled in the right context as God wants it to be. "Whoever finds a wife finds a good *thing* and obtains favor from the LORD." We're going to see how the husband is to nourish and to cherish and to up-build his wife. That's an obligation that comes from God. He gives a command that that's the way that it is.

Proverbs 19:14: "...a prudent wife *is* from the LORD." A lot of men don't know that and don't appreciate that, because they look upon women just as sex objects, sex symbols, and a lot of women look at themselves as that way, too.

Too many people have followed this course—too many men. I bring up the example of Magic Johnson, and Wilt 'the stilt' Chamberlain that in his basketball career said that he 'slept with 20,000 women'! Someone figured it out that that had to be 5-6 women every other day on an average for his whole basketball career. That is total whoremongering! That is total beastly licentiousness beyond belief, but he couldn't have done it without the women who wanted to.

So, there's a warning here for men. and I want you to understand, women, that God brings this upon the men more so than upon the women because the man is the one who is tempted by sight, tempted by sexual drive more than women. That's just the nature of things, and God made it that way. No one is going to change it. Therefore, there are things that men have to be very careful of.

It says in the New Testament, 'flee fornication.' I think they're going to learn that with all of this AIDS epidemic. They just ran a test in Paris of as many prostitutes as they could—male and female—and guess how many percent of them have the HIV virus or AIDS. Just take a guess—20%? 30%? 50%? 60%? 70%? 80%? 90%? 95%? 98%? **95%!**

Here's what God says to every man, and there's also some correction in here for women, Proverbs 5:1: "My son, attend to my wisdom; bow your ear to my understanding; That you may keep discretion, and that your lips may keep knowledge" (vs 1-2). God is saying, 'Because I've given you free moral agency...' which God has done. The only thing God is going to do to intervene against free moral agency is when human beings get to the point they're going to absolutely destroy the world. That's when God is going to intervene.

- God is not going to stop a person from committing adultery if they want to.

- God is not going to stop a person from becoming a whoremonger or a prostitute if they want to.
- God is not going to make you become a good husband if you don't want to.
- God is not going to make you become a good wife if you don't want to.
- God is not going to make you get along in your marriage. *You must choose to get along in your marriage!*

I've had fights with my wife, and don't look at it as with some great shock. Ministers are not perfect. I bet you've had fights with your wife or your husband. If you haven't then I would certainly like to have a letter from you or a phone call from you and tell me that you have been perfect all your life, or close to it. I mean, even 80% perfect would be wonderful! I would like to hear that.

Verse 3: "For the lips of a wanton woman drip as a honeycomb, and her mouth *is* smoother than oil; but her end *is as* bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword" (vs 3-4). Whatever emotionally, mentally, physically, sexually, compatibility—all of these things are tied in with it.

Verse 5: "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on the grave. She does not ponder the path of life..." (vs 5-6). In other words, it's going to be a lot of slick things coming along here to entice men. Also, by the way, it brings down the morals of women, in general, too.

One of the things that's very important in doing that is movies, television, magazines and media. And rather than filling their mind with God's Word, too many people fill their minds with the ideas of this world and of Satan the devil—which sound good, look good, which sound right. That's why there's the AIDS disease, because God is showing that He's not going to tolerate this any longer. It's not going to be!

So, women entice men, that's just the nature of things. You have to be aware of those of enticements.

Verse 7: "Now therefore hear me, O you children, and do not depart from the words of my mouth. Remove your ways far from her, and do not come near the door of her house... [Don't give yourself the step into the door of opportunity to sin.] ...lest you give your honor unto others and your years unto the cruel" (vs 7-9). There's a whole life to live, and there are years to be lived. Marriage was intended to last a lifetime. Wasn't intended to be a sex partner today or two or three tomorrow, as Wilt Chamberlain did and so-called 'Magic' Ervin Johnson, or many of the others. Of course, the shocking thing is that there are groupies of women

that follow them around. Groupies of followers, and they stand there in line and after the basketball game come along and say, 'I want you' *or* 'I want you' *or* 'I want you.' In that case they're all willing in it, by choice.

So, God is saying here, 'Before your heart and mind ever get started with that kind of thing—because it's going to lead to death—don't even go near the door of it.' That's one of the great problems that is the result of marriage today; that too many have done that—whether in the service or whether before they were married or whatever the situation may be. There are some people who come along and they are victimized.

What do you do when you find out that your mate really was a whoremonger or a whore before you got married. Now what do you do? What if it happens during marriage? Then what do you do? We'll cover that a little later.

Verse 10: "Lest strangers be filled *with* your wealth, and your labors *be* in the house of a stranger; and you moan when your end *comes*, when your flesh and your body are consumed, and say, 'How I hated instruction... [The older we get the more we'd like to go back and relive our lives. You can't do it! Therefore, we have to take some things and learn right now. We can modify and adjust our ways.] (There are too many who say): ...I hated instruction...'" (vs 10-12).

They're going to die of AIDS. They're going to die of syphilis. They're going to die of gonorrhea. They're going to bring into this world deformed children, mentally retarded children, cocaine addict children, and on and on and on!

"...and my heart despised correction; and I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ears to those who taught me! I was almost in utter ruin in the midst of the congregation and assembly.'" (vs 12-14). God says here is the solution. Here is God's original solution as we can say for the sex problem, which is beginning right here:

Verse 15: "Drink waters out of your own cistern... [This is put in symbolic language, and it's interesting]: ...and running waters out of your own well." We'll get later where the husband is to encourage and up-build the wife with the 'washing of the water by the Word' as Christ does to the Church. This is very important that it follows along here.

Verse 16: "Let your fountains be dispersed abroad *as* rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only your own, and **not strangers' with you**. Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth" (vs 16-18). That is the ideal, that you

get married when you're young—not teenagers not knowing anything. Some do, and you know the insinuating problems with that. This is what God is saying is the ideal of God's way. He wants it to be that you enjoy 'the wife of your youth.' That's the whole thing that needs to be!

- Learn to enjoy your marriage!
- Learn to enjoy each other!

Even though there may be some differences and interests. Almost anything can be overcome with understanding and knowledge and proper attitude and working at it. It surely can! And almost anything can be destroyed, divided and separated apart by hatred, animosity and bitterness. It can happen! I've seen it happen!

This is what we need to do right here, v 19: "Let her be as the loving deer and pleasant doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times, and be ravished always with her love.... [*versus* the 'love' of a stranger. They have found that psychology counselors is saying 'the way you can spice up your marriage is to get some pornography—television or magazine—make your sex life better.' What they've found out is that it destroys it and plants the seed in the minds of the individuals out there. That's not the way to solve the problem. Believe me,

- you can't solve any of your marriage problems by taking Satan's advice
- you cannot solve any of your marriage or sexual problems by following Satan's instructions

It isn't going to work! You have to follow God's ways and do what is right and do what is good and proper.

Verse 20: "For why will you, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and He ponders all his paths" (vs 20-21).

- God knows!
- God understands!
- God realizes!

Our lives are an open book before God. God says that He knows every hair that is on our head.

- Does He not know how to help us, to encourage us when we come to Him and pray to have our marriages work properly?
- Do we not have that ability and access from the Creator?
- Does God want you fighting and arguing always?

No! It's your choice. God didn't make it that way.

- Can you come to God and solve the problem? *Sure you can!*

- Is it necessarily going to be absolutely perfect? *No!*

May not be! You may have some imperfections to deal with yourself and your wife/husband—either way. That’s the way life is. As my wife says, ‘that’s the way the cookie crumbles, the mop flops and the jelly rolls.’ You have to take it as it is and go from there. We’ll see that there are several things that we need to understand and realize as we’re going along.

Proverbs 9:13—we can also apply this to the man, How many times does it say in here in referring to a man? Mostly the book of Proverbs is for men. “A foolish woman is clamorous; *she is* simple and knows nothing.... [But a wise woman is great. Same way with a foolish and simple man; causes no ends of problems to a marriage.] ...And she sits at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city, to call those who pass by, who are going straight on their way: ‘Whoever is thoughtless, let him turn in here.’....” (vs 13-16). Sounds like the lineup after the basketball game—doesn’t it?

Verse 16: “...And to one lacking understanding, she says to him, ‘Stolen waters are sweet, and bread *eaten* in secret is pleasant’” (vs 16-17). That’s the whole philosophy of the movie industry, which, by the way, is designed to destroy families, to destroy loving sex within marriage and to create lust and amorous and wrong ideas in the minds of men and women.

This is true concerning anything in life, whether it be marriage, job, investment, studying, whatever you are doing, this is true, Proverbs 12:1 “Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, but he who hates correction *is* stupid.” That’s exactly what the whole women’s movement is about today. They hate any reproof, whatever there is. That’s just the way that they’ve leveraged to get rule over man.

Verse 2: “The good *man* receives grace from the LORD, but He will condemn a man of wicked devices.” This applies in marriage. You cannot take the devices of Satan in a marriage and rule over your wife to make her a vassal, a servant, put her in fear and wretchedness and cause your marriage to be destroyed. ***God is against that as He is anything else.***

(go to the next track)

Things which will destroy a family and a home: *pride!* A man that has so much pride that he won’t listen to anything; and your wife can be a good counselor, can help you with a lot. And the hardest thing for a man to say is, ‘Honey, you’re right.’ Just understand that. If you say something to your husband and he doesn’t say anything, and he’s

kind of thinking about this, he’s received it—back off! He’s received it and will do something about it.

A man has a lot of hard work to do and to be a husband is harder than being a wife from a man’s point of view, and being a wife is harder than being a husband from a woman’s point of view—which means that you both had tough jobs—right? Don’t get in and do any comparing.

Let’s talk about some things about the women. Now is your turn. Let’s go to Ephesians 5, again. If you’ve been having difficulties with husband and wife in being able to accomplish these things, what you need to do is have an aunt or an uncle or whatever baby sit the kids for a day and you plan the day and both of you sit down and talk about it without getting mad. Make an agreement first before you sit down and talk about it that ‘I won’t get mad and I won’t get frustrated and I won’t get up and walk out. Let’s talk about it.’

Because: a woman is able to achieve a whole lot more by submitting to her husband than she is by browbeating him. that’s just a fact. If you’re loving, kind and submissive your husband is just going to fall all over himself to please you. Isn’t that what you want? *Yes!* Don’t try and take control. Help him with the family. You are to be a help suitable, compatible.

Ephesians 5:22: “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands... [if you think you ought to; if you believe it is right—doesn’t say that, does it? NO!] (What does it say?): ...as to the Lord.” One thing for sure, you’re not going to argue against Christ—are you? That doesn’t mean that you become a non-person. Please understand, your husband has to submit to his boss—does he not? Does he not have to submit? *Yes, he does!* So, God is not asking you to do something that your husband does not do.

Even if he has his own business, what does he have to do? *He has to submit to his customers—* does he not? If he doesn’t he won’t have a business—will he? *No, he won’t!* You try running a restaurant and you send out any ole kind of eggs for breakfast that a person orders—burned, hard, runny or soft or raw, whatever—and the customer is going to say, ‘I’m never coming back here again.’ So, men are also in subjection.

I think somehow women tend to think that men don’t have to submit to anything. Yes, they do! “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord,” because the Lord has made him responsible. He is the head by creation. You, entering into marriage have entered into a *created relationship* that God has created.

We have found that this principle (1-Peter 3)

is true within what we've been doing with the Christian Biblical Church of God: How many wives and husbands have been offended because of the Church? They can see things in the Church that maybe you couldn't see. We have seen when the husband and wife who have been in the Church begin to understand about the love of God and the grace of God and really begin to apply that in their lives, that lo and behold we've had a lot of baptisms of formerly unconverted husbands and unconverted wives. This principle here in 1-Peter 3 works.

1-Peter 3:1: "Likewise, *you* wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, even if any are not obedient to the Word, through *the* behavior of the wives they may be gained without a word"—not preaching to them. Because a man will just fall all over himself to please his wife if she's willing, kind, not picking at him, nagging at him and all of these things.

Here's another thing in marriage that's important to do; not only in having communication, but there are times when it's very difficult to really get the point across, or maybe there's an antagonism. This will take place on the job or at home or in the family, and it is this: ***You pray and ask God to put it in the mind of the person the correct and proper thing that needs to be done***, so when they come to the knowledge of it themselves—because God has answered that prayer (which He will)—then it comes from *within* them rather than badgered by the husband from without, or henpecked by the wife from without. It comes from *within* and then it is *from the heart*. That works a whole lot better.

That's why husbands and wives should pray together. And don't use prayer to beat each other up. 'Oh, God, make my wife submissive.' And there she is, 'I've been trying so hard.' 'God, make my husband love me.' Why are you so unloving? Use prayer as a time together to ask God to help you grow together in love. That's very important. That's the only way the marriage is going to work.

You're always going to have stress that will come along—it'll be there. You're always going to have trials which will come along—they'll be there. You're always going to have your ups and your downs—they will always be there. But you have to live through this and love each other through thick and thin. Let it be, wives, by the conduct.

Verse 2: "Having witnessed your chaste behavior *carried out* with reverence; whose adorning, let it not be the external *adornment* of braiding *the* hair, or wearing gold *jewelry*, or dressing in *costly* clothing" (vs 2-3). There are some women who are so worried about their looks that they lose their personality. Don't do that. Your personality is of very primary importance. Some

women get so vain that they almost go into hysterics when at 30 they see the first little lines up in the corner of their eyes. If you have a loving heart it doesn't matter if you have wrinkles all over your face and you're 90-years-old.

Love is what is important! You can take the most beautiful woman in the world and she can be the snippiest, snitiest thing in the world. You can take the most handsome man and he can be the most obnoxious, most proud, fist bashing kind of person that you would ever want. Let it be from the heart, from both sides.

Verse 4: "But *let your adornment be* the inward person of the heart, *manifested* in the incorruptible *jewel* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is of great value in God's sight. For in this way also the Holy women of the past who hoped in God adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; *and* you are her children, *if* you are doing what is right, and are not frightened *by* any intimidation" (vs 4-6). You're not to be intimidated. This is not asking you to become a non-person. This is asking you to become a complete woman in Christ. That's what's important.

Let's talk about some accomplishments that a woman can do. Let's go to Proverbs 31. God does not expect you to be mindless, brainless, submissive dodos with no backbone, no spine or no brain. That's what the women's lib make out everything to be for a woman who submits to her husband. 'There ain't any man going to tell me what to do.' Well, the Lord was a man and He's going to tell us what to do—right?

Notice the ability, and God praises this. Can a woman own her own business? *Sure!* In her own business does he have charge over if there are any men working for her? *Of course, she does!* Nothing wrong with that. There are some women who have great abilities, and as long as they have taken care of their children... I would basically say this: Do not neglect your children for the sake of a career, because your career is going to kill you in the end and your children will hate you for it. Think about that before you do it. No career is worth any giving up or destroying any child. But you can have careers.

Proverbs 31:10: "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her value *is* far above rubies. The heart of her husband trusts safely in her... [Because they love each other and they are bound together in this marriage estate. He can trust in her to do whatever she needs to do.] ...so that he shall have no lack of gain" (vs 10-11). In other words, she's going to properly take care of the house and everything that is done.

Verse 12: "She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.... [that is a true Godly woman and she'll work] ...She seeks wool and

flax...” (vs 12-13). That’s why women love to shop; they love to shop! My saying is, go shop! Do well! My wife can find bargains that are unreal. She can come home with \$100 items that she’s had her eye on for days and weeks and it finally gets down to about \$12, and she buys it. I don’t have the patience, nor do I go around and look at all these little tags. But she does. When we have tough times, she provided clothes for the children, and she bought I would say we paid for an equivalent of a thousand dollars worth of clothing and things like that for maybe \$200. Which we had to, because we were strapped!

“...and works willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants’ ships; she brings her food from afar. She also rises while it is still night, and gives food to her household, and a portion to her young maidens. She considers a field and buys it...” (vs 13-16).

- that takes brains
- it takes understanding
- it takes ability

That’s why when God says ‘submit to your husband’ He’s not asking you give up your personality, He’s asking you to find it. Just the opposite to the way the world thinks. I’d like my wife to go out and buy me a field and make a profit on it. I’d tell her, ‘Go buy!’

“...with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. She binds her loins with strength and makes her arms strong.... [She’s not a little weak whippersnapper that is incapable of doing nothing.] ...She sees that her merchandise *is* good; her lamp does not go out by night.... [In other words, she’s up early and stays up late.] ...She lays her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. She stretches out her hand to the poor; yea, she reaches forth her hands to the needy” (vs 16-20). She concerned with others.

Look at all these activities! This is a woman that is so submissive to her husband that her husband trusts her in everything. What that does, that brings you freedom! Whereas the other brings you rebellion.

Verse 21: “She is not afraid of the snow for her household for all her household *are* clothed with scarlet.... [She takes care of them. She provides for the winter, makes sure that the socks are there, the underwear is there and all that sort of thing. You don’t want to have long-johns in the drawer in the summer, and you don’t want to have summer briefs in the drawer in the winter. She takes care of that.] ...She makes herself coverings; her clothing *is* silk and purple” (vs 21-22). That’s pretty expensive stuff—*isn’t it? Yes, it is!* Here’s a woman with ability. This shows that God is not trying to put

women down, but she’s still in submission to her husband—*isn’t she? Yes, she is!*

Verse 23: “Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land. She makes fine linen and sells *it*, and delivers girdles to the merchants. Strength and dignity *are* her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom...” (vs 23-26).

- she’s educated
- she’s trained herself
- she understands what she is doing

The picture that the femi-nazis picture, or the overlord religionists picture of women is just completely wrong. Too many of us have been influenced by that—both men and women. Too many men have given into their wives because they don’t want to be over-bearing, and too many wives have been over-bearing and picky and bitter against their husbands, because they have been affected by the world and don’t understand the real love of God that they need in their marriage to do it.

Verse 26: “She opens her mouth with wisdom in her tongue *is* the law of kindness. She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed, her husband *also*, and he praises her... [because she does all these things and has ability, yet, in submission to him] ...‘Many daughters have done nobly, but you excel them all’” (vs 26-29).

So, when your wife does good—just like you want a good word; just like you want your wife to say, ‘Honey, that was a good job, I appreciate it’—you do the same to your wife. She’s worked just as hard as you, and worked her fingers to the bone to provide and do the things and make the meals, take care of the home or whatever it may be. In this way then you become one. This way then the two become one instead of having a partnership where you’re always fighting and you’re always trying to move that 50-yard line. Become one!

Verse 30: “Favor *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain; *but* a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates” (vs 30-31). That’s really talking about a woman of great ability and great intelligence and things like this. That’s why go ahead and improve your knowledge and understanding on how to be a wife, how to be a mother, how to cook good nutritious meals at home.

I guarantee you one thing, with your children, if you stay home and take care of the children and you learn to do all things in a very economic way, about the only amount that you would make if you deserted your children and went

out to have a job would be about \$2/hr.; because you have to pay for the babysitter. You don't have the time to cook the food because you have to go buy it cooked, because you don't have the time at home and do it. You don't have the time to go shopping and all of those things. All of those women who are out there striving and working and killing themselves, exhausting themselves with jobs, trying to have a family and children and palm them off to daycare centers, it just doesn't work. If you apply this kind of thing to it, then you will see that it works wonderfully, and God's way is good. He does expect you to have ability.

Let's look at some other things concerning women here in Proverbs 9:13: "A foolish woman is clamorous; *she is* simple and knows nothing.... [God doesn't want women to be that way. Yet, the femi-nazis say that if you submit to your husband that's the way you'll become. *That's not true!*] ...And she sits at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city" (vs 13-14). Then it goes on to say how she handles her life and so forth.

Proverbs 11:16: "**A gracious woman keeps honor...**" That's something! Think of that! Wouldn't it be fine if every time company came into the house your husband says, 'Boy, I've got the greatest wife in the world, look at what she has done.' How good would you feel about that? *You would because you love each other*—right?

Verse 22: "*Like* a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, *so is* a beautiful woman who is without discretion." You have to have manners and all of that. You've seen those. Those are the kind that meet their husbands at the door with a rolling pin! They have no discretion. Instead of being wives they go around the house as if their M-16 tanks, and just destroy everything in the path.

Proverbs 12:4: "A woman of virtue *is* a crown to her husband, but she who causes shame *is* like rotteness in his bones." He's going to eat his heart out because of it. He has feelings.

Proverbs 14:1: "Every wise woman builds her house..." You learn to do things and you learn to make-do with what you have and it's amazing! I'm amazed what my wife can do with things. She just does a fantastic job with them.

She still has her faults. I have my faults. And every once in a while we have a collision with it. It'll happen! But 'don't let the sun go down on your wrath' (Eph. 4). If you have a fight—which you'll have... You get married and everything is perfect and wonderful and love, love, love and everything is great, great, great! Then lo and behold, somewhere down the road something happens and you have a fight. You wonder, 'My, how did that happen?' It

happened because you're still carnal and you made a mistake. It's not the end of the earth. Your marriage is not dissolved. God has not disappeared. You just have some things to overcome, that's all. So, 'don't let the sun go down on your wrath' and sit there and let it boil and stew and ruin your sleep, toss and turn and you wake up the next morning both of you—more grouchy for the husband and the wife more snitty than before—go through another day of it.

Do you love strife and turmoil? Why have two days of a fight, or three days, or a month? Or slam doors and all this sort of thing. People go through that. You know what I'm talking about. I know I'm not talking to perfect people. God calls the weak—doesn't He? In that I'm not trying to put you down, please understand. I'm just saying that when these things occur then have some understanding. If they don't occur and you have a good loving relationship: Tell us! Give us the information! We need it!

Proverbs 18:22: "*Whoever* finds a wife finds a good *thing* and obtains favor from the LORD." That's for the wife and that's for the husband—works both ways. You're working together with it.

Let me tell you something about being snitty, Proverbs 21:9: "*It is* better to dwell in a corner of the housetop than to share a house with a quarrelsome woman"—in a wide house. There's another one that says 'the continual drippings of a wife....' You get the feeling like the raindrop that's coming down the drain and goes Plink! Plink! Plink! And your nerves become frayed! Don't do that! Spare yourself the bitter attitude from having to do it, and spare your husband the grief of having to put up with it. In either case it accomplishes nothing—does it? If you want him to love you and be kind to you then you return and reciprocate in the same way.

Let's come to something which is a physical thing, and it can be remedied over a very short period of time. Paul brought out many of these things. They've had the same problems in marriage beginning with the difficulties that Adam and Eve had. All the good things that you go through, all of the difficult things that you go through, everyone else somewhere sometime has experienced it. They did back in the Church at Corinth. Paul is bringing the things out as they really are. He's upholding the Word of God and he says:

1-Corinthians 11:1: "Be imitators of me, exactly as I also *am* of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, because you have remembered me in all things, and you are keeping the ordinances in the way that I delivered *them* to you. But I want you to understand that the Head of every man is Christ, and *the* head of *the* woman *is* the man, and *the* Head of Christ *is* God" (vs 1-3). That's the way God has

placed it. As we have shown, that is not a hierarchy. When we have a marriage, it is a *created relationship*. When we are called into the Church, it is a *spiritual created relationship* between God the Father, Jesus Christ and the individual that God has called, based on the love of God.

Verse 4: “Every man who has a *covering* on *his* head when he is praying or prophesying... [inspired speaking in most cases. In some minority of cases it means prophesying of events to take place.] ...puts his Head to shame. But every woman who has *her* head uncovered when she is praying or prophesying puts her head...” (vs 4-5)—her husband.

When does a woman pray and when does she prophesy? I’ve searched the Bible and the only place that I can find that women in a community setting—like a church assembly—is praying or prophesying is when she is singing: such as Deborah, such as Samuel’s mother, such as Miriam, sister of Moses. Never are they in the pulpit preaching. Paul said that he does not allow a woman to teach or usurp authority over the man. That has to do with the affairs of the Church and teaching.

“...to shame, for it is the same as being shaved. For if a woman is not covered, let her be shorn. But if *it be* shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered” (vs 5-6). You know today that is a style that is coming in—women who shave their heads. I got on the plane to go to Denton for the marriage and there was a woman who was a stewardess and she must have been in her 50s—now they keep them so they can retire—and she had a crew-cut; I kid you not, she had a crew-cut. I almost fell over my briefcase. I couldn’t believe it. Then I began watching some of the styles and difficulties that women have, and the hairstyles that they have, and it is becoming a style to have really short, short hair! Just coming up here on the trip I just kind of took a survey—six out of ten women had short hair. A lot of them were the older women, cut real short. There’s a saving grace:

1. it is not a sin unto death
2. it’ll grow

You can blame your hairdresser. Your hairdresser has sabotaged your hair. But if you truly want to do the will of God, this is the one little one that a lot of women overlook. Please understand, I’m not going around and picking on women, and I’m not measuring hair lengths. If you can’t figure out what is long enough for you, then I can’t help you. If it looks too short, chances are it is. If on a man it looks too long, chances are it is.

Verse 7: “For, on the one hand, a man ought not to cover *his* head... [Long hair, and there are

more and more men with long hair. I thought we got rid of that when we finally got rid of the hippies. Now it’s all coming back again and they’re all becoming hippies again.] ...since he is *the* image and glory of God; but, on the other hand, *the* woman is *the* glory of man. For *the* man is not of *the* woman, but *the* woman *is* of *the* man. And also, *the* man was not created for the sake of the woman, but *the* woman for the sake of the man. For this reason, it is necessary for the woman to have a *sign of being under authority* on *her* head because of the angels” (vs 7-10)—the power of the blessing of God.

Verse 11: “Nevertheless, neither *is the* man separate from *the* woman, nor *the* woman separate from *the* man in *the* Lord. For as the woman *is* of the man, so also the man *is* by the woman... [Because all men from Adam on were born from their mothers. He’s making sure he’s not putting down anybody, but just clarifying the point here.] ...but all things *are* of God. You judge for yourselves. Is it becoming for a woman to pray to God uncovered?” (vs 11-13). And that means that she is to have hair sufficiently long enough to cover her.

Verse 14: “Or does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a shame to him?” Conversely if a woman has short hair it is a shame unto her. It is not a gross sin, but it is one of those things that:

- Do you want to do the things that please God?
- Do you want to do the will of God?
- Do you esteem all of the precepts of God to be correct and right altogether?

If you do, you shall have no hang-up with it—right? I have noticed this for quite a while and haven’t said anything, but in seeing the style coming out, we’ll just say that all of the hairdressers for the women are sabotaging your hair—let it grow if it’s short.

Verse 15: “But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; because the long hair has been given to her instead of a *veil to cover her head*.” We see that with this the hair for a woman is to be long. God wants a distinction between men and women. When the distinction of the sexes is missing, then you are subtly setting the groundwork for those things which will bring an unequal equality.

What do I mean by that? How can you have an unequal equality? *You are giving the message that men and women are equal and you create an unequal society by doing that!* You also teach children to then be accepting—somewhere in the generation down the line as it is evolved of homosexuality—such as we have today. *It’s very important that men and women follow those things and do those things, because it is pleasing to God!*

Now, let’s come back to Ephesians 4:22, and

let's take these things which apply to the marriage estate. "That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth" (vs 22-24). Then he gives all of these admonitions:

- don't lie to each other (v 25)
- don't be angry with each other and hold your anger and sin; don't let the sun go down on your wrath (v 26)
- no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, do that which is good (v 29)

Men are guilty of that quite extensively. I know some that need to clean up their communication.

- grieve not the Holy Spirit of God (v 30)

If we're doing things contrary to God, we're grieving the Holy Spirit—are we not? *Yes!*

Verse 31: "Let all bitterness, and indignation, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be removed from you, together with all malice; and be kind *and* tenderhearted toward one another, forgiving one another, even as God has also in Christ forgiven you" (vs 31-32). That's how to run your marriages.

These are the overall principles. You have fill in all the details. Husbands and wives, you need to just sit down and say, 'Ok, let's bite the bullet and sit down and have a good loving session. Let's not be beating up on each other. Let's not accuse each other. Let's not bring up things of the past.' *If you do this, I'll do this! If you do that, I'll do this!* No!

- Love each other!
- Submit to each other!
- Submit to God!

Let's see why that's so important. I'll tell you what, this will make childrearing a whole lot easier, too. Your children *know* when you have strife and contention. Your children *know* when there's not the love that ought to be there. It does affect them! It will affect their attitudes. Sometimes, if it continues while they're growing up, when they leave home they are going to have an unbalanced concept of what marriage should be. Now then they have a problem to overcome, which has been caused because of the strain in the family relations.

1-John 4:16: "And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. **God is love**, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him." Try and make your marriages have more of the love of God by you growing in the love of God: for the husband in loving your wife; for the wife in loving your husband; mothers and fathers

to the children; the children to the mothers and the fathers.

Verse 17: "By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected within us..." It is something you have to work at your whole life. The way that it's made perfect is that you go through disappointments and you learn, grow and overcome. Those things can be taken care of that way and overcome with love.

Verse 18: "There is no fear in the love of God... [You don't need to have a hard, heavy hand in being overbearing toward your wife and your family. You create fear and intimidation and that is not love.] ...rather, perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment. And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God. We love Him because He loved us first. **If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother...** [or his wife or her husband or her children or his children] ...**he is a liar.** For if he does not love his brother... [or his wife, husband, children] ...whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen?" (vs 18-20).

So, what we need to do to overcome the problems that we have in marriage is to let the love of God be that cornerstone of everything that we build on!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Isaiah 3:12
- 2) Genesis 1:26-27
- 3) Genesis 2:7, 20-24
- 4) Genesis 3:16-17
- 5) Proverbs 18:22
- 6) Proverbs 19:14
- 7) Proverbs 5:1-21
- 8) Proverbs 9:13-17
- 9) Proverbs 12:1-2
- 10) Ephesians 5:22
- 11) 1 Peter 3:1-6
- 12) Proverbs 31:10-31
- 13) Proverbs 9:13-14
- 14) Proverbs 11:16, 22
- 15) Proverbs 12:4
- 16) Proverbs 14:1
- 17) Proverbs 18:22
- 18) Proverbs 21:9
- 19) 1 Corinthians 11:1-15
- 20) Ephesians 4:22-24, 31-32
- 21) 1 John 4:16-20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 9
- Ephesians 4:25-26, 29-30

Husband/Wife Relations

Fred R. Coulter—July 4, 1999

In our marriages, what we need to do is let God work in our marriages. This sermon is built upon the Sacred Marriage Ceremony. What I did is when I was in Texas to marry my daughter to Chad Alexander. They were both in Sabbath services and I knew that I would have their good attention during Sabbath services, whereas the next day when the wedding ceremony was going on, they wouldn't hear a word and not knowing what they're saying 'I do' to.

So, I went through the Sacred Marriage Ceremony word for word and covered the important things with it. That is a basis for study because we need a whole new approach to the things that we need in our marriages.

We have too many influences from the world. Just absolutely incredible influences that are subtle and things that I am sure that all of us have in our minds. I include myself because I've made plenty enough mistakes and I've done things I shouldn't have done, and I've conducted myself the way I should not have conducted myself, but thankful that God is merciful, gracious, loving and kind and will forgive us.

Out of it He wants us to grow. Out of it He wants us to be converted. You can never understand the good or the love until you have been down to the bottom and in the pit. Then you will understand it. Then you will feel it. Then you will be thankful and appreciate it. Likewise in our marriages.

What I'm going to do is give you a Bible perspective on marriage. Let's go back view what God did with the creation. We're all created by God; Adam and Eve by the very hand of God.

You understand that God did not make anything else of all the creation that He did, by personally fashioning it. He made everything else by command.

- He commanded, and they were!
- God said, and it was!

With man, God was personally involved. This shows the nearness that God wanted to have with His creation of man and woman and how important that is.

Genesis 2:7: "Then the LORD God formed man *of the* dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." We need to understand this, brethren. The world has no knowledge of this. Marriage to them is an arrangement or a partnership or a thing. I'll tell you later why marriage is never a partnership. If you

try and run it as a partnership then you're doomed to failure.

Genesis 1: 26: "And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth'"—everything that God created.

God loved mankind so much that He made the world all that there is for us. Furthermore, He doesn't charge. He gave it as *a gift*. But since He's Creator He does require part of the increase so that you realize that you have nothing that didn't come from God. ***Everything that we have comes from God:***

- everything physical
- everything spiritual
- our mothers and fathers
- our brothers and sisters
- our husbands and our wives

Verse 27: "And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth'" (vs 27-28).

I don't read any management books because I don't think we need to have corporate management style within the Church, but I remember reading one years ago, which said that the best way to get people to accomplish something is to give them a mission command. A mission command is just like we're reading here. It gives broad parameters and the person has the liberty to use their initiative rightly to fill in all the blanks.

That's great—isn't it? Anytime you feel that God is squashing you, you're accusing God because God is not there to squash anybody. He gave the whole world to all human beings. What a tremendous thing that is. Unfortunately, the way they use it, because of sin, is not right.

"...And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth'" (v 28). And it was so.

Then God made another special creation, and that is the woman. We're not going to pick on the

men; we're not going to pick on the women. Some of the things that I may say, if you find yourself falling short don't take it personal, as if somehow I could read your mind—I can't; or someone told me about something you may or may not have done—which they haven't.

God has said that in a *created relationship* the order of things is not hierarchical, although men have made a hierarchy out of it. What He did—because you cannot have two heads; just can't do it—He made the man and then He did a very special thing. All men need to understand this and realize this. God created the woman. There was nothing of all the animals that Adam named that was a help suitable for him (Gen. 2:20).

Genesis 2:21: “And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall over Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs, and *afterward* closed up the flesh underneath. Then the LORD God made the rib (which He had taken out of the man) into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said, ‘This *is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. *She* shall be called Woman because *she* was taken out of Man.’ For this reason... [And I'm sure God told Adam this (repeated in Mark 10) ...shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife—and they shall become one flesh” (vs 21-24).

The reason that marriage is not a partnership is because the two are to become one—that's why. Men and women are different. God made it that way. I don't care if you take a man, grow long hair, put on women's clothes, give him hormones, put makeup on him, wear high heels, go drag the homosexual bars of San Francisco, he's still a male! Or likewise a woman, to shave off all of her hair, put on men's clothes, become rough and gruff—she's still a woman! Just the way it is, and we need to understand that.

Now then, because of sin, God told Adam that he would rule over his wife. Let's understand something about rule; there are many kinds of *rule*. Most feminists when they hear that, they just go blithering cross-eyed—‘No man is going to rule over me!’ Well, the way they depict it, every man is a gorilla and every woman is a toy to be smashed. So, we want to change this around and not have it, so today we have the women's lib movement and the ‘femi-nazis’ are in full control. They don't want women's rights, they want women's rights *and* men's rights. I don't see that in the Church, so I'm not saying that to any of you here in the Church. That's the way it is in the world, and I think some of the thinking has affected us.

A husband is to rule in love. Rulership means that *you are responsible*—no doubt about it! Let's go ahead and talk about responsibilities in marriage. Then we'll talk about the responsibility of a man. The reason being is because wives seem to think it's hard to

submit to their husbands. I don't think in feeling sorry for yourselves that that be the case; so please when I make a generality, if it doesn't fit you exactly don't be offended, please. There will be some things I'll have to say that if I said in a carnal audience out in the world, I would have to have body guards and an open door to run out of very quickly, because I would be assaulted.

I will try and be as straightforward as I can in some of these things. Let's talk about the men. Normally, in sermons like this, because of the sin of Eve, the women are picked on first. But because of the sin of Adam, I'm going to pick on the men first. This is very important for us to do; important for us to realize. In going through this, I want to ask you a few of questions before we get to this.

- What is it that we are to have with our relationship with God?
- What is that built upon?
- *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your being!*
- Correct?
- What is another thing that is important?

Many, many people like to take the Word of God for their own convenience. For those husbands who are oppressive, you're using the Word of God for your convenience, and for you wives who are not submissive, you're using the Word of God to your advantage, or misusing it to your disadvantage—however you want to put it or say it. We often apply this to false ministers—don't we?

Matthew 7:21: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven... [Of course, we're saying ‘Lord, Lord,’ aren't we? *Yes, we are!*] ... but the one who is doing [practicing] the will of My Father Who *is* in heaven.”

What is the will of God for husbands? For wives? When we find out what it is and we ask God for the strength and His Spirit to do it, then we will find out that it really works. If you believe the Word of God—which you have to—and if you pray every day ‘Thy will be done’ in whose life are you asking it to be done? *Your own!*

Psalm 119 is a tremendous and wonderful Psalm and it tells you the attitude that we need to have in loving God's way and loving His commandments and loving God. ***You have to love the Truth!*** Not only do you have to love God, you have to love the Truth, because the Truth comes from God. If you love God you're going to love His Truth. If you're going to do the will of God and really want the will of God, it's going to have to happen in every life—your life, my life, everyone—

because this is all part of conversion and entering into the Kingdom of God.

Psalms 119:124: “Deal with Your servant according to Your mercy, and teach me Your statutes.” Brethren, we always want God to deal with us in mercy. Never wish the wrath of God upon anybody—not even your enemy. Pray for them, because they might even be converted. That’s why God called Saul who became Paul, to show that He ‘will have mercy upon whom He will have mercy.’ And He ‘will call whom He will call.’

Verse 125: “I am Your servant; give me understanding that I may know Your testimonies.... [We need understanding in the marriage estate.] ...it is time for the LORD to work, for they have made void Your law. Therefore, I love Your commandments above gold—yea, above fine gold.” (vs 125-127).

Let’s take that and apply it to the marriage estate within our marriages. I don’t know of any marriage that is perfect, including mine. That’s just the way that it is. I think that if you husbands are waiting for your wife to be perfect before you’ll be nice, or you wives are waiting for your husbands to be perfect before you will submit, you’re both going to be fighting the rest of your life. That’s a guaranteed recipe for trouble. What you have to do is this: *You have to come to the point of*, v 128: “Therefore, I esteem all Your precepts concerning all things to be right...”

Do you agree with that? In everything that God has said? That then is the point of deep conversion. You can’t go along like the Protestants say: ‘Yeah, I love those 9, but that #4...’ or whatever other commandment it can be. You probably heard me ask, through the years: Which commandment do you esteem the least? There was a reason that I said that, because I wanted each one of you to think about it. To see which commandment you really discounted, meaning you esteemed the least, meaning that in those cases you don’t want the will of God quite the way that God says. So, we have to come to this point.

“Therefore, I esteem all Your precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way” (v 28). We need to have the kind of rejection of the ways of the world as a false way and not bring it into the Church or into our lives. Living in the world the way that it is, that’s very difficult to do.

- There are going to be disappointments.
- There will be upsets.
- There will be emotions involved.
- There will be children involved.
- There will be money involved.
- There will be where you live involved.

All of those things will affect you very personally.

So, if you don’t love God and you don’t love each other—and that’s the key, you’ve got to love each other in spite of everything, meaning that you cannot have your love toward your wife or toward your husband conditional. That is, ‘I will love you IF...’ You’re already dead in the water because you’re setting a condition. Maybe you’re setting an impossible condition because you either don’t want to love your wife or love your husband.

Look at the Church. How many divorces have taken place? Why? *Because they brought in the world!* Whenever you bring the world into the Church—whether it be theologically or in marriage or in childrearing—you’re going to destroy it, one way or the other.

Ephesians 5:1: “Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children... [that doesn’t mean to imitate God and exercise wrath] ...and walk in love, **even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us** as an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor” (vs 1-2). Then it says all the things that we are not to do.

It tells us we are to follow the “...fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth” (v 9).

Verse 21: “Submit yourselves to one another in *the* fear of God.” What does that mean? Husbands submit to wives? NO! It means that you agree on things together and that you confer with one another on those things which are mutually done.

Even within the Church here. We’re all subject to one another—aren’t we? In setting things up, he did an excellent job and put forth the best that he could. We submit to it. He says, ‘Fred, we’re going to meet in this meeting hall.’ *Fine!* I submit to him on that because he made the arrangements. We come here and we have a potluck and we all submit one to another. We get out of the women’s way when they want to do the work in the kitchen and put the meal out. We eat it and all that sort of thing. That’s all submitting one to another.

With a hierarchy that’s awfully hard to figure out—isn’t it? In your home, if I come into your home, I’m subject to your home. That’s your home. That’s what all of that means. I’m not going to come into your home and try and do something contrary to what you do, because it’s your home.

Verse 25: “Husbands, love your own wives...” That’s what’s so very important, to love your wife. When you get the marriage ceremony, go over it:

- in sickness and in health

- in want or in wealth
- till death do you part

Now, let's understand something concerning the marriage covenant, which very few people really grasp: When you are married and you covenant with God—husband and wife together in the presence of God—you *have made a covenant with God*. Did you realize that? You just didn't legally agree to live with each other called marriage. ***You made a covenant with God, and a covenant is unto death!*** That's why it's 'until death do you part.'

The only grounds for loosing a marriage is when there is sexual infidelity, because the purpose of marriage is to become one flesh physically and spiritually. That breaks the covenant.

Verse 25: "Husbands, love your own wives..." To what degree and how do you do it. Only if she's a good cook? A good housekeeper? Only if she goes out and gets a job and makes extra money? Only if she takes care of your good car and doesn't ding in the fenders? Only if she fixes your favorite food, which she may have an allergy to? What?

Notice, v 25: "...in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." The husband as the head is to be the one

- to provide
- to work
- to love
- to oversee
- to guide the household
- to love his wife
- to honor her

It takes a lot of work, a lot of effort, to be a husband who properly provides for his wife and his family.

It's far more difficult kind of work than women, in some cases, realize. I have yet to see any woman anywhere—though she may be smarter than some men, and some are—to be able to hold up under the rigors of work as a man as been designed to do. They tried it in New Guinea. Have you ever seen some of those documentaries of New Guinea. The men sit around and smoke drugs and send the women out to the fields to work the potato patch and take care of the hogs. It's a miserable, wretched society. Everybody is unhappy. They are so far away from Christ that's it's unreal.

It's a job! It is work! A man will not necessarily express the emotions the same way a woman will—and he won't, so don't expect him to. God make him that way. It just the way it is! Sometimes he'll keep a lot of things inside and won't say a lot of things because he's mulling over a lot of difficult decisions and things that he's either

working on at work, or having in mind for the family, or things that he's going to do, wants to do, or desires to do.

In loving his wife, he's got to put forth a great effort, just like you say you have to put forth a great effort to submit to him. But if you love your wives and if you love your husbands—and loving God together—that's the best foundation that it's going to be.

Verse 26: "So that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with the washing of water by *the* Word." To provide everything for that will be nice, lovely, good; to give her the means to do the things that she needs to do for the house and for being that part of the one that you are becoming.

Verse 27: "That He might present it to Himself *as* the glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing... [That's spiritually speaking. I wish that we all could have no spots or wrinkles, but that's just the way it goes. We get spots and wrinkles and gray hair—all of these things that come along—don't we? *Yes!*] ...but that it might be Holy and without blame. In the same way, husbands are duty-bound [ought]... [In the old English that meant you were *under obligation*.] (men are obligated): ...to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself... [Because the two shall become one. That's important to really understand.] ...for no man has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord *does* the Church. For we are members of His body—of His flesh and of His bones" (vs 27-30).

The first time I came to understand that, I said: How can we be a part of the spiritual body of Christ through His bones? I understand His flesh, because He gave His body as a sacrifice—right? But what do you mean *bones*? Finally, it dawned on me. That goes clear back to the creation of Eve who was created from a bone or a rib from Adam. The woman was created from the innermost part of man, right close to his heart, because that's where she should be. Likewise, Christ did the same thing. He is creating the Church from the innermost part of His being.

- Are we not called The Body of Christ? *Yes!*
- Are we not called The Bride of Christ? *Yes!*

Then Paul repeats what it is here, v 31: "For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I am speaking in respect to Christ and the Church. Nevertheless, let each one of you love his wife even as himself; and *let each* wife see that she reverence *her* husband" (vs 31-33).

I've heard women in the Church say, 'Well, I don't know about this *reverence* bit.' Well, we'll explain that when we get there.

Let's look at some things which are very important, which a man has to look to in building the house. Let's look at some of the responsibilities that a man has.

Psalms 127:1: "Unless the LORD builds the house..." That has to do with your marriage, because when you're married then you build a house—do you not? You buy one or whatever it is, and what you're doing with your lives, you're building it—correct? You need to build the house of your marriage *God's* way. It will work! No doubt about it.

Just because maybe your parents failed. Or maybe you've seen some in the Church that never had the knowledge that you have in loving God and loving each other, to build a marriage. They're not successful. Don't worry, there's still hope for them. They could still come to understand. A person can change in heart, mind and attitude anytime they really repent to God. That can happen. So, don't let anything build up in you as anger for a man, or hostility as a man, or bitterness as a woman. And women tend to be more bitter and keep things in the back of their mind a whole lot longer.

What is that going to do? *All that's going to do is sour your attitude and destroy your relationship!* You want God to forgive you—don't you?—through Christ. Well then, you do the same likewise with your husbands, your wives, your children. If it involves your mother and father, then that too, that's all part of it.

"...they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD keeps the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.... [Doesn't this sound like the way the world is today? The rat-race so many people live in?] ...It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late... [to drive on the freeway, go to work and do all these things] ...to eat the bread of toil..." (vs 1-2). Why can't we have some happy marriages? Happiness is also going to have some disappointment. We can! We need to do it God's way, it'll happen that way.

In building the house, what you need to do is this: I remember an evangelist bragged that when he got married, on his wedding night that he took his wife in the bedroom and he took off his trousers and threw them down on the floor and said, 'Now, I am the head of the house and if you can wear them, put them on.' What a wonderful, loving way to start a marriage! The worst thing in the world.

There's also a noted evangelist who bragged about 'spanking' his wife. That's not God's way! You won't read in the Proverbs anywhere that when your

wife is upset that 'thou shalt spank her.' *All that is just a distorted fixation on power!* To be a husband and head of the family is NOT a power position. It is a leadership position by *creation*.

- To serve!
- To build!
- To love!
- To become one!

That takes a lot of work!

1-Peter 3:7: "Likewise, *you* husbands, dwell with *your wives* according to knowledge, as with a weaker vessel..." I'll just have to say this: Those who need anointings run about 7-3 out of 10 *women*. Women are the 'weaker vessel.' When you're young you may not think so, but you still are. Does that mean that all men are strong? *No, there are some weak men, too!* There are some strong women, too. If you, as a woman, have not yet married, and you have strong personality, don't marry someone who is going to be 'milktoast Joe.' It won't work! If you marry him, you're bound for life. Then you have to make it work under a handicap. That's why you pray and ask God to provide you with the right husband and with the right wife so that it can be blessed of God.

"...giving them honor *as* women, and as joint heirs of *the* grace of life so that your prayers may not be cut off" (v 7). If you're going to have family strife—husband and wife competition and fighting all of the time—guess what? Don't count on very many prayers being answered—right? Doesn't it say, 'they be hindered.'

Let's see some things that a man has to do. Let's come to the Proverbs, because men have to apply themselves as well as women. We'll see that women have to apply themselves, too. Man being the head of the house and provider, when I married Rachele and Chad, I told him, 'I'm going to tell you when to say *I do*. When I go through 'you're going to love her, honor her, to cleave to her, to cherish her, when I say *provide for her* you say *I do*.' I said I will blink and my eyes will come up \$ signs.

To be a husband and a father and the head of a house—and head of the house should be rulership with love, kindness, consideration and all of that—here's what it is:

Proverbs 10:16: "The labor of the righteous *tends* to life..." The reason that he does, understand that men are *work oriented*. God made them that way. That's why they get into careers. Sometimes if they have to change careers later on, support them! Sometimes they do. In all the things that we have gone through, if Delores didn't love me and support me we would have never made it. I don't mean support me in the

sense of going to work, but support what has to happen because you love him. That's important because it is labor.

Verse 29: "The way of the LORD is strength to the upright... [That's what needs to be done to have your marriage strong, but you have to do it the way of the Lord.] ...but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity" You can apply that right to a marriage. You bring sin into the marriage by

- not having the right kind of marriage
- not being the right kind of husband
- not providing the best that you can

If your husband is providing what he can, don't browbeat him. Encourage him. I tell you one thing that is so, so very important: Men, though they like to give the effect that they are strong, that they don't have too much emotion, they do need encouragement from their wives.

Proverbs 12:24: "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule..." A husband in doing what he's doing he has to be diligent in it. Any man who loves his family, loves his wife doesn't have to be told to get up and go to work, because he's always thinking about that. He'll get up and go to work, because he wants to provide, he wants to do.

"...but the lazy shall be under tribute" (v 24). If your husband is a lazy slough, then you're always going to have difficulty. Then you will never get some of the things that you want. I'll tell you this, all the brow beating in the world isn't going to make him work harder. ***So men, in your responsibility as head of the house and to do that, you must set your goals***

- to work
- to improve yourself
- to build your career
- to be the best that you can be in the things that you're doing
- being the husband in the way that you can be

In loving your wife, be diligent in it. God will bless you.

Verse 27: "The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting... [In other words, the sloughful man is always looking for a handout.] ...but the substance of a diligent man is precious." There are people who, through a period of time in their life, because they work, because they're diligent, because they apply themselves—husband and wife working together—that they're able then to build their own families, they're able to increase in their personal possessions and things like this.

If you get personal possessions don't set

your heart on them. Enjoy them while you have them. Take care of them while you have them. Use them to the betterment of the family and everything. "...but the substance of a diligent man is precious" (v 27).

All of these things have to do with the work of the man. Proverbs 11:23: "The desire of the righteous *is* only good..." That's what you want with your family—isn't it? That's what every husband wants. He's going to have failures, defeats, setbacks, trials. You think you have trials at home with the children, try his boss. Turn it around the other way. That's true, too.

And for the sake of providing for the family, maybe the father has to do something that he may be good at it, but he might not be the kind of expert that he would really want to be—and he really wants to be—but because of certain things he can't be. Well, he needs your encouragement and support in that so he can grow and increase in his abilities through life. That's all a part of building the house, the family.

You can tear it down to many other things. Read all of the Proverbs concerning the sloughful, the lazy, the indolent. You can see that in families where the husband is sloughful and lazy and indolent or just doesn't care. I'm talking about beyond being discouraged because of something that comes along. I'm talking about those who are just neglectful and have no sense of responsibility. Everything deteriorates and falls apart.

I don't know of any case of that here, but I'm just saying that in general. In marrying, make sure that you know the one you're going to marry first before you marry them, because you know once you marry ***that's it!***

(go to the next track)

Proverbs 12:3 "A man shall not be established by wickedness... [Neither shall a marriage, a business—nothing shall be established by wickedness.] ...but the root of the righteous shall not be moved. A woman of virtue *is* a crown to her husband..." (vs 3-4)—because she supports him.

Now, let me just mention here that there is a vast difference between supporting your husband and just defending your position with him. What do I mean by that? Men really—as you women know but don't want to admit, and a lot of men don't want to admit—have fragile egos. Men need support. The last thing a man needs is a contentious woman: carping, picking, criticizing, always being a downer. Too many women are like that. Men think differently than women. That's just the nature of it. God made us that way, to think differently.

Men are more goal oriented, and in that, to

get to the goal, they're going to do it. Maybe they'll forget some of the niceties along the way. Maybe they'll even offend women in doing what they're doing, because they're different. For a virtuous woman to be a crown to her husband, then she needs to support him—not just defend him, support him, uplift him. Not sympathizing as with a little child—'now, now there, little junior, you hurt your knee or let me kiss your finger where you cut it.' That's not support. That is condescending!

Support is that you help him in everything that you can do to help him to achieve whatever he's to achieve—whether in work, whether at home, whether in the family, regardless of what it is. I'll tell you one thing, if you do that, you're going to find that your whole relationship with your husband is going to improve tremendously. Absolutely tremendously! It really, really will! **Be the crown to your husband!**

Verse 4: "...but she who causes shame is like rotteness in his bones." And that's the way it is with some men. Women can get so bad that they their whole lives just shrink up and shrivel away, because of the treatment of women toward their husbands. That can happen, so we need to keep that in mind. Again, we see both sides, how it's going here.

Now, let's talk about some of the little problems that you may have. Proverbs 15:16: "Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble with it. Better is a dinner of vegetables where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred with it" (vs 16-17). This shows, and I'm sure you've experienced it, where you've had a knockdown, dragged out argument and no one is speaking! I've experienced it.

- How did you feel? *Miserable!*
- How did your food taste? *Terrible!*
- What was the best you ever had in the food? *It was rotten!*

—because of fighting and contentious things like this.

Verse 18: "A wrathful man stirs up discord, but one slow to anger calms strife." That's a source of a lot of problems in marriage. Where the man gets angry and just stirs it up! Stirs it up!

Same way with a woman; she'll do it a little differently. She'll be contentious like the dripping of a faucet—pickety, pickety, pickety or drip, drip, drip—which can also stir up the anger! Like fueling the fire here. Then it goes on and on and on. We'll see in the book of Ephesians there's a solution for that.

Proverbs 16:8: "Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice." Oh, how true that is! There's nothing but fights over

it.

Verse 19: "*It is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud.*" That's what there needs to be in a marriage, a humble spirit from both husband and wife. How? *Toward God!* In the way that it should be.

Verse 24: "Pleasant words *are like* a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." There's the way to get right results in your marriage, right there. You can overlook a whole lot.

- You don't have to bring up every negative thing that there is—do you?
- You don't have to be contentious about everything that comes along—do you?
- You don't have to point out every fault that there is—do you?
 - Why not uplift?
 - Why not help?
 - Why not have pleasant words?
 - Why not be encouraging?

'Oh, that may puff him up.' Not necessarily! Maybe he'll be more puffed up if you don't. Maybe your wife won't be so divisive and contentious and drippy with her criticism if you have pleasant words for her. That's just part of life! You really need to understand that.

Proverbs 17:1: "Better is a dry piece of bread, and quietness with it, than a house full of sacrifices *with* fighting." *Absolutely!* Have you ever walked into a house where they just ended a family argument? If you had a knife you could take it out and cut the atmosphere and just stack it—right?

- Is anybody happy? *No!*
- Is it pleasant? *No!*
- Is it good for anybody? *No!*
- What does it work out to be? *Rottenness and misery*, just like the Proverb says.

Now, let's go to the New Testament and see what we need to do; see how we can live our lives in a right way. A lot of these things are here for us to learn, to know, to do, to understand. And a lot of it has to do with just living and time and love and experience. Each marriage is going to be different, because of the interest of the people involved and the things that need to be done.

Let's understand something which is true. I think that one of the biggest problems that men have in a marriage is that they don't consult with their wives when they need to—*which they should*. They're not kind and considerate to their wives—as they ought to be. One of the biggest problems that women have is that *they think they know what their husbands are thinking*.

Many times you can make a pretty good guess, but not all the time; and it applies to husbands toward their wives, too. If you think you know what your wife is thinking, or if you think you know what your husband is thinking, you probably really don't know. Do you know their heart and mind before God when they pray? Do you really? What does that end up being? *That ends up being judgmental! Being judgmental to condemnation is one of the worst things that there is in marriage.*

We have some good instruction in 1-Peter for us in how that it affects our relationship with God and our relationship with our marriage. We need to understand that and learn that, because this is how we can improve our marriages.

1-Peter 2:21: "For to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His footsteps, Who committed no sin; neither was guile found in His mouth" (vs 21-22).

I want to focus in on *fairness* and *equality*. That becomes very important at this point. I want to talk a little bit about *fairness* because

- Was it *fair* that God had to take upon Himself all the sins of the whole world?

You think about that for a minute if you think some of the things you're going through are not fair.

- That He was beaten for our sin?
- That He received stripes because of our iniquities?

Well, of course not!

Verse 23: "Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; *when* suffering, He threatened not, but committed *Himself* to Him Who judges righteously; Who Himself bore our sins within His own body on the tree, so that we, being dead to sins, may live unto righteousness; by Whose stripes you were healed. For you were as sheep going astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls" (vs 23-25).

Then He leaves that idea and goes right into the situation of husband/wife relations as Christians. We all get our perspective and we all see that God took upon Him all of these things. That becomes a solution to the problems within a marriage. Not the divorce courts of this world. Not the psychologists of this world. ***But going to God and getting things solved God's way!***

1-Peter 3:1: Likewise... [What do you mean *likewise*? In reference to what we just read. In the same manner and attitude as Christ had.] ...*you* wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands... [That's the only way a marriage is going to work.

You cannot have two heads. You cannot have two bosses. You cannot have two directions to go in a marriage—only one!] ...so that, even if any are not obedient to the Word, through *the* behavior of the wives they may be gained without a word."

That's a source of a lot of problems within marriage, where one mate believes and the other one doesn't believe, and then trying to convert that one. No! It needs to be by example—both for the husband and for the wife.

Verse 2: "Having witnessed your chaste behavior *carried out* with reverence; whose adorning, let it not be the external *adornment* of braiding *the* hair, or wearing gold *jewelry*, or dressing in *costly* clothing; but *let your adornment be* the inward person of the heart, *manifested* in the incorruptible *jewel* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is of great value in God's sight" (vs 2-4). That doesn't mean you give up your person. That doesn't mean you give up your personality. That just means that this is the way—provided that your husband is loving you, which he ought to—to make the marriage work and be happy.

Verse 5: "For in this way also the Holy women of the past who hoped in God adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands." That's the way we have a Christ-centered, God-oriented marriage and are able to get along as husbands and wives.

Verse 6: "Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord... [I don't know of any women today who are willing to call their husbands 'lord.' This is not an absolute requirement that you do, I want you to understand that, because you can call a person *lord* and be hateful in it. It's not the calling him *lord* that made it right, but *her attitude* in yielding to him.] ...*and* you are her children, *if* you are doing what is right, and are not frightened *by* any intimidation. Likewise, *you* husbands, dwell with *your wives according to knowledge...*" (vs 6-7).

That's very important. Man has to have knowledge and understanding on how to make a marriage work. You're never going to beat your wife into submission. You women are never going to make your husband be what he is to be by picking at him. It won't work!

You've got to do it "...according to knowledge as with a weaker vessel... [since she is a woman] ...giving them honor..." (v 7) There's a place of honor that God has for women. ***Honor as your wife!***

- She is not chattel
- She is not a servant
- She is not a slave.
- She's not there to do all of your dirty work

and for you to go through the house like you're a rampaging torpedo and strewing and throwing everything around, so that 'now the woman can clean up my mess.'

No way! That won't work! Too many men do that though. You need to consider it.

"...dwell with *your wives* according to knowledge, as with a weaker vessel, giving them honor..." (v 7) By doing the things to show the honor to her; to help her; to encourage her. And she's going to have more emotional ups and downs than you. You need to be a help and a stabilizing and a loving factor for her. That's just the way it is.

"...as women, and as joint heirs of *the* grace of life... [Here's something that is given as a warning to men. Not to women, but to men! Is God holding you responsible? *Yes!* What does He say?] ...so that your prayers may not be cut off" (v 7).

If you husbands are having trouble getting your prayers answered, maybe you need to look at how you're treating your wife. Maybe you need to understand how your relationship with your wife is. Maybe that's why your prayers are not being answered, they're being cutoff. They're not going any higher than in the room in which you are praying. Maybe you'd better start:

- Oh, God, help me to have the right attitude in my marriage.
- Help me to re-establish the right situation with my wife.
- Help me to humble myself before You so that I can
 - ✓ show love to my wife
 - ✓ show her honor
 - ✓ show her the respect

That doesn't mean you're giving up your rulership. As some might say a man is to RULE over the women. I've heard that in the Church, too. Then they've gone all the other way and saying now, 'let's treat them with equality.' God never said it's equal! It's togetherness, but it's not equal. God gives this warning to men. He doesn't give it to women. Therefore, the man bears the greater responsibility.

Let's see something else that's very important in the marriage. Sex is never to be used as a manipulative tool to withhold so that you can get your own way. That's either for the husband or the wife.

1-Corinthians 7:2: "Rather, to avoid sexual immorality..."—because God made us as creatures who have sex and love in that sex. No animal has love in sex, only human beings. That's why He made it so that when a husband and wife have relations, they are the only thing of God's creation

that have conjugal relations face-to-face. You think about that! Nothing of all the creation that God has done for reproductive of any animal of any species anywhere are face-to-face. It's not just reproduction. There is love, joy, becoming one. That's what marriage is all about. What Paul is saying is that sex outside of marriage is not right.

"...let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render *his* conjugal dues to *his* wife, and in the same way also the wife to *her* husband.... [That doesn't mean that now the man becomes a total sex-monger and drags her off into the bedroom five times a day. That's not what God means. Do you understand that?] ...The wife does not have power over her own body, but the husband; and in the same way also, the husband does not have power over his own body, but the wife" (vs 2-4).

Notice, if you don't have proper conjugal relations in the marriage, it says, v 5: "Do not deprive one another *of conjugal dues*..." In other words, you are defrauding the marriage. Why have marriage if there is not sex? If there wasn't sex people could just live together and come and go as they want. There would be nothing to bind them. That's why God made male and female. That's why there is marriage. This is the responsibility that is due. God says so. That would be another thing which would cut your prayers off from God. You're not going to solve any problems in the marriage by rationing sex, by cutting it off.

I'll tell you one thing: There may be a lot of emotions which make it miserable and rotten and not worthwhile unless you're trying to run your marriage God's way. Can there be sex without love? *Yes!* Can there be marriage without love? *Yes!* Not all marriages are depended upon love. Love is something you grow in. Love is something you build up. Love is something that you work at. It's not just a feeling. There's the responsibility there. This then is the physical aspect of it.

Let's see the spiritual aspect of this, so we understand how then God expects a husband and wife to react and interrelate together and how that marriage can be as Christ would want it to be.

Ephesians 5:20—this shows our attitude; this shows what it needs to be. Marriage is a dual responsibility of husband and wife and God lays the final, ultimate responsibility upon the husband. The one who is made the head is the one who is ultimately responsible. We know that marriage pictures Christ and the Church.

- Is Jesus responsible to the Church? *Yes, He is!*
- Is He responsible for helping, encouraging,

teaching and uplifting the Church? *Yes, He is!*

Ephesians 5:20: “Giving thanks at all times for all things to God and the Father in *the* name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” I tell you, if you count your blessings—there’s even the song: ‘Count Your Blessings, name them one by one and it will amaze you what God has done.’ That’s what we need to be here. *Be thankful!* You can always find a circumstance in life which is worse than yours. Always! I don’t care how bad you may think it is, there’s always one worse than you somewhere in the world.

“...at all times for all things...” Irrespective of whether you’re being tried. You may have some difficult times—or being blessed. Always be thanking our God and Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then Paul goes to v 21 to show with that attitude—this applies to husbands and wives: “Submit yourselves to one another in *the* fear of God.” Do you think that God is going to bless you as a husband because you’re mean and cruel to your wife, and that you’re going to RULE over her and that you’re going to FORCE her and you’re going to MAKE her to do this? *Of course not! Absolutely not!* Your prayers are cutoff, because you’re not honoring her as God expects you to do.

Do you think you’re going to accomplish the will of God by nagging and picking and criticizing and looking at every fault that your husband makes? *No! It won’t work!* You have to be submitting yourselves to God. Then the rest of it flows.

Verse 22: “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” Are the husbands to submit to Christ? *Yes, they are! Absolutely!* So, what God requires of a wife is no more than God requires of the man toward God. Absolutely the same!

Verse 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. For even as the Church is subject to Christ...” (vs 23-24).

- Are you husbands really out there doing these things as Christ does for the Church?
- Are you really trying to be the provider and preserver and deliverer?

OR

- Are you lazy and sloughful and indolent?

All of those things all come into play in it. Here is the thing that’s important with it. What we’re doing is giving you some tools on how you can assess your marriage, how you can assess your life and what you need to do to have a marriage that is Christ-centered and God-oriented.

“...in the same way also *let* wives be *subject* to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your own wives... [How? *With Godly Divine love!*] ...in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, **and gave Himself for it**” (vs 24-25). That shows a tremendous attitude of sacrifice, work, perseverance, continuance, honor and all of this. That’s so very important. Why did Christ do that?

Verse 26: “So that He might sanctify it... [make her Holy, pure and righteous] ...having cleansed *it* with the washing of water by *the* Word.” It’s accomplished by grace, love and understanding. No by browbeating, brute force, shouting and yelling and screaming. That isn’t how Christ is doing it.

How many times you make mistakes and go to Christ and say, ‘Oh, God, forgive me.’ Does God forgive you? *Yes, He does!* How ought you to treat your wife?

- with love
- consideration
- kindness
- understanding
- forbearance
- hold your tongue
- hold the correction
- let things work out

You’ll see that things go along a whole lot better. Marriage is not going to be that the husband is going to *make* the wife do his will, or the wife is going to *make* the husband do her will. It won’t happen! It just won’t work.

So, what if you do have a big fight? What if you do have a big, knockdown argument? Then you do just exactly as it says there in Eph. 4: ‘don’t let the sun go down on your wrath.’ Make up before the day is over. That’s what it’s saying. Then when you get up in the morning, don’t carry over yesterday’s problem into today.

Why destroy the present time with past problems. There are going to be enough future problems in the coming present time that you don’t have to destroy it with past problems. Do you see how this all works? It’s not that God is against women. It isn’t that God is unfair to women and now he’s given this all to the man to beat up on the woman and the woman’s place is just to suffer. That’s not God’s way at all.

Verse 25: Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with the washing of water by *the* Word; that He might present it to Himself... [How?] ...*as the glorious Church...*” (vs 25-27).

The whole purpose of the New Covenant is that Christ and the Church enter into this marriage relationship, which is pictured by the physical marriage of husband and wife. That shows we all have a long way to go in making our marriages right before God. It's something that is continually ongoing. Something that you have to set your course for your whole life, and look down through time and space as it were and realize that it's going to have to go beyond children coming into the family, marrying and growing up and going out on their own, and then grandchildren, great-grandchildren and all of this.

Then there's going to come a time when one is going to die. Very seldom do husband and wife die at the same time. If you're a widow or a widower, you don't want to look back and say, 'oh, if I could have done this or done that, or the other thing.' No! You can say that you did the very best that you could and with God's blessing and you had as good a marriage as it could be. You had some human faults and mistakes, but that's just the way that it is. That's exactly what God wants to do with the Church. That she might be consecrated, Holy and completely blameless.

"...not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame. In the same way, husbands are duty-bound... [under obligation to God] ...to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself" (vs 27-28).

That says an awful lot. That means not only just as yourself—your goals, purpose, work—that is all bound up in the phrase: "as himself." Not just necessarily the flesh of your body alone. That's part of it, but it has to do with the whole focus and purpose of your life. You see the great responsibility that God lays upon the husbands; and the responsibility that God lays upon the wives. It has to work together. It's a one-way street, but there are two people involved. You can't have one going one way and one going the other way. You have to be going in the same direction.

If there are difficulties involved, learn how to work around them. Learn how and I'll tell you this—you can understand how to do it more by taking it to God in prayer, asking God to help you do it; asking God to help you see and understand what it needs to be—than you can by going to all the marriage counselors in the world. I can guarantee you that. I can tell you that from personal experience.

Verse 28: "In the same way, husbands are duty-bound to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself; for no man has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes

it, even as the Lord *does* the Church. For we are members of His body—of His flesh..." (vs 28-30)—through the crucifixion and all that means. That is a whole lifetime of trying to understand what that means. After being a minister for as long as I have been, and being in the Church as long as I have been, I'm really beginning to understand the whole greatness of what Christ did and becoming that perfect sacrifice for our sins. That is absolutely incredible beyond belief. It is something that we need to grow in, and as you do then you're going to grow in understanding and how to make your marriage happier.

"...and of His bones. For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall be one flesh" (v 30). That is the whole key and emphasis as to what we need to look to in marriage. Your whole spiritual existence as it were is all wrapped up in your marriage. Whether it's an easy marriage or whether it's a difficult marriage. You can't just up and walk away from it because there are difficulties that come along.

- Did Christ up and abandon the Church because there were difficulties? *No!*
- Did He reject it because they had problems and things that maybe in their own choices helped create the problems? *No, He didn't!*

He's kind, understanding, corrective, merciful, leading, guiding in every way.

Verse 31: "In correlation to the spiritual analogy, which is a type, a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to and cleave to his own wife and the two of them shall become one flesh and blend their live into one." You need to think about that! Marriage is so that you can blend your lives into one. You don't lose your identity, but you both gain a greater identity with both of you working together in the marriage. Just as we are to be one flesh in marriage so are we to be one spirit with Christ.

Also, that comes down to the marriage that we are going to have the same attitude, the same going forth in our marriages in the attitude that we have toward Christ.

Verse 32: "This mystery is great, immense and supreme; but I am speaking concerning the relationship between Christ and the Church and their eternal destiny." Remember that with your marriage. Remember that when you are trying to get things straightened around in your marriage. Start with the spiritual aspect of it.

You're not going to correct any part of the physical aspects of the marriage until you get the spiritual aspects squared around. You're not going to

get that going in the right direction except through prayer and yielding to God, studying His Word. This sermon is not intended to be a cure-all for all relations between husbands and wives. This is intended to be a view from God's perspective as to what we need to do to bring our marriages together the way they ought to be. Everyone is going to be different from the other. Getting the spiritual things straightened out is the most important.

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 7-27-11

Verse 33: "However, let everyone of you be loving his own wife exactly as himself; and the wife see that she revering her husband." And oh, how much better our marriages would be if we were to all do that.

God's Word is absolutely profound concerning our marriages and is a great key so that we can enter into the Kingdom of God and will be an added blessing for us having our marriages in the way that would result in having a blessing from God now to eliminate the fighting, arguing, encroachment from the world and really draw close to God. Do that as God would want you to do.

Husbands, love your wives; and wives, you submit yourself to your husbands and walk down the same road together. Then you can enter into the Kingdom of God knowing that you have given your best to each other and to Christ!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*
by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 2:7
- 2) Genesis 1:26-28
- 3) Genesis 2:21-24
- 4) Matthew 7:21
- 5) Psalm 119:124-128
- 6) Ephesians 5:1-2, 9, 21-33
- 7) Psalm 127:1-2
- 8) 1 Peter 3:7
- 9) Proverbs 10:16, 29
- 10) Proverbs 12:24, 27
- 11) Proverbs 11:23
- 12) Proverbs 12:3-4
- 13) Proverbs 15:16-18
- 14) Proverbs 16:8, 19, 24
- 15) Proverbs 17:1
- 16) 1 Peter 2:21-25
- 17) 1 Peter 3:1-7
- 18) 1 Corinthians 7:2-5
- 19) Ephesians 5:20-26, 25-33

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 2:20
- Mark 10

Marriage Covenant

Fred R. Coulter

Today we're going to have a special presentation because Brandon Alexander and Alisa Bonhert from Canada—I don't know what the connection between Texas and Canada is, but some way it works out. There's going to be a little presentation for them, because they are planning on the official wedding to be sometime in June and I think Wayne Stenhouse is coming out to do it. So because of that—and I think it was a little over ten years ago that Chad and Rachelle were married. I was blessed to be able to marry them. I guess all three of us had shaking knees and all this sort of thing and it was really quite a tremendous thing to do. Now, his brother Brandon is a young man, and he's found a young woman from a far land, if we could put it that way. So they're going to get married.

What we are going to do, we are going to go through *The Sacred Wedding Ceremony*, and let's see what God requires of us. For Brandon and Alisa this will help them understand what they're getting themselves into. For everyone who is married, this will help you reconfirm what you need to do. Let's understand this: marriage is not a commitment; *marriage is a covenant*. A covenant is far different than a commitment. Today in the world that we're living in, which is just obsessed with sex, there's hardly any true knowledge of what is right and what is wrong and what it means to be married, and what it means to be in covenant marriage with your husband and wife *vs* what many people do—live together, and they don't know whether they will marry or not.

My wife, Dolores, because she can't stand a lot of the TV, she has her favorite program, which is called House Hunters. No porn, no heavy music, no hard rock, and she gets to see many different houses that they have. But she was telling me how there are two things that people do today. People do not have children, they have animals, and they are more concerned about the space for their animals than anything else. The other one is that there are many people/couples, who live together, and they are supposedly committed to each other, but they're not yet married. Some of them have been that way for years.

Let's look at what God expects. What is the right and the correct standard to receive the blessings of God, to be in contact with God, to have the kind of marriage that God wants us to have. After all the love and all the emotions and everything, all of that gets all settled in, then marriage becomes a little

different than the idealistic, wondrous dreams that people have. So let's begin:

The Sacred Wedding Ceremony
(Paraphrased Translation of the
Scriptures)

We will make comments and we will go to different Scriptures as well as the ones that are here. So I have this printed front and back for you.

This is a happy and joyous occasion. Marriage is a natural union, but a Divine institution... [It has not been instituted by man.] ...ordained at creation by Almighty God. This intimate love relationship was created by God Himself, because GOD IS LOVE.

And human beings were made to receive and to give love, not only from each other as husband and wife, but each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, each other as neighbors to neighbors, different levels of love and consideration and understanding, the most intimate being that of marriage.

God does not approve what they have in many, many states in America today. Homosexual marriages, and those kind of things, we know from the Word of God are perversions and are meant to destroy the true understanding of marriage. Because Satan the devil knows that if you destroy the marriage, if you get everyone selfish and self-serving, and if you get them wanting their own way in stubbornness and in carnality—and you destroy it and you cause divorce—then you destroy the relationship the children need to grow up to be responsible adults. That's what he wants.

That's why the NOW gang and the NARLs all want single-mother support, and they glorify single mothers. Well, the truth is single mothers are still married. *They're married to the state*. Look at the obscenity of it, the abomination of it out there in California. There are a lot of abominations take place out in California, because what happened when the U.S. tilted to the left, all the fruit and nuts ended up there.

God's way is *the* way. The others are men's ways and Satan's ways. It has to be based on love, and love is not just an emotion. Love constitutes faith, loyalty, trust, and honesty in the roles that God created us to fulfill. Those are the proper roles because He made us. Here's a key thing that is lost in everything that the world has concerning marriage:

Physically and spiritually the marriage estate portrays mankind's supreme destiny of ONENESS with God...

That's tremendous, because God is a family. So then you can look at it this way: when you are married and you bring children into the world, it also helps you to understand how God has to deal with us, because you have to deal with your children. So it is a perfect picture of what God wants, and we all fall short of that perfect picture. That's why there's repentance, and that's why there is redemption.

...in His family, in His eternal kingdom forever.

Remember, New Jerusalem has no temple, because God the Father and the Lamb will be there and They are the light of it. So, it will be this intimate relationship with God forever on a high spiritual plane.

Since God Almighty is the Supreme, Sovereign Ruler, He is our Creator, therefore, it is only fitting and right that we use the laws and principles of God's Word as the fundamental authority which governed this sacred marriage covenant to which you are both now entering.

A covenant! Now let me just state this: ***A covenant is a commitment to death.*** Once you pledge in a covenant relationship—that is unto death. I hate to use the word commitment, because it's so loose and non-binding today.

In the beginning, after the Lord God had created Adam, He said, "It is not good for man to be alone, I will make a helper, suitable and compatible for him."

Suitable and compatible also means *a counterpart, a sustainer beside him.* That is the most accurate translation of 'compatible for him.'

"So, the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then God took one of the man's ribs, and from it He fashioned a woman, and brought her to the man. And the man said... [after he was quite amazed] ...'This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.'"

So that's quite a thing—isn't it? God never intended the woman to be a separate authority aside from a man when she's married. Before she's married, she is. But just like when we are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, we are no longer authorities to ourselves.

- God is our authority
- His Word is our authority
- His way is how we are to live and walk

So likewise, when there is marriage, God made it so that the woman is to be in subjection to her husband, but the husband is to love his wife.

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Gen. 2:18, 21-24).

God performed the first wedding ceremony.

Then the Lord God blessed them saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth."

Of course, that's what's happening today, although not in the way that God intended. That creates a lot of problems in the world and society and in people. So, when we have the marriage ceremony and we come before God, we are asking God to be part of this marriage union that He created, that He designed.

Today, in the presence of these witnesses we are asking the Lord God Almighty, in the name and authority of Jesus Christ, to bless this marriage, with love, understanding, faithfulness, dedication to each other, knowing that marriage is honorable in everything.

You need to come back to this, because every marriage is going to have its ups and its downs. It's going to have its good; it's going to have its bad. One thing what marriage does: it also can bring out the best in you and the worst in you, and that's where the problems are created.

As a husband and wife you need to understand what God expects. If you understand what God expects and requires, and you ask God to bless you in fulfilling that. I can tell you this from multiple years of counseling people: The most pitiful thing is a family without a father. Boys and girls need fathers. Also it is true that the father can have more authority over boys than women. Seventy percent of your juvenile delinquencies come from homes with no fathers.

Now there are some mothers who understand, because of their circumstances, they have to raise the family alone. They are to be commended when they really do a good job and look to God. But what they have to do, they have to exert a great deal more effort, because not only do they have to be mother, they have to replace father. That is very, very difficult. So this is the ideal of what God wants.

If you do these things, you will have a good marriage. You will want to work out your problems. And where there are difficulties, give each other some space, so you can overcome the difficulty and always follow the guideline, which is this: ***Never let the sun go down on your wrath.*** That will help you solve more difficulties and traumas and disputes if you do that.

Jesus upheld this honor by teaching, “He who created them in the beginning, made them male and female, and said, ‘For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife and the two shall become one flesh....’

Isn’t it interesting?—*become*. It’s a process. It takes years and you have to work together.

“...Consequently, they are no more two, but one flesh.”

Let’s come back here to 2-Timothy 3 and we will see what destroys marriages in this world and what destroys the society in the world, as well. Here are the things that we are confronted with in a magnified way in this world, especially with all the media, the television, everything else that you have. I am constantly amazed how many people cannot get along without being plugged in. They have to have their ear phones, they have their IPOD going, they have their telephone going, they have their Blackberry going, and when they sit down they’re so hyped up in doing things with it that they have to play their computer games on their phones, text message to everybody. That’s why I don’t have a cell phone. You couple all of that together with the now-generation, ‘I want it now. I want it here. I want it my way.’ Sound like some TV ads? *Yes!*

2-Timothy 3:1: “Know this also, that in the last days perilous time shall come... [they’re here] ...For men will be **lovers of self...**” (vs 1-2). That is the key problem in the whole world today—lovers of self. The modern phrase for that is *narcissistic!* It is called *narcissism!* If you have that, you are *narcissistic*. That means everything in the whole universe in your life centers around *you and your desires* and your *emotions* and your *whims* and your *tastes*, and everyone has to kowtow to that. This is fostered by the media and Hollywood in particular. You can probably think of the names of quite a few people who are that way.]

“...lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents... [childrearing comes in when the children come along] ...unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good, betrayers, reckless,

egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (vs 2-4).

This is what people are confronted with in the world today and confronted with in their own lives. Living in this society and watching these things on television and seeing how things are, we fall victim to it ourselves—don’t we? And I think the epitome of this is—it happens all the time, whenever I go into the supermarket, because I do some shopping at the supermarket—never fails, you’re going to see a narcissistic little brat of a kid, a boy or a girl, mom is trying to shop and the kid is going, ‘waaaa,’ and they don’t know how to control them. I remember one kid I was afraid he was going to fall down. He was standing up in the shopping cart, the place where you’re supposed to seat them, he was standing up there and the mother couldn’t get him to sit down. I walked up and I just pointed my finger to him and I said, ‘Sit down!’ He looked at me and sat down. The mother said, ‘Thank you, thank you.’ So it starts early.

We are to love each, cleave to each other and it’s a process.

“Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man separate” (Mark 10:6-9).

Too many marriages today are centered around this: ‘Well, if it doesn’t work out, I can always leave.’ ***When you enter into that you are already double-minded and unstable in your ways and selfish in what you’re thinking, and you have doomed it to collapse in failure.*** Because you’re not ready to face the reality that life is difficult. Marriage can be difficult. Understanding and getting along with each other takes a lot of love and effort and kindness and understanding and forbearance. That’s just the way it is because of the nature of human beings.

If you understand this: that you are ***not*** to separate, that this is ***binding until death***, that will make your marriage work better. God, through Christ, gave one escape hatch, which is the next paragraph.

Also, He said, “Whoever divorces his wife, except for the cause of sexual infidelity...” (Matthew 5:32).

Because sexual relations between husband and wife is sacred, is honorable, and is bringing the two together as one flesh, physically, spiritually, mentally, and there is a special thing that happens—especially to women—that their emotions and their hormones work together so that that relationship with their husband bonds them to the husband and the husband to the wife. If you understand there is no divorce except for this, but when sexual infidelity takes place, and it takes place because of what?

- selfishness
- narcissism
- lust
- greed
- unfaithfulness
- deceitfulness

Everyone who lies, cheats, steals, commits adultery, they know what they're doing—right? *Yes, they do!* They don't even have to have the Bible to tell them it's wrong. They know it's wrong, most people do. Well, some of the new generation today, they don't. So that's the only cause, and if it's not for that cause and you remarry, you commit adultery.

So, we see that it is God who joins a husband and wife together as one flesh.

This is from God, because He made you, He created you. You're not of yourself. *You have nothing you didn't receive.* Let's look at another Scripture here, which is good to put at this place—Psalm 16. Here is a wonderful Scripture. Every time you get up on your high horse, or you hoity-toity about this or that, or you think how great you are or what you've done, how good you are, whatever.

Psalm 16:1. "Preserve me, O God, for in You do I put my trust.... [That's where both husband and wife have to have trust in God completely. That's why you both need to pray, you both need to study, you both need to yield to each other, etc.] ...I have said to the LORD, 'You are my LORD; I have no goodness apart from You'" (vs 1-2).

Think on that. Every time you get to thinking how good you are, whatever goodness you have comes from God—right? Whatever goodness you have is because it's in line with the Word of God—is that not correct? *Yes!* It all comes from God! By ourselves 'our hearts are wicked and deceitful above all things, desperately wicked,' and no one can know it. So keep that in mind. ***You have nothing you didn't receive and you have no goodness apart from God!*** That'll keep you humble.

So, we see that it is God who joins husband and wife together as one flesh. What God has bound...

Because you come before God, you take the name of God, you call upon God, and you ask God to bind this marriage and you ask God to bless this marriage, God is involved. And you cannot turn around and defy God and expect everything to go well.

...what God has bound, man is commanded by that authority not to separate. What God has bound only God can loose as revealed in His Holy Word...

A marriage so bound and blessed by God is binding for life, for better or for worse...

You have the good times and the bad times. You have the ups; you have the downs.

...in sickness and in health... [when sickness comes, you always realize how helpless you are] ...in want or in wealth...

The way today's economy is going, it's going to be more in want than in wealth.

...unto death do they part.

Just think if every married couple in the world had this understanding, and attitude, and really went God's way, just think: there would be no adultery, there would be no fornication, there would be no homosexuality, there would be no lesbianism, there would be none of those things. It would put the hooker business completely out of business.

Here are the instructions, and it's amazing how few instructions are in the Bible on how to have a happy marriage. Remember this: ***happiness is not a state of emotion!*** That's only one aspect of it. Happiness is the knowledge of God's Word and the knowledge of your covenant relationship with each other in the marriage estate, so that you know that in spite of whatever may come along, that everything is going to be right in the long run. That's where happiness comes from. Seeking an emotional state of happiness puts you into the narcissistic way of wanting your own way.

The Apostle Peter is writing this:

"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord...

You might want to think on that and pray on that. Also, husbands, remember: when your wife submits to you in this way, you better not have a heavy hand and you better not be arrogant and you better not be demanding and things like this just because she submits to you. There's another half of the equation.

...because the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church, which is His body, and He is the Savior, Deliverer, and Provider of the body. In exactly the same manner as the Church is subject to Christ, even so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything in the marriage estate.

Husbands, LOVE your wives, in exactly the same manner as Christ also loved the Church, and gave up Himself for her, in order that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of the water through the Word of God.

For this purpose:

...That he might place her beside Himself...

Notice how that ties in with Gen. 2, that she is a sustainer beside him.

...as the glorious, untarnished Church, not having a single spot or stain, wrinkle or blemish, or any such thing; but that she might be consecrated, Holy and completely blameless.

If you love your wife that way, I guarantee you she will be submissive to you, because God guarantees it.

In exactly in the same manner, the husbands are duty-bound and under obligation to God to love their wives as their own bodies....

And every wife knows that when the husband gets sick, 'Oh, you're just a little coward.' Isn't that true? 'Oh, I've got a headache.' 'You're just feeling sorry for yourself.' Dolores told me that a couple of times.

...because no one truly hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, exactly as the Lord does the Church. For we are members of His very own Body..."

Here is a tremendous thing we need to understand.

(go to the next track)

With no other human being are you going to have such a close personal relationship. Here's what it's picturing, so keep this in mind. When things don't go exactly well, have God let you picture in your mind what it should be and strive toward that.

"...of His very own flesh, (through His crucifixion—and all that it means)..."

Didn't Jesus say we're bought with a price?

...and of His bones (that is, the Church is a special spiritual creation. For in the same manner as Adam's wife was created from his own rib; so also, as a counterpart for Christ, the Church is created from His innermost being).

That's why we have the Scriptures, 'Christ in you, the hope of glory.' Close intimate relationship spiritually with God the Father and Jesus Christ—correct? 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.'

Just as we work and develop in our marriage and love each other and love our children and all the ups and downs with them. The reason that we have children is so God can fulfill His plan. And we are

participating in His creation and He is so great and marvelous, that what He has done is He has made it so that you create your own children after your own image. 'Oh, he looks like his dad. Oh, she looks like her mother.' Supposed to be—right? *Yes!* Isn't that terrific? You wouldn't want to have your children look like some whatever—would you? *No!* Isn't that something?

And to ensure that there will be children, God gave sex and passion and emotions and they will come, sometimes without expectation. We are created as a counterpart for Christ. So then Paul writes:

This mystery is great, immense and supreme...

Now stop and think about it. God did not create angels to marry or have offspring. They assist God in carrying out His work. We participate with God in His creation in bringing forth children made in our image, *after God's image*, so that they can become, when they become grown and adult, and so forth, become part of those who receive the Holy Spirit of God and are able to enter into the Kingdom of God. So that's a tremendous thing.

I know dad's do not like poop diapers, I don't. But the next time you're cleaning one of those and cleaning up your own child, just think of this: one day this squalling little child is going to have an opportunity to enter into the Kingdom of God as a spirit being and 'I had a part in bringing forth this child and helping God create His family.' When you understand that, that'll help lift a lot of burdens, lift a lot of frustration. That doesn't mean that you don't have the teaching and discipline and love and all of this sort of thing with it. That all goes with it.

...For I am speaking concerning the relationship between Christ and the Church (the bride of Jesus Christ and their eternal destiny).

However, let everyone of you, also, be loving his own wife as himself, and the wife should see that she reverence her husband" (Eph. 5:22-33).

When you're in the right relationship with God, you're not going to be carnal and want to impose the superior fist of authority.

The Apostle Peter continues God's instructions, "In the same way, you wives be submissive to your own husbands from your heart..."

'Well, I know God says so, so I'm going to—(mumble, mumble).' No! From the heart. You may have to pray about it. You may have to ask God to

help change your heart. You may have to ask God to help change your attitude. Likewise, with husbands loving their wives. What if she gets into a snitty attitude and you don't like it? That'll happen! I'm not going to ask you to raise your hands if it happened to you. I should ask, 'Raise your hands if it hadn't.' And I'm not going to ask it, because no one would raise their hands.

"...with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

- This doesn't mean you make yourself a doormat.
- This doesn't mean that you don't have character.
- This doesn't mean that you don't have ability.

You go back and read the Proverbs 31 woman. She had a lot of ability, a lot of skill, bought and sold property, traded the goods that she made and things like this—a lot of ability. But she didn't stand up and take her husband's place. And her husband said, 'Look at my wife. Boy, she can do all these things. She's a wonderful wife.' So there's the relationship.

Thus, did Sarah obey Abraham, calling him lord...

You don't have to quite go that far, 'Oh, my lord and master,' and so forth.

...and you have become her daughters if you do what is right...

I have a sermon I did years ago, *The Human Nature of Abraham and Sarah*. They had their faults. Abraham had a deceitful streak. Remember, he comes to Abimelech and says, 'Oh, my sister.' Later on, 'Why didn't you tell me she was your wife?' *I was afraid*. Do what is right.

...Likewise, you husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel...

And I'll tell you that women *are* weaker vessels. That's just the way that it is. I can verify it with the anointed cloths that I send out. They run five to one, women *vs* men. That's why women should not be put into situations, which brings extreme stress upon them. That's what single motherhood does. It's difficult. Men's bodies are designed to take more stress—to work, to lift, to heave, to bang, to pound, to climb, to conquer, to fight, to war, all of those things. And yes, we're created differently. I notice this with some of the soldiers on the planes when you come down this way. Here they have this nice strong back, slim

waist, strong arms, and then their girlfriend comes out to meet them and, WOW! what a difference between the two. Just keep all of those things in mind.

...and grant her honor as a fellow-heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered" (1-Peter 3:1-7).

If you're not loving your wife in the way that you should, you may have some hindrance to your prayers. Do you want that? *Of course not*.

Your Sacred Marriage Covenant

Here is the marriage covenant and you will be surprised how few words and how quickly it transpires that you make a decision for life.

We are here today in the presence of God, coming before His very throne in heaven above and we are asking God to join you as husband and wife. Therefore, in accordance with God's Word, each of you should solemnly promise...

What did God say? What did Christ say? 'Let your *yes* be *yes* and your *no* be *no*.' If you solemnly promise, you are bound before God.

...before God and in the presence of these witnesses to accept the sacred marriage covenant according to the conditions set forth and imposed by Almighty God as revealed in His Holy Word.

Now, we're down to business.

Do you, [the groom's first name], enter into covenant with God... [because God created you and God created your wife, so it's with God.] ...in the presence of these witnesses... [because there always has to be a witness to the covenant] ...to take her, [full name of your wife], to be your lawful wedded wife until death...

When you make this covenant and you know that it is this way, you're not going to give yourself any wiggle room for unfaithfulness or duplicity anywhere down the rest of your married life. It's good to go back and go over these words and make sure that you understand them. And you will grow in the understanding of these.

...and as the Scriptures command, for better or for worse, in sickness or in health, in want or in wealth, to cleave unto her, to love her as Christ loves the Church, to honor her, cherish her and provide for her?

You are the bread-winner. That doesn't mean that wives cannot undertake employment, but never do it to the detriment of the children.

Now then do you [her first name] enter into covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses to take [his full name] to be your lawful wedded husband, until death as the Scriptures command, for better or for worse, in sickness or in health, in want or in wealth; and to submit yourself to him as unto the Lord, in everything in the marriage estate, as the Church does to Christ; and to honor and reverence him?

And you are bound by two words: *I do!* Isn't that simple? Then we ask a special blessing and prayer on the marriage.

Since we are asking God to join you as husband and wife...

Don't look to the minister, don't look to the man, it is God.

...and praying for His binding and blessing of this covenant marriage...

Remember that, it is a ***covenant marriage***.

...it is appropriate to follow the Biblical example of laying on of hands to set you apart for this sacred covenant.

Then they join hands, kneel down and pray. Weddings are my favorite thing. So that's what entails 'getting hitched.'

- God created you
- God wants you to marry
- God wants you to have children

and you are in a covenant relationship with Him and with each other.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 2:18,21-24
- 2) 2-Timothy 3:1-4
- 3) Mark 10:6-9
- 4) Matthew 5:32
- 5) Psalm 16:1-2
- 6) Ephesians 5:22-23
- 7) 1-Peter 3:1-7

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Proverbs 31

The Passion of the Christ and **Same-Sex Marriage**

Fred R. Coulter

Delores and I went to see the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, and it was pretty packed for a 1 o'clock matinee. Since Mel Gibson is a Catholic, I took my little notepad and I was going to note all the Catholicism that came up in it. I had received many reports from different people, even those condemning it, who vowed not even to see it. If you see it 'you're watching an idol' and God says don't make an idol. I didn't see anyone bow down in the theater and worship the screen. And to whom an idol is nothing, *it is nothing!* And if you're going to portray something in a movie, then you have to have live, living figures.

The way it opened was Isaiah 53, that 'He was bruised for our sins and our iniquities and it pleased God to lay upon Him the iniquity of us all.' That was the way it started—just read it. Then it opens up in the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus is praying. I thought Mel Gibson did an excellent job with the whole movie. On a scale of ten you'd have to give it an 8-1/2 to 9, maybe 9-plus. He did stick very close to the Gospels. Of course, whenever you stick close to the Gospels, Truth is truth because it comes from God. It doesn't matter who puts it out, because even God says that if the 'false prophets would speak His words and make His people stand by His words,' that He would acknowledge that.

Jesus is praying, and as He's praying it shows Him in the agony, all of this sort of thing. Then all of a sudden appears Satan. Even though the Scriptures don't say that he appeared, when you go back to Psa. 22 about the crucifixion of Christ it says that 'bulls of Bashan and dogs have compassed Me.' That's referring to the demons.

I thought Gibson had accomplished something very profound right at the beginning with the image of Satan—which is a woman by the way, and some people say it has a man's voice; Delores says it has a lower woman's voice—needless to say there's a maggot hanging out of one of the nostrils. Satan is saying that these people aren't worth it and 'no man can take upon himself the sins of the whole world. Why would You do this? Why would You go through it?'

When Satan is done—you probably saw this if you watched some of the reviews on television—a serpent comes out from underneath Satan's garment and while Jesus is praying He's on His hands and knees with His hands down on the ground and His face touching the ground, and the serpent comes up

on His wrist. Then Jesus stands up and He stomps the serpent on the head and kills it. What he's in effect saying is, this whole movie is about the sins which began with Adam and Eve. The prophecy back there in Gen. 3:15 that the Seed of Eve would 'bruise the head' of the serpent and the serpent would 'bruise His heel.'

I'd have to say the long hair was not a detraction because the one who played Jesus, Jim Caviezel—who is half Jew by the way—is very masculine. He went to the University of Washington and played football. He was very masculine, quite strong looking and so forth. From that point on everything stuck pretty much with the Scriptures. As you go through it—and I would recommend if you want to see it, go see it, you will get a lot out of it—there were only just a few places where you could really say it was Catholic. But even there, it was way, way toned down, because all the focus was on Christ, even though Mary, His mother, was close at hand in many different things. She was in the background.

I would have to say this, Mel Gibson did a very good job in casting for Mary—who was half Jew by the way, from Romania—very plain, very simple, not ugly, but not beautiful. I thought everything was done in good taste that way. It shows the supportiveness of Mary and not the superior position that the Catholic Church puts her in. So, he did stick to the Scriptures there. In the different things that took place, I thought the only place where you could say it was truly Catholic was where Peter, when he repented and was weeping, Mary was there in the crowd and he came up to her and got on his knees and said, 'Forgive me, mother.' That was about the only one that I would say that would be truly Catholic—but it wasn't out of hand.

A lot of the critics have said, 'It doesn't say that Jesus fell down three times with the cross.' Well, it doesn't say He didn't, either. There were places where He stopped, he talked to the women who were saying, 'Blessed are You,' and He said, 'You'd better worry about yourself and your children and not about Me.'

I'll just have to reflect on one comment by a fellow named Christopher Hitchens, who writes for *Vanity Fair*. It was very interesting, he said that in order to give his critique of it, he read the four Gospels. And Delores brought this up, which I think is very profound and very important, why does this

movie have such notoriety and conflict? When you go through it and you see it—and many people have experienced it—it is something that you experience. It's not a movie that you watch intellectually. It is something that goes through you, because of what was done.

It takes away everybody's excuse! It takes away the excuse from the Catholics, from the Protestants, from the Churches of God. All of the social Churches of God better listen up and pay attention and realize what Christ has done. It also takes away the excuse of the Jews, even though they're vociferously protesting it. A lot of things were accomplished in it, which I'm sure were well past what Mel Gibson ever had in mind or figured. There are some things which are taken from some tradition by a nun and someone else on a couple of things, but it did not take away from the movie. All the flashbacks had a purpose in it, and they were good.

The long hair was not a problem because it was either covered with blood, or sweat and blood, so it was all up close to the head anyway. The scenes where it flashed back and showed where He was at the last Passover and then the Sermon on the Mount, He was very masculine looking and the long hair was not a problem. Actually, I think Mel Gibson was going against traditional Catholicism: Mary was not beautiful and Jesus was masculine.

The other night they had *Ben Hur* on, so we were watching *Ben Hur*, and in *Ben Hur's* edition of it they had people more well-dressed, which was probably more the way that it should have been than they were in *The Passion*, but that's neither here nor there. Jesus in *Ben Hur* had a crown of thorns and a little bit of blood dripping down and that was it.

The subscripts were easy to read. It was in Aramaic and old Latin, and I was surprised that I was able to pick up quite a few words from the Aramaic and more from the Latin than I figured. Everyone ought to be able to pick this up—'idioto'—*stupid!* The truth is they probably spoke Greek more than Aramaic. It took an awful lot of work to do the makeup. They started at two in the morning so he could get on the set by ten. When they were doing the crucifixion scene, it was in the winter in southern Italy and the temperatures got down to about 40⁰ with 30 mph winds, so you really had wind-chill.

I heard an interview with Jim Caviezel and he said that everybody that was on the set that was not in the movie had gloves and parkas and here he was up on the cross with a loincloth and he was really cold and shivering and everything. He was struck with lightning while he was on the cross and there was someone else who was also struck with

lightning. They didn't die. Also, he had his shoulder dislocated when he fell with the cross, so he was actually suffering some pain. The scene with scourging: this Christopher Hutchins said, 'The Bible just says that He was scourged; it wasn't anything like Mel Gibson had in the movie.' Well, the truth is, all you have to do is put the words *He was scourged* and everybody knew what that was. Just like it was depicted in the movie.

So, showing where he was beaten with rods and scourged was very profound and everyone is complaining about the violence and everything like that. Remember, Isaiah said that 'His visage was more marred than any man.' When people are scourged with a cat-o-nine-tail, it literally not only cuts the flesh open, it rips it off. It says in Psa. 22—the prophecy of Christ on the cross, that He could look down and see His bones. It literally ripped it off the ribcage. It was something! Everybody who complains about the scourging being too violent, it wasn't even half of what it really was.

Interesting sidelight on the scourging: They had on his back a wooden protection, made just like his back, colored just like his back, so when they beat him and scourged him, obviously they had to do it with the real scourges and the real rods—which they did—he wouldn't be hurt. One of the scourgers missed twice, and the second time it took 14 stitches to close it up. That's ONE—ONE WHIP! Everyone likes to sanitize it, but no one wants to take responsibility. Now they have no place to hide, because everyone who sees this has had a witness to the Truth. It's interesting how many people ran home and got their Bibles and looked it up in the Bible.

Let's answer the question: Who killed Christ? *I think it starts out with*—as Mel Gibson did—*in the Garden of Eden with Satan* and having Christ stomp on the head of the serpent after He was done praying really proved the point! Let's go to Colossians, the second chapter, and let's see about the crucifixion. What was nailed to the cross? *Christ!* Everyone—because all are sinners—had his or her part in killing Christ. Every human being from Adam clear on down to the last human being that will be.

Colossians 2:13: "For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses.... [When Jesus on the cross said, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.' That is also the beginning of forgiveness for everybody else who repents.] ...He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees of *our* sins... [That's what that verse means] ...which was contrary to us... [Are not sins contrary to us? *Yes!*] ...and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross.... [He represented sin, the sin

of the whole world, which means the sin of all human beings.] ...After stripping the principalities and the powers... [all the demons; that is Satan. Read Psa. 22, they were all compassing about Him.] ...He made a public spectacle of them, *and* has triumphed over them in it” (vs 13-15)—meaning the crucifixion!

Right at the end [of the movie], Satan is pictured: it’s one of these things that you start up close and then you go clear up into the universe. Only in this case, it’s not the universe, it’s total blackness where Satan is reduced to a screaming being and counted as nothing in the blackness of darkness. That was very affective. Here’s the verse that did it. When you’re focusing on the last 12 hours, you can’t bring in great sections of other Scriptures and all of that. He had various and different flashbacks with it.

Isn’t it interesting that John is the one who says Who Jesus was, John 1:1: “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The Word was ‘made flesh and tabernacled among us.’ Yet, even some ministers in the Church of God say, ‘Oh no, He was not God.’ There’s no place to hide anymore!

Let’s see Who Jesus was, v 29: “On the next day, John sees Jesus coming to him, and he says, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world.’” So, who killed Christ? *Every human being in the world, that’s who killed Him!* We know in Rev. 13:8 that it says that ‘He was slain from the foundation of the world.’ This tells us it was planned.

Now, let’s see something else about it, 2-Corinthians 5:20—Paul is talking to whom? *Gentiles!* “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; *and* God, as it were, is exhorting *you* through us. We beseech *you* on behalf of Christ, ‘Be reconciled to God.’ For He made Him Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him” (vs 20-21). That’s why He did it. Who forced Him to do it?

John 10:14: “I am the good Shepherd, and I know those who *are* Mine, and am known of those who *are* Mine. Just as the Father knows Me, I also know the Father; and **I lay down My life for the sheep**” (vs 14-15). Mel Gibson had that in the movie. He didn’t have this:

Verse 16: “And I have other sheep that are not of this fold.... [showing that it’s going to go to the whole world, not only just to the Israelites] ...I must bring those also, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock *and* one Shepherd..... [How are they going to hear His voice? *Through the written word!*] ...On account of this, the Father

loves Me: because I lay down My life, that I may receive it back again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down and authority to receive it back again. This commandment I received from My Father” (vs 16-18). So, who killed Christ? *All human beings!*

What you need to do, if you haven’t done it recently, get out *The Christian Passover* book and read the section in there about The Nature of God and The Nature of Man; Sacrifice of Christ and why He did what He did. The long and short of it: ***God is just!*** God lives by His own laws, because the laws He’s given to human beings reflect His character. And since we are to become the sons of God, He has given us a Godly standard to live by.

Because of sin and giving within human beings the *law of sin and death* in order to justify all men—that was the sentence of Adam and Eve’s sin, and remember it says that ‘death passed on to all of those who did not sin after the similitude or after the likeness of Adam’s sin. No one has sinned directly in the face of God like Adam and Eve! People need to understand that. He sentenced them to death because of what they did. All human beings from then on are subject to sin and death—correct?

So, what Christ did—which is very profound, very important—the Father sent Christ in the likeness of sin of flesh—that’s literal Greek. Christ took upon Him the *law of sin and death* and lived a life without sinning. He took the same sentence that He gave to all human beings and took it upon Himself and then justified all who repent by His sacrifice. That’s what we need to understand that happened before we start placing blame on who killed Christ.

One Pentecostal minister made a big deal of this, and I think that he wanted attention to himself. He did get attention to himself because he appeared on Fox News. He’s a Pentecostal minister who doesn’t believe in going to movies. What he did was put on his church sign: ‘The Jews killed Christ (1-Thess. 2).’

I think Mel Gibson handled this very well. Who were those in Judea during Jesus’ day? *Jews and Romans!* Who were involved in killing Christ? *Jews and Romans!* And I’ll add one other thing: The Chinese were not there! Eskimos were not there! The Jews then conspired to kill Christ, but remember, God offered them repentance first beginning on the Day of Pentecost.

1-Thessalonians 2:14: “For, brethren, you became imitators of the Churches of God in Judea which are in Christ Jesus; because you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they also *suffered* from the Jews.” Now, what are you

going to do with Jews killing Jews because they believe in Christ? How are you going to handle that? Like I said, no one can hide any longer; the comfort zone has been removed. Atheists can't hide; Protestants can't hide; Catholics can't hide; Orthodox can't hide; Jews cannot hide. It's out there in the middle of the whole world as never before. That's got to be something beyond human endeavors.

Verse 15: "Who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and drove you out... [They didn't want the Thessalonians to know the Truth. When Paul came and preached in the synagogue, what did they do? *They drove them out!* What is the whole purpose and the agenda of the Jewish community today? *To kill the story of Christ!* Now they cannot!] ...and do not please God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles so that they might be saved in order to fill up their sins always. But the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost" (vs 15-16). We'll see how it came upon them to the uttermost in just a minute.

We need to understand the things that are going on. All human beings had their part in killing Christ. God prophesied that the Messiah would come through them; that it would be of the tribe of Judah, the house of David. Therefore, it couldn't come through Ishmael—it had to come through *the Jews*. No denying the fact.

Here on the first sermon given, Peter stands up and he says, Acts 2:21: "And it shall come to pass *that* everyone... [including those Jews who were there condemning Christ on the Passover Day] ...who calls upon the name of *the* Lord shall be saved." So, right after the Jews killed Jesus Christ—which they did with the assistance of the Romans—God opened the way for forgiveness immediately for those people who had their first hands in it. How fair can you be? How merciful and kind can you be? God gave them many chances!

Verse 22: "Men, Israelites, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarean, a man sent forth to you by God, as demonstrated by works of power and wonders and signs, which God performed by Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know; Him, having been delivered up **by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God**... [God delivered Him up!] ...you have seized by lawless hands *and* have crucified and killed. ***But***..." (vs 22-24). What Peter is saying here is very important.

- in spite of all this
- in spite of the fact that you killed Him
- in spite of the fact that you have this sin on you

"...God has raised Him up, having loosed the throes

of death, because it was not possible *for* Him to be held by it" (v 24).

Verse 36: "Therefore, let **all** *the* house of Israel... [Of course, He's to take away the sin of the world] ...know with full assurance that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.' Now, after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (vs 36-38).

Who are those who would receive it if they repented? *The very ones who stood there in the crowd and said, 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him!'* They were the ones. The very first ones offered. That is missed by a lot of people. If anyone stands up and says 'The Jews did it! They killed God alone, they are guilty.' NO! They were only the instrumentality in the plan of God to do it, and they represented before God all of humanity.

In reference to Judas Iscariot about the 'Son of man' must be lifted up, but woe to the man who betrays Him.' Even though it is destined to happen, there still has to be punishment for sin. Let's come to this famous verse that no one wants to read that was left in Aramaic, but the English subtitle was taken out, Matt. 27:24. I think that Pilate was portrayed just about right.

Matthew 27:20: "But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes to demand Barabbas... [and I liked the caricature of Barabbas. Some complained that he looked too evil and toothless, but I thought it showed how human nature will choose the basest of things and men over God. They did a good job with that.] ...and to destroy Jesus. Then the governor answered *and* said to them, 'Which of the two do you desire *that* I release to you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'What then shall I do with Jesus Who is called Christ?' They all said to him, 'Let *Him* be crucified!'" (vs 20-22). It was the whole of the people there.

Let's understand something: The whole of the people that were there at that time were not all the Jews that lived in Judea. Had nothing to do with the Jews who were in Diaspora. They represented all the Jews and the evil of human nature of every human being.

Verse 23: "And the governor said, 'Why? What evil did He commit?' But they shouted *all* the more, saying, 'Let *Him* be crucified!' [that means repeated] ...Now Pilate, seeing that he was accomplishing nothing, but *that* a riot was

developing instead, took water *and* washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, ‘I am guiltless of the blood of this righteous *man*. You see *to it*.’ And all the people answered *and* said, ‘His blood *be* on us and on our children’” (vs 23-25).

When you say something to God, He’ll take you up on it. Instead of repenting, the Jews developed such anti-Christian polemics and defamation—if you don’t believe that, read any of their Talmuds and any of their Kabalas and you will see their reaction to Christ. God has taken them up on this. Remember, anytime a Jew anywhere—as well as a Gentile anywhere—repents of sin, this will be lifted from them. Who sentenced them? *They did!* God only took them up on their request.

If anybody is getting all sensitive with this, I’ve got at home a Jewish publication: *The Christian Jew*. I save it for this very reason, because a Jew wrote to other Jews—not Christian Jews—saying that ‘we are suffering because our ancestors said, ‘Let His blood be on us and on our children.’ He says you can come out from underneath that if you repent.

Since these represent all people, what is this also saying? *The blood of Christ is upon all people until the time that they repent!* Is that not true? What is it that forgives your sins? *The blood of Christ!* If you don’t have your sins forgiven and you don’t repent, what is on you? *The blood of Christ!*

Paul is talking about the Jews, and the Jews have always said, ‘We’re superior. We are the chosen people,’ etc., etc., etc. But Paul levels the playing field here. Romans 3:9: “What then? Are we of ourselves better? Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—with being under sin.... [Which means they ALL are guilty of the blood of Christ until they repent—correct? *Have to be!*] ...Exactly as it is written: ‘For there is not a righteous one—not even one!’” (vs 9-10). Then he lists all the things about human nature.

Verse 19: “Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law... [meaning every human being is under the condemnation of the penalty of the law] ...so that every mouth... [Does that exclude anybody? *No!*] ...may be stopped, and **all** the world... [Is that just against Jews? *No!*] ...may become guilty before God.”

Verse 23: “For **all** have sinned, and come short of the glory of God... [ALL—every human being. That’s why I thought it was very fitting in the opening of the movie of *The Passion* where Christ stands up and stomps on the head of the serpent, showing that this goes clear back to Adam and Eve.] (but here’s what God is willing to do): ...*but* are

being **justified freely**... [upon repentance] ...by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness in the present time...” (vs 23-26).

Now we have another public declaration around the world of an unheard of magnitude. Interesting, we’ll see where this goes. We’ll see what happens with this.

“...that He might be just, and the one Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus. Therefore, where *is* boasting?... [Can the Jews boast? *Nope!* Can the Gentiles boast? *Nope!*] ...It is excluded. Through what law? *The law* of works? By no means! Rather, *it is* through a law of faith” (vs 26-27). That *law of faith* is what?

- Believe!
- Repent!
- Be baptized!
- And you’ll receive the forgiveness and the remission of sins!
- And the gift of the Holy Spirit besides!

Quite something—isn’t it?

Verse 29: “*Is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also *the God* of the Gentiles? YES! *He is* also God of *the* Gentiles, since *it is* indeed one God Who will justify *the* circumcision by faith, and *the* uncircumcision through faith. Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law” (vs 29-31).

How is that established? *You have your sins forgiven, you receive the Holy Spirit of God* and now the laws and commandments of God are being written in your heart and your mind—in your inward parts—and you *become* converted and grow in grace and knowledge!

Once you get past all of the things that human beings look to, and all the controversy pro and con concerning the movie, and you understand the Truth, there’s a whole lot more to it than meets the eye.

(go to the next track)

I want to cover a couple of things before we get to the cultural wars or same-sex marriage. During the movie there were different flashbacks. Some people have had criticisms of the flashbacks—especially the one where Jesus fell with the cross there was a flashback to when Jesus fell as a young boy and Mary went to try and help Him and all that sort of thing. I think all the flashbacks—if you see the movie—are timed just about right to relieve the

intensity of what was going on. The comment was made that on History Channel so many terrible things have been on there concerning Christ and the Bible. I would have to say this undoes an awful lot of that.

One thing they always say, ‘Well, this was written many years after.’ That’s why the commentary in the New Testament shows it was written immediately, not many years after. Then the question comes up about the Holocaust. The Jews get all offended when someone says that 29-million Russians were killed; 12-million Germans were killed—as if those deaths are not on the same scale as the death of the Jews who died in the Holocaust. For someone to say that 6-million didn’t die, they get all bent out of shape. Well, it’s time to quit hiding behind the Holocaust, understand history, understand the Truth and to accept the repentance and forgiveness that Jesus extended from the time that He expired His last breath. That’s what needs to be done.

All human works and religions and self-righteousnesses are all going to come to an end! I can understand one point of the Jews, which is this: ***Catholicism cannot be a religion from God in its practices and idols and Sunday-keeping and holidays***; that they are true. However, there are many, many Christian Jewish groups who keep the Holy Days, the Sabbath and there are many what you would call ‘Gentile Christian Sabbath-keeping groups’—which we would be referred to—who keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days and things like this.

Let’s just see where all of this falls. Let’s see what happens with it. Never before in the history since Christ died has there ever been this much notoriety about Jesus Christ, the crucifixion and what happened and so forth. It’s going to have a profound affect down the road.

Comment from a newspaper: There’s a woman who said she’s read the Gospels over and over again, but she didn’t realize what it was like until she saw the movie. For all who are horrified at the violence there, please understand it was far worse than what was depicted. The audience when we attended was very quiet, very still, no noise. I’m sure there were people who were crying, but no sobbing. When we left the movie nobody said a word. One man started talking and everybody looked at him and he shut-up right away. Everybody was profoundly moved by seeing the movie because they experience it, and you would have to say that that’s probably the closest that people will come to experiencing what those who saw the crucifixion, or who have seen crucifixions, experienced back then. It’s going to have an everlasting affect in this generation.

I also find very interesting that they’re also talking about *cultural wars* in this society. You’ve got *The Passion of the Christ*—in spite of all the efforts of all of those who didn’t want it to be shown—was shown on more movie screens than people have ever imagine that it would be. They were hoping to try and restrict it and make it a bust and condemn it because it wasn’t successful. That didn’t work. Now, all of those who said that Mel Gibson will never work again—unnamed sources—are coming back and saying, ‘This is making a lot of money, let us in on the action.’ There was a lot back-peddling and that’s what they meant.

Quite a few things have been coming down now and I mention about Judge Moore and his stand. I mention about some others and so forth. It’s very fitting and appropriate because I mention the *cultural wars*. You look at what’s coming down at the same time: You have

- *The Passion of Christ*
- the Judge Moore situation
- all of the Catholic Church now admitting to—I would say to the tip of the iceberg—all of their sexual crimes, sins and pedophilia and so forth.
- the media taking a hit
- the worst devastating thing happening to the Democrat Party—*same sex marriage!*

Let’s talk about that, because I think when juxtaposition all of these things together, you can see not only is there a cultural war, not only are these things happening, but *there’s a reason* that they are done. What this is going to do is it’s going to do something that we, as human beings, cannot do. That is we as human beings in the Church of God cannot do. God can do it. He’s setting the table in this society for whatever He’s going to do.

It says there in Rev. 3, the Church at Philadelphia, ‘I open doors, I shut doors, no man can open it, no man can close it.’ Then He commends those who faithfully and patiently keep the Word of God. However all of this going to come together we don’t know.

Let’s look at something here concerning same-sex marriages. First of all, what is marriage? *Marriage is a God-created relationship between a man and a woman* for the very purpose of love and bringing forth children into the world, to have the blessing of reproducing themselves after their kind and their likeness. God is going to increase His plan through conversion, etc., and according to the way that He is going to do it.

Who established marriage that it is between man and woman? *God did!* That is higher than any

law of the land; that is higher than any church in the land. That is the Creator God Who made us, established it and that's the way that it is, and He did it for our good and our blessing and for His plan to eventually bring billions and billions of spiritual sons and daughters into the Kingdom of God.

Right here in the very beginning, there was not a mate for Adam, so here's what God did. In Gen. 1 it says that God created us male and female in His image.

Genesis 2:20: "And Adam gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field, but there was not found a helper compatible for Adam. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall over Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs, and *afterward* closed up the flesh underneath. Then the LORD God made the rib (which He had taken out of the man) into a woman, and He brought her to the man" (vs 20-22).

This ought to solve the problem of women's lib. God did not take another lump of clay and make a woman. What has women's lib done for us? *God did not expect men to be brute beasts toward their wives!* But not all men down through history have been brute beasts toward their wives.

I had a woman call me at the office the other day and she said, 'I don't know what these women are up to, because they can't understand that every time women take over the society falls apart.' What's happening today?

Verse 23: "And Adam said, 'This *is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. *She* shall be called Woman because *she* was taken out of Man.' For this reason [God says] shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife—and **they** shall become one flesh" (vs 23-24). That's what God has created and decreed. Anything other than that is sin! Plain and simple!

The Pharisees came and said, 'Can you have divorce for any cause,' and even some people in the Church still ask the same question. Read what Jesus said! Matthew 19:4: "But He answered them, saying, '**Have you not read** that He Who made *them* from *the* beginning made them male and female, and said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh"? So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate"' (vs 4-6).

To protect the institution of marriage, God gave a specific command. We know the account of the sinfulness of the world that 'every man's imagination was only evil continually' and violence 'filled the earth.' We are told that as it was 'in the days of Noah so shall it be in the days of the coming

of the Son of man.' Therefore, you are seeing all of these things, and you can be guaranteed for sure, absolutely on the Word of God, that back then they were doing exactly the same thing as they're doing today—and probably even worse!

Let's come to the commandment that God gave to *protect* the family, first of all the fifth commandment, Exodus 20:12: "Honor your father and your mother... [It doesn't say honor your step-father and his live-in lover; or her live-in lover. It's an absolute contradiction for same-sex to be married! It is total stupidity, it is completely against God, and is *thumbing licentiousness and lawlessness not only to the society but also to God!* They are tempting God to execute His judgment against them.] ...so that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God gives you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery" (vs 12-14).

Under that thing of committing adultery comes *all* of the other laws which give the prohibition against unlawful sexual activity. God created us as sexual beings. God gave us all the feelings and everything that there are

- for sex
- for love
- for pro-creation
- for building and bonding a marriage so that they become one flesh

Let's look at some of the other Scriptures which prohibit the things beyond that. Some of the things I'm going to read here, some people are going to get very angry if they come on the website and hear this sermon. I say to you: **too bad!** The Word of God is the Word of God, and I have the right to read it, and I have the right to preach it, and I have the right to uphold the laws of God, and I have the right given by the Word of God to condemn all sin and licentiousness that is against God which

- destroys people
- destroys their minds
- destroys their lives

You show me one case of venereal disease between a husband and wife who have remained faithful their whole lives and then I'll throw away the Bible. You can't do it because **those diseases are a result of SIN!** In spite of all the medicines and things that people are able to use today, it only delays the inevitable death sentence!

Leviticus 18:1: "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, "I *am* the LORD your God. As they do in the land of Egypt where you dwelt, you shall not do. And you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Neither shall you walk in their ordinances. You shall do My

judgments and keep My ordinances, and walk in them”” (vs 1-4).

All the laws of God are good, spiritual and Holy. Whoever keeps them is blessed to the extent that they keep them. Whoever breaks them is cursed to the extent that they break them. A living law, all the laws of God are

- living and active
- all the time
- everywhere
- in every society
- in every generation

from the beginning of Adam until the end of the earth! God *is* God and God *is a living* God! His Word is ‘sharper than a two-edged sword.’ If it cuts a little deep and you don’t like it, then God requires you to repent. Let’s read what He says:

“I *am* the LORD your God. And you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall **live** in them. I *am* the LORD.... [then He lists all the things]: ...None of you shall approach to any who are near of kin to him to **uncover their nakedness**.... [to engage in sexual activity] ...I *am* the LORD” (vs 5-6).

- “...of your father or the nakedness of your mother...” (v 7)
- “...of your father’s wife...” (v 8)
- “...of your sister, the daughter... (v 9)
- “...of your son’s daughter, or of your daughter’s daughter...” (v 10)
- “...of the daughter of your father’s wife...” (v 11).
- “...of your father’s sister [your aunt]. She *is* your father’s near kinswoman” (v 12)

and all the way down including all the rest of the sexually prohibited activities. Why? *Because these activities destroy the heart, the mind, love and understanding!* There is no such thing as a private act behind closed doors—**which is sin**—that does not affect the society. Have not all of the sins of the homosexuals affected our society? **YES!** Not only through their perversion, but also through all the cost of the medical things because of their sins and their diseases and their uncleannesses which they have! There is no way that anyone can deny it, and God said you shall not do it!

Verse 22: “**You shall not**... [the homosexuals do not like this]: ...lie with mankind as with womankind. **It is an abomination to God.**” That’s what God says! A lot of people don’t like that, because ‘we have fun and we love each other.’ You can put in there *a woman should not lay with a woman as with mankind. It is an abomination!* All of these same-sex marriages that are taking place

today are an abomination before God! And every one that takes place is just building up the judgment of God and the wrath of God against the society that will do it and will allow it. That’s exactly what’s happening.

Verse 23: “And you shall not lie with any animal to defile yourself with it. And a woman shall not stand before an animal to lie down to it. **It is a perversion.** Do not defile yourselves in any of these things... [Every one of these things that are listed here in Lev. 18 are defilement against your mind, your heart, your body, society and God!] ...for in all these the nations **which I cast out before** you are defiled” (vs 23-24). Why are nations rooted out? *Because of God’s judgment!*

Verse 25: “And the land is defiled. Therefore **I visit** its wickedness against it, and the land itself vomits out those who live in it. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *neither* the native, nor any stranger that lives among you; for the men of the land who *were* before you have done all these abominations, and **the land is defiled.** *You shall not do these* so that the land may not spew you out also when you defile it, as it spewed out the nations that *were* before you; for **whoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls who commit them shall be cut off from among their people**” (vs 25-29).

That’s the judgment of God! Please understand this: **The judgment of God is on everyone all the time everywhere in the world!** All are under law! All are under sin! The freedom that God gives us is the freedom from sin through repentance and obedience. There are two kinds of freedom:

1. God’s freedom for love, law-abiding
2. Satan’s freedom of lawlessness and hatred and vitriolics against God!

Those are the two ways. We are in a *cultural war* that is almost unreal! All of this stems from this philosophy, which was espoused by Aldous Huxley—he and his brothers were founders of the United Nations. He put out this philosophy of meaningless for his reasons and motives for the denial of special creation and his rejection of God’s rule in his life:

I had motives for not wanting the world to have a meaning. Consequently, I assumed that it had none and was able without difficulty to find satisfying reasons for this assumption.... For myself, as no doubt for most of my contemporaries, *the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation....*

That's exactly what's going on today. All of these same-sex marriages are instruments of the philosophy of meaninglessness, so we can choose what we want to do, and be as lawless as we want to be—and everybody 'stick it in your ear.'

...from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom; we objected to the political and economic system because it was unjust.... There was one admirably simple method of...justifying ourselves in our politically erotic revolt.

That's exactly what's going on today!

We could deny that the world had any meaning whatsoever. Similar tactics had been adopted during the 18th century and for the same reasons.... The chief reason for being 'philosophical' was that one might be free from prejudices—above all, prejudices of a sexual nature. It was the manifestly poisonous nature of the fruits... [the commandments of God] ...that forced me to reconsider the philosophical tree on which they had grown (Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means*, [312, 315, 316, 318).

So, he did just like Adam and Eve and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Those who try to do good and keep the laws of God are called *immoral*. I tell you what, God has set before this country a choice that has never been thrown down in the gauntlet that it has.

I tell you one thing, that if the Democrats get in it is going to be such a corrupt perversion like nothing we have ever seen, and the punishment will be terrorist attacks and destruction of America on our own soil! It doesn't matter if they're in the Church or know God or not, they better stand up for Truth or the beginning of the end has started. That's my opinion, because it's not going to stop! Let me just say this: God has given a clear choice. Not that Bush is a saint or that the Republicans are saints, but God has thrown the judgment down on who is going to stand for even the Truth that you know and understand.

Proverbs 5:1: "My son, attend to my wisdom; bow your ear to my understanding; that you may keep discretion, and that your lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a wanton woman... [or a strange man, as well] ...drip as a honeycomb, and her mouth *is* smoother than oil; but her end *is* as bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword" (vs 1-4). If any doctor would be honest about it, they will tell you that 50% of American young people are destined to have sexually transmitted diseases. Those who die of AIDS and various of the other 60

sexually transmitted diseases live miserable and horrible and panic-filled, desperate lives, because they are reaping the penalty that God has put there to automatically happen. There are 32-million American women hooked on pornography online! To say nothing of how many men! ***God has thrown down the gauntlet and the challenge and there better be a whole lot of people listening to it!***

Verse 5: "Her feet go down to death... [***Same-sex marriage is death!***] ...her steps take hold on the grave. She does not ponder the path of life; her ways are unstable—you cannot know *them*.... [There are all these deceptions here so that people get deceived and won't find the Truth and do it.] ...Now therefore, hear me, O you children, and do not depart from the words of my mouth. Remove your ways far from her [or him], and do not come near the door of her [or his] house, lest you give your honor unto others and your years unto the cruel; lest strangers be filled *with* your wealth, and your labors *be* in the house of a stranger; and you moan when your end *comes*, when your flesh and your body are consumed" (vs 5-11). And doctors and medicine no longer help. You rot and stink and die in your sins!

Verse 12: "And say, 'How I hated instruction, and my heart despised correction; and I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ears to those who taught me!'" (vs 12-13).

Proverbs 6:23—on the other hand: "**For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.**" God has set before you *life and death; good and evil*. He commands you to choose *life that you may live*. If you choose evil, you will suffer the penalties. If you choose evil and do not repent, it will be even worse. God guarantees it, because ***God will not be mocked by anybody!***

Verse 24: "To keep you from the evil woman [or man], from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman [or man]. Do not lust after her beauty in your heart; nor let her seduce you with her eyelids, for by means of a harlot [or a man] *a man* [or woman] *is vanquished* to a piece of bread; and the adulteress [or adulterer] will hunt for the precious life" (vs 24-26). That's what they do with all this sex-education in school. The homosexuals are creating new young flesh for their way of death so they will always have sex-partners.

Verse 27: "Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife... [or any other woman, or any other man] ...whoever touches her shall not be innocent" (vs 27-29).

Verse 32: “But whoever commits adultery with a woman... [or with a man; a perversion or homosexuality] ...lacks understanding... [and they’re touted in the world as being wise—we’ll see what that wisdom does to society] ...he *who* does it destroys his own soul. He shall get a wound and dishonor; and his shame shall not be wiped away” (vs 32-33).

Now, let’s see what this does to the society; Romans 1. This is not the first time there were cultural wars. But all through history, whenever homosexuals have gotten the upper hand, in any society, it is doomed because of God’s judgment. In western civilization—and in particularly America—it stands at the door! God says that what they do today is call ‘evil’ *good* and ‘good’ *evil*. (Isa. 5). They cast the law of God behind them and then try and proclaim God’s blessing upon themselves. Never happen!

Here’s what happens to a society, and here’s where we are right now, and you can see the progression of this, Romans 1:18: “Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness... [and that’s why *The Passion of the Christ* is such an important thing in this *cultural war*. They weren’t able to suppress it!] ...because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them; for the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—**so that they are without excuse**” (vs 18-20).

They have no excuse! How many Bibles are there? Anyone can step out and see the sun, the moon, the stars. Anybody can now go online and look up NASA Hubble telescope and see the wonders that God has created **so that they can be humbled and convicted in heart and mind that God is great!**

Verse 21: “Because when they knew God, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings... [All you have to do is just watch the news and listen to the vain reasonings!] ...and their foolish hearts were darkened.... [They lose understanding! It perverts the mind! It perverts the thinking!] ...While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones... [and liberated] ...they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into *the* likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things. For this cause... [God acts and brings His judgment with cause!] ...God also abandoned them...” (vs 21-24).

Here’s the state of homosexuals today and homosexual marriages, v 24: “God also abandoned them to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, **to disgrace their own bodies between themselves.**” And if people really knew or understood the depths of depravity of homosexual behavior of male and female, bestiality behavior—male and female—it is an absolute vomit-turning abomination! All of these simple-minded do-gooders who think: ‘Oh, it’s all the same. They love each other. It’s fine’ *are nothing but empty airheads who know nothing!*

Verse 25: “Who exchanged the Truth of God for the lie... [They throw out the Bible!] ...and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the one Who is Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen.” What do they worship and serve more than anything else? *The lust and passions of the human body and perverted sex!* They don’t worship God!

Verse 26: “For this cause... [here’s the second cause] ...**God abandoned them...** [Yet, what happens? *This society exalts them!*] ...to disgraceful passions; for even their women changed the natural use of *sex* into that which is contrary to nature; and in the same manner also the men, having left the natural use of *sex* with the woman, were inflamed in their lustful passions toward one another—men with men shamelessly committing lewd *acts*, and receiving back within themselves a fitting penalty for their error. And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge, God abandoned them to a **reprobate mind** [*void of judgment; a perverted mind*]...” (vs 26-28). When you hear some of these people speak on the news and justify their sin and abominable, unclean, wretched behavior, *know* that you are listening to a *reprobate mind!*

“...to practice *those* things that are immoral; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions; whisperers, slanderers, **God-haters...**” (vs 28-30). That’s what we are up against today, and that’s what the *cultural war* is all about. All of those who profess to know God, who take the name of Christ, take the name of God and go out and keep Sunday and Christmas and Easter and all of these things, you are religious hypocrites when you come back and try and take the laws of God and say that you’re doing the will of God when you reject Him!

And for that very cause those who are self-righteous in this society also need to repent of their self-righteousness and their wickedness and things, because the lawless grace of Protestantism and the indulgences of Catholicism **have laid the groundwork and paved the way for where we are**

today! And make no doubt about that.

“...insolent, proud... [as they stroll down the stairs of San Francisco’s City Hall.] ...boasters, inventors of evil things *and practices*; disobedient to parents, void of understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable *and* unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who commit such things are worthy of death, not only practice these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit *them*” (vs 30-32). That’s where we are in this society!

I know that even in the Church of God there are going to be some people upset at what I’m saying. I’m too harsh, too intolerant, to reactionary! Let me just say one thing: *There’s going to come a day when everyone is going to stand before God!* Let’s see what’s going to happen—all of those who hate God, all of those in this society are going to have to bow the knee to Christ one day. All of those in the Church of God who are soft and comfortable who treat the Truth of God as a social club, your day has arrived! Your time has come!

Whether you’re a Catholic or Protestant or Church of God, you’d better stop and think! You’d better do like a lot of these news commentators, in order to give their opinion concerning the movie *The Passion of the Christ* they had to go read the Gospels. Well, maybe you’d better do the same thing. Get out your Bible and read it!

I’m very happy and thankful that, at this juncture, that we are able to produce this Bible—*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*—to help and serve people. That’s what it’s for. It’s not for self. It’s not for aggrandizement anymore than anything that the apostles and those who served Christ down through the ages served themselves. NO!

- This is done so that you may hear!
- This is done so that you may repent!
- This is done so that you may come to God!

God says that He will forgive. Just like we saw earlier, the very first ones He forgave were the ones who killed Him! But they didn’t want to take that forgiveness, so God had to judge them.

- What will God’s judgment be upon us?
- Upon you?

We are in a desperate battle for Truth!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Colossians 2:12-15
- 2) John 1:1, 29
- 3) 2 Corinthians 5:20-21
- 4) John 10:14-16
- 5) 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16
- 6) Acts 2:21-24, 36-38
- 7) Matthew 27:20-25
- 8) Romans 3:9-10, 19, 23-27, 29-31
- 9) Genesis 2:20-24
- 10) Matthew 19:4-6
- 11) Exodus 20:12-14
- 12) Leviticus 18:1-12, 22-29
- 13) Proverbs 5:1-13
- 14) Proverbs 6:23-29, 32-33
- 15) Romans 1:18-32

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 53
- Psalm 22
- Genesis 3:15
- Revelation 13:8; 3
- Genesis 1
- Isaiah 5

Also referenced: Books

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Christian Jew* (no author cited)

Sacred Marriage Covenant

Fred R. Coulter

Tomorrow there's going to be a wedding and I have a once in a lifetime opportunity. I told Rachelle years ago that when it came time for her to marry that I would love to give her away and then perform the ceremony. That's what I'm going to do tomorrow. We're very happy about it, very excited about it.

There are some very important things concerning marriage and concerning the whole plan of God and the creation of God, and all these things are tied up in it. I think today we live in an age where we have been so far removed from personal relations, because we have all kinds of machines, gadgets, computers, telephones, e-mail and whatever, that we can handle so many things without really, as they say in the technological world, interfacing with each other.

Let's understand something about the human creation, which is different than all of the rest that God created. There's something very special that relates to man and to woman and to marriage and how God wants us to lead our lives as married people. One thing that is always important is that you always need to keep the *ideal* and the *perfection* of what God has given you in the marriage as the vision and the goal to strive for throughout your marriage. That is how then you are inspired.

The way people are able to change the most; the way people are able to grow in knowledge and understanding—after all, our whole lives are involved in growing—is that we be inspired. The reason is because if you're inspired then you will want to do, from the heart, what God wants you to do. That's why it's so important. If you don't have it in your heart to do it, then it becomes a mechanical thing. Then it begins to break down and carnality begins to weave in-between it. When that happens you have to have the perfection of God's intention and original creation in mind, and how that being husband and wife, being together, this is meant to uplift us and draw us closer to each other and closer to God.

Let's begin first of all and see that human beings are far different than any of the creation that God has created on the earth. This will be fitting, too, because tomorrow we'll be rejoicing.

Psalms 33:1: "Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous ones; praise is becoming for the upright. Praise the LORD with lyre; sing unto Him with a harp of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song; play skillfully with shouts of joy, for the Word of the LORD is upright; and all His works are *done* in

faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD. By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea together like a heap, putting the depths in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, for He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (vs 1-9).

This is a great basic principle for us to understand concerning God's way in everything. Whenever God speaks it is truth. Whatever God says becomes reality. That's why when we look at God's Word—if we look at it from that point of view, every bit of it—then we can begin to come to a great and a full understanding of the Word of God through His Spirit. Whereas, the world says, 'We're going to pick and choose, and we don't believe God. What we agree with, that's fine and God will come to you on that basis, then we'll be righteous before you.' *That's not the way that God wants it and they miss so much because of it!*

We have to conclude that all things that God has done is all righteous and goodness and perfection in everything that there is. When God created all He had to do was speak. Here again is a Psalm of praise to God:

Psalms 148:1: "O praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise Him in the heights. Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts. Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all you stars of light. Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, and waters that are above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for He commanded and they were created" (vs 1-5). All God has to do to create something is to command it. That's quite a fantastic thing— isn't it? That shows the power of God. What I want you to do is begin thinking about God's creation of man and woman.

Verse 6: "He has also established them forever and ever; He has made a decree which shall not pass away. Let praise be to the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters, and all the depths; fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy winds fulfilling His word, mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds, kings of the earth and all people, princes and all judges of the earth, both young men and maidens, old men and children; let them praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and the heavens. And He has also lifted up a horn for His people, praise for all His saints, even of the children

of Israel, a people near to Him. O praise the LORD!” (vs 6-14).

This is actually a Psalm that shows what the whole Millennial setting is going to be when Christ and the saints are ruling here on the earth. The way that that is going to be done, it’s going to be that we are going to teach the people of the world for the very first time why they were born, why they are here, why they are made in the way they are, and God’s great plan for them. It will be taught to them with the love of God.

The most important thing to remember is this: ***Without the love of God you miss the fullness of what God wants you to have, and what God wants you to be.*** But we’re also going to see that in order to understand the fullness of God that sometimes you’ve got to have your ups and downs in life. That’s so you can appreciate what God has done.

Let’s go to Genesis, the first chapter, and let’s see how these Psalms come together to show how God created everything that there is. Let’s just begin right in the beginning. When we go through this, when we come to the creation of man and woman we are going to see God did something very special, and very different from the rest of His creation.

Genesis 1:1: “In *the* beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” I’m not going to go through a technical explanation of the time-setting on this, but just to go through and read this. Remember, He spoke and it existed. Let’s see how He does it with the power of His Spirit.

Verse 2: And the earth was without form and void, and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said... [He spoke!] ... ‘Let there be light.’ And there was light. And God saw the light that *it was* good; and God divided between the light and the darkness. And God called the light day, and He called the darkness night. And the evening and the morning were day one” (vs 2-5).

Notice that everything that God did was, v 6: “**And God said**, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters *from* the waters.’ And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament heavens....” (vs 6-8).

We all flew in heaven to get here. Every time I travel I go to heaven. It’s always humbling to fly, because you get up there about 35,000 feet and you look down on the earth and you realize that you’re just nothing but kind of like a little speck. If you get

up high enough you can see how the clouds just form around the earth and you can actually tell that the earth is round. Then it’s really interesting taking off, you see it all disappear. When you land and you come down closer and closer and you begin to see cars on the road and the landing strip and then you’re down. But that’s always quite an experience, in flying. It keeps one’s perspective. You don’t get all lifted up in how great you are.

- Verse 9: “And God said...” He’s doing all the commanding.
- Verse 10: “And God called...”
- Verse 11: “And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth vegetation—the herb yielding seed *and* the fruit tree producing fruit after its kind...’”
- Verse 14: And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament... And it was so.’
- Verse 20: “And God said, ‘Let the waters abound *with* swarms of living creatures...’”

Have you seen some of these Discovery films where it shows all the fish under the water and you see these great, huge schools of fish? Can you imagine that by God’s command there they were suddenly filling the ocean? All kinds of creatures, all for a specific purpose.

- Verse 21: “And God created great sea-animals... [all of them] ...after their kind...”
- Verse 22: “And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the fowl multiply in the earth.’”

Verse 24: “And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind—livestock, creeping things, and beasts of the earth—each after its kind.’ And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the livestock after their kind, and every creeping thing upon the earth after their kind. And God saw that it was good” (vs 24-25).

Then we come to the creation of man. God did all of this in a lesson to show that there is nothing like the creation of man and woman; that their creation is special. They are the highest of everything that God created on the earth.

So special are they that, 26: “And God said, ‘Let Us make man **in Our image, after Our likeness...**’” That’s quite a thing to contemplate— isn’t it? That we are made in the image and likeness of God. No other creature is made like that. That’s why when you look at all of the other creatures you find none like man. None who is able to

- think
- create
- build
- have emotions

- have capacity for love

An animal, like a dog, has a certain capacity for love; that they can come and nuzzle you and if they really like you, if you put your hand down beside the chair they'll come and put their snout up under it because they want to be petted. But an animal like that does not have the things that human beings do.

- we can talk
- we can communicate
- we can have great feelings and emotions

We're made in the likeness of God! That is what is so fantastic. Whenever you get down on yourself, or down on human beings, or down on the troubles and difficulties that you have, the way that you pick yourself up is to come to God and be thankful that *you are made in the image of God for a great and a Divine purpose*. To actually become as we know the whole plan of God, to become part of the Family of God, with a great and a glorious and eternal destiny that is so fantastic; it is just marvelous!

Notice what else He did, v 26: "...and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth." God made this beautiful earth and everything that is here for all of mankind. And He blessed them.

Verse 27: "And God created man... [We're going to see how He created man which is different than creating all the rest. All He did was 'command' and they came into existence. With mankind it's different. He did not command.] ...in His *own* image, in the image of God... [If you want to know what God looks like, just like a human being, because we're made in His image.] ...He created him. He created them male and female. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'" (vs 27-28). That's quite a blessing— isn't it? That God would create all of this and give it to mankind and say, 'It's yours!' However, there are some laws and commandments which God gave, so it can be taken care of properly.

Genesis 2:7: "Then the LORD God formed man *of the* dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." Human beings are so special of a creation that God handmade Adam and Eve. That's quite a thing to understand. All the rest He just commanded and they were. But human beings He made! Crafted! Planned ahead of time! We have the marvelous creation that we have of the human body, the human mind where we're able to:

- think
- talk
- see
- walk
- build and craft
- think way beyond ourselves!

As a matter of fact, our minds are so unique that we cannot think of a time when we never have been, nor can we think of a time when we never will be. Though at one point in time we were born into the world, which that is also a special creation by God.

That's the tremendous difference. God *made* man with His own hands. God personally breathed into him the breath of life. With that breath of life He also gave the *spirit of man* so that we can have the capacity of thinking.

Verse 15: "And the LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may freely eat of every tree in the garden... [So, He's given free choice.] ...but you shall not eat of the tree of *the* knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat of it in dying you shall surely die'" (vs 15-16). Right away He instructed them.

Adam and Eve were also a very unique creation compared to the rest of mankind, v 18: "And the LORD God said, '*It is* not good that the man should be alone. I will make a helper compatible for him.' And out of the ground the LORD God *had* formed every animal of the field... [He did that by command] ...and every fowl of the air—and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called *each* living creature, that *became* its name" (vs 18-19).

Adam was created with a language, ability to think, ability to analyze and categorize. Right away, God gave Adam all this responsibility of naming all of the animals, because Adam was going to have to deal with them in ruling the earth. I'm also sure that he understood, because of the blessing that was given to be fruitful and multiply.

Verse 20: "And Adam gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field, but there was not found a helper compatible for Adam. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall over Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs, and *afterward* closed up the flesh underneath. Then the LORD God made the rib (which He had taken out of the man) into a woman, and He brought her to the man" (vs 20-22).

Adam knew what was taking place. He knew what was going to go on. What he says afterward tells us that there must have been a discussion

between God and Adam to tell him what he was going to do. He said, ‘Adam, you’ve named all these animals here, do you see any of them that look like you?’ *No!* ‘Do you see any of them that can talk like you and I can talk?’ *No!* ‘What I’m going to do is I’m going to put you in a deep sleep and I’m going to take one of your ribs and I am going to make you the perfect helpmeet.’ After it was done, He brought her to him.

Verse 23: “And Adam said, ‘This *is* now bone of my bones... [he knew what was going to take place] ...and flesh of my flesh. *She* shall be called Woman because *she* was taken out of Man.’” The reason that it was done this way is to show the special *created relationship* that husband and wife are to have.

Verse 24: “For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother... [If Adam said this, which I’ve gone back and forth as to whether Adam said this or God said this—or someone else put this in, like Moses, when he put together the book of Genesis. But the more I read it, the more I think that Adam knew it and understood it, and he said it.] ...and shall cleave to his wife—and they shall become one flesh.” That is they shall become one flesh.

God made man in one way; made woman in another way so that they are perfectly compatible to become one flesh. That’s why the older that people get, the longer that they have been married, the more that they think alike. They are to be one. So, a man without a wife is deficient; and a woman without a husband is deficient, *because God made it that way!* it doesn’t mean that they can’t exist separately or single, but it just means that in the creation of God’s plan this is what He created to begin with, that it be right and good altogether.

Verse 25: “And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed.” That’s before they sinned. We won’t go through the sin part of it. This is a day to look at the good part, to look at the ideal part and see what God wants.

After they were created, they had a tremendous blessing. They were able to see their Creator, talk with their Creator, and also they had the very first Sabbath. The very first Sabbath on earth was where two or three are gathered together—Adam, Eve and the Lord. This is why God created the Sabbath Day, that His creation of humankind could

- fellowship with Him
- know Him
- talk to Him
- see Him
- to understand Who God is

Can you imagine a more inspiring Sabbath than this very first Sabbath?

Genesis 2:1: “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And by *the beginning* of the seventh day God finished His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (vs 1-3). And from the other things we know here, He had conversation with Adam on the sixth day and I believe that Eve was created somewhere in the afternoon on the sixth day.

On the Sabbath He rested. And I just imagine that He sat down and He talked with Adam and Eve—they talked back and forth. He told them His plan, what they were going to do and why He wanted to them to eat of the Tree of Life. He warned them concerning the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Just like anything else God does. He doesn’t let something happen to you until you know! Until you have been told and warned! Likewise with them.

I do not believe that God turned Satan loose on Adam and Eve just minutes after they were created. I believe they were fully instructed so that what happened when they did eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil they were aware of it. God instructed them on what they were to be as human beings. Also, He blessed them and told them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it.’ Of all the creation of God, man and woman are the only ones who, in love together, face each other—face-to-face. That is a tremendous and wonderful blessing that God gave in the creation of man and woman, that He gave to no other animals.

The lesson for that is that God wants us to understand that the relationship of husband and wife together is coming together as one. In this coming together as one they also have the great and the tremendous blessing that God has given to bring forth children. In bringing forth children they are actually participating in God’s creation plan. Yet, God’s love is so great, and God’s love is so particular, and God’s creative powers are so fantastic that when husband and wife come together and procreate the new creation of their children, their children are made after the kind of husband and wife. Each one of the children born in a family are different and separate and distinct, even though they have the same mother and father. We know that scientifically.

Nothing can beat the plan of God! So, God has made this special creation of man and woman, husband and wife, and the reason that He wants it in marriage is because he wants the children to understand that they came from *father and mother*.

That's why the family is central in everything that God does. Children born of that marriage are a very special gift of God. The way the world is, sometimes they don't turn out to be the gift that we would like them to be. But nevertheless, they are still the gift of God.

Understand this, remember this: One of the reasons why there is the story of the prodigal son in the New Testament, is because God is showing that in spite of the sin of mankind, God is also able to bring them back. In spite of all the difficulties that may come along and happen in the family, God has not given up on any person or the human race or anyone who has had any difficulty at all, and He wants them always to know ***there is hope, there is redemption, there is change*** and all of these things are possible because God is greater than all human beings together.

Marriage is quite a wonderful thing. What I'm going to do is go through the marriage ceremony. If anyone of you would like to have a copy of the Sacred Wedding Ceremony, you can just write in for it. I've done what you might say is a reaffirmation of the vows of older married couples who say at their 25-year anniversary they want to reaffirm their vows to each other. I change it just a little bit. But the wedding ceremony and everything that is here is one of the things which will help draw you closer together.

When we're all in love and before we're married and all these things come along, everything is wonderful and great and marvelous and perfect and everything like that. Then BAM! one day here comes a dispute! What are you going to do? God gave the rules for what you are going to do. Let me just read this:

The Sacred Wedding Ceremony
A Paraphrased Translation of Scriptures

This is a happy and joyous occasion. Marriage is a natural union, but a Divine institution, ordained at creation by Almighty God. This intimate love relationship was created by God Himself, because GOD IS LOVE.

I tell you, that's the most important thing to remember. Through thick and thin, up and down, love is the thing that is going to glue husband and wife together.

Physically and spiritually the marriage estate portrays mankind's supreme destiny of ONENESS with God in His family, in His eternal Kingdom forever.

This is the ideal that God wants us to always keep in mind. The reason that He wants us to keep it in mind and to look to that always is so that when trouble

comes along it can be repaired and it can be overcome.

Let's go to 1-John, the first chapter. Since it pictures the relationship, here's what God wants us to have between each one of us and God the Father and Jesus Christ. When I was on a trip recently down to Opp, Alabama, I had a 14-year-old girl ask me—because I was giving her a ride over to church—'What does it feel like to be the head minister?' I said, 'Well, I've never really thought of it, because as far as I know Christ is the Head of the Church.' Christ is the head of every one of you. The Church is the body of Christ. When we gather together in assembly like this, then our true fellowship is to be like this first Sabbath between Adam and Eve.

God's Spirit is to be here among us. He is to teach us with His Word. His Spirit is something that leads us and guides us with His Word and Truth so that we understand God's way. Then we have a unique thing that takes place, which is this: God fellowships with us. Just like marriage is to be a special, intimate relationship between husband and wife, so the Sabbath is to be a special gathering together of God's people so that we can have fellowship with Him. The Sabbath becomes a very special day, because God puts His presence in it, puts His love in it. Puts His grace in it. Gives us instruction and correction.

1-John 1:3: "That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ."

That really means our true fellowship. If you have that, brethren, in your prayer, in your study during the week, then when you come together at Sabbath services you automatically bring to a minimum and eliminate all the politics of Church, all the social clubbing of getting together,

1. you come together because you love God
2. because you love each other

Your fellowship is with God's Spirit and with you and God the Father and Jesus Christ *in* you and one to another. That is the ideal fellowship that we are to have as a Church. It's the same way the ideal fellowship we are to have as husband and wife and it follows along the same way.

Since Almighty God is the Supreme Sovereign Ruler, and He is our Creator, therefore, it is only fitting and right that we use the law and principles of God's Word as the fundamental authority which govern this sacred marriage covenant into which you are both now entering.

In the Beginning, after the Lord God had created Adam, He said, “It is not good for man to be alone, I will make a helper, suitable and compatible for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then God took one of the man’s ribs...and from it God fashioned a woman, and God brought her to the man.

That’s what it really means. He fashioned with His very own hands.

“And the man said, ‘This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.’ For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh” (Gen.2:18, 21-24).

What we have here, when this takes place—when the marriage covenant and ceremony and coming together takes place—God has created a brand-new relationship between husband and wife. Just like when God calls us and gives us of His Spirit, we are brought into a relationship of fellowship with Him. Likewise when there is a marriage and those who know God and love God and are doing it according to God’s way, this is a brand-new created relationship. This brand new created relationship then is a *covenant relationship*.

Then the Lord God blessed them saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.”

Today, in the presence of these witnesses, we are asking the Lord God Almighty, in the name and authority of Jesus Christ, to bless this marriage with love, understanding, faithfulness and dedication to each other, knowing that marriage is honorable in everything.

Jesus upheld this honor by teaching, “He who created them in the beginning, made them male and female, and said, ‘For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. Consequently, they are no more two, but one flesh.’

A unique thing happens when you really love each other and cleave to each other and become one flesh. As one woman said recently, ‘I can’t remember a time when I was not married.’ That is something— isn’t it? That’s the way that God wants it, then the blessing of love can flow from that.

Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man separate” (Mk.10:6-9).

So, *the marriage covenant is binding unto death!* Just think how much better the world would be if that were that way today; how much better the families would be and the lives of those involved would be if that were the standard today. Quite different—wouldn’t it?

(go to the next track)

I’m sure that that’s what it’s going to be in the Kingdom of God during the Millennium, that there are going to be blessed marriages and the knowledge of God is going to cover the earth as the seas cover the earth.

Can you imagine the kind of marriages and families and the kind of understanding and teaching? If you think we have done intellectual things in this age, I can hardly wait until the Kingdom of God is here and we find out what things will be done then. I think it will be greater and more fantastic, because if the Kingdom of God is not greater than the greatest that man can do, well then, God has failed. ***I don’t believe God is going to fail!***

Also, He said, “Whosoever divorces his wife, except for the cause of sexual infidelity and marries another, commits adultery.

That is to safeguard the marriage!

And if a woman divorces her husband, and is married to another, she commits adultery” (Mat.5:32).

So we see that it is God Who joins a husband and wife together as one flesh.

God created you for that very purpose. Since God is actually doing all of the creation, even though it’s by human pro-creation, then I think if each one coming together in the marriage estate views it from the point of view that God created this man for me, and God created this woman for me, so that when you come together you will love each other more and love God even more. And let that be an ideal to which you always project your life in.

What God has bound, man is commanded by that authority not to separate. What God has bound, only God can loose as revealed in His Holy Word.

A marriage so bound and blessed by God is binding for life, for better or for worse, in sickness or in health, in want or in wealth unto death do they part.

The reason is this: Whenever you enter into a covenant relationship of this importance this covenant relationship is pledged by your life. Let’s use the example of baptism. Baptism is a covenant pledge, and a covenant pledge is guaranteed by your

death; meaning that you will be faithful in this covenant pledge and relationship until you die.

Our covenant relationship begins with Christ in the Church. Christ has already died. He has given His life in the covenant pledge. It comes to us with baptism.

Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound? MAY IT NEVER BE! We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?” (vs 1-3).

When you’re put under that watery grave, you’re really put into a grave. It is a symbolic grave, granted, but if you were never lifted up out of the water you would be dead indeed! It is a covenant pledge that *you* will be faithful unto death just as Christ was faithful unto death. So, you see why baptism in the covenant relationship is not like a ritual ceremony. What you’re actually doing:

Verse 4: “Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness of His* resurrection” (vs 4-5).

This is the covenant pledge that we have made to God. When you come to fully understand about baptism and the covenant pledge of baptism, you have pledged faithfulness unto your death, or if unfaithful the Lake of Fire. That’s why baptism is not for infants, because you have to be knowledgeable enough to know to make that kind of covenant commitment to God. There’s no going back on it, likewise with marriage.

A marriage so bound and blessed by God is binding for life, for better or for worse, in sickness or in health, in want or in wealth unto death do they part.

Now, let us understand the New Testament instructions concerning the marriage estate:

This becomes very important. Always remember this: God does not have a moveable 50-yard line. You are to become one flesh together.

“Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord...

Think how many marriages would be that much better off if that were done. God doesn’t ask for submission to put women down by the heavy hand of men. He does not expect that.

...because the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church...

The husband is head of the wife by creation. There’s no hierarchy here. A *created relationship* is not a hierarchy. Can people make a hierarchy out of it? *Yes!* When they take away love and devotion and service and put in authority, fear and intimidation, they have created a hierarchy and you have destroyed a marriage. We’ve seen plenty of that—haven’t we? This is why God says ‘submit yourselves unto your husbands as unto the Lord.’

...which is His body; and He is the Savior, Deliverer, and Provider of the body. In exactly the same manner as the Church is subject to Christ, even so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything in the marriage estate.

It is a voluntary thing by love, devotion and choice. You’re going to run into difficulties in your marriage because your husband doesn’t make the right choice all the time in everything. But he will be able to recover himself from it if you support him and love him and submit yourself to him and help him. Then I’m sure you’ll be guaranteed there will be fewer mistakes.

Let’s look at it this way: Man was never perfect before he was married, and the woman was never perfect before she was married, so you have two imperfections coming together to become one perfect flesh. That’s going to take some time. Notice what Christ says to the husbands:

“Husbands, LOVE your wives...

That means in everything! She’s going to have good days and bad days, too. How are you to love your wife?

...in exactly the same manner as Christ also loved the Church, and gave up Himself for her...

You’re to love her emotionally, physically, spiritually, work, provide, protect, toil—all of those things. If women think it’s a big responsibility to submit to their husbands, let me tell you, it’s a bigger responsibility for a husband to be the head of the wife. You need to understand that. He gave Himself up:

...in order that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of the water through the Word of God; that He might place her beside Himself as the glorious, untarnished Church, not having a single spot or stain, wrinkle or blemish, or any such thing; but that she might be

consecrated, Holy and completely blameless.

“In exactly the same manner, the husbands are duty-bound and under obligation to God, to love their wives as their own bodies.

If every marriage could keep that in mind, and every time you get a little ripple or wave coming through—maybe even storm or tornado will come through your marriage—you can still have here your great insurance policy from God, that it can be rebuilt. It can always be upgraded in Christ.

All wives know that men are cowards when it comes to their own bodies. When they have pain it really hurts. When they don't feel good, they have to be taken care of. Women are blessed with one thing—you can consider it a blessing or however you want to—that, men, you don't know pain and never will, because you cannot have children. Every woman that has had children knows that for a fact. The only dispute that women have with the Scriptures is that when a woman is travailing in pain, to give birth, when a man child is born she 'has joy and the travail is forgotten.' That is the one verse that most women say, 'not quite!'

When you're sick and down your wife will take care of you, and when she's sick and down you help her and take care of her. When you're sick and down you're cranky. I know when I had my bad hip, I got cranky, did I get cranky! Delores was kind and understanding, bit her lip and chin and all that sort of thing. There are times when you have to tolerate each other—when those times come along. But that's all part of love.

The man who is loving his wife in this manner loves himself, because no one truly hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, exactly as the Lord does the Church:

“For we are members of His very own Body, of His very own flesh, (through His crucifixion—and all that it means)...

Remember, the great lesson in the physical marriage is that Christ is going to marry the Church and that is a spiritual lesson; so that we become one with Him. To be married to Christ for all eternity is going to be a tremendous and fantastic thing, brethren.

...and of his bones (that is, the Church is a special spiritual creation. For in the same manner as Adam's wife was created from his own rib; so also, as a counterpart for Christ, the Church is created from His innermost being).

I remember the first time I read Eph. 5 I could not understand it. I couldn't understand it until I went back and really understood the creation of woman from man, and that compared to the Church.

Ephesians 5:30: “For we are members of His body—of His flesh and of His bones.” This is talking about through the very crucifixion. We are part of the Body of Christ. We are given forgiveness of sin through His sacrifice, through His flesh—because he was beaten and scourged—and of His bones. When I saw that I said *how could that be?* Not one bone of His was broken—right, isn't that true? *Yes!*

What could this mean? *Nothing other than it goes back to the creation!* God took a rib out of Adam and created Eve, so that the Church is then created just like Eve from the innermost part of Christ. Think on that! When you have the Spirit of God, Christ is in you—correct? *Yes!* That's all it could it mean 'with His bones.'

“This mystery is great, immense and supreme: For I am speaking concerning the relationship between Christ and the Church (the bride of Jesus Christ and their eternal destiny).

We are to think of the oneness that we will be with Christ as the Church, as the bride, working together, loving each other and bringing new children into the Kingdom of God beginning in the Millennium. If we keep all of that in mind in relationship to the physical, human marriage, then this gives us the inspiring ideal to always shoot for. This gives you the desire to say,

- 'I forgive you.'
- 'I love you.'
- 'I understand'—because you really do.

And all of those things that are necessary to function as husband and wife in a close relationship that we grow together in Christ.

However, let everyone of you, also, be loving his own wife as himself, and the wife should see that she reverence her husband” (Eph.5:22-33).

The Apostle Peter continues God's instructions, “In the same way, you wives be submissive to your own husbands...from your heart...

You can be guaranteed one thing: If you really submit from your heart in a loving way, you are going to receive back so much more than if you try and stubbornly get your own way. I guarantee it! Because God does! That will happen!

...with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. Thus, did Sarah obey Abraham, calling him lord...

Well, Sarah was no little wallflower, wilting up there on the wall and falling to the ground—was she? *NO!* When God talks about these things and these are the instructions, He doesn't mean that at all.

...and you have become her daughters if you do what is right... Likewise, you husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way...

Just like the wives understand their husbands, the husbands need to understand their wives. That's a hard thing to do. It's always easier to say, 'Obey me and submit.' Well, you haven't understood a thing! That's why what happens when you come together this way—in an understanding way:

...as with a weaker vessel, and grant her honor as a fellow-heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered" (1-Pet. 3:1-7).

That's important to really realize and understand. That's great, and that makes the marriage and everything perfect. These are the things that are very important concerning the wedding ceremony.

Now then, when you have children—all of ours are grown up. I remember when each one was born. They were all born at home. They charge and 'arm and leg' and half a body in a hospital today—don't they? If you can find a midwife and deliver them at home and everything is right and no complications happen, deliver them at home. The first one born at home—Jonathan—it cost us \$35.

Another thing, too; I have seen this and it is true. When women have children, and ten days later ship them off to the daycare center, children lack emotional attachment, they lack identification, they become fidgety and I think that's where a lot of the 'hyperactive' children come from, because they're not there with their mothers to nurse them, to feed them, to take care of them, to be there when they're home and all that sort of thing has a part to do with it.

God has designed everything to be in a loving relationship. That's what's important, likewise with children. And with children you always learn love in spite of everything. Children, when they are born, other than being physically put together, they're imperfect in every way. You have to watch over them, feed them, diaper them, but there are always the joys. You see them grown and see that innocent look and there's a special

something that only a mother can appreciate—only a mother can, because none of you are nursing fathers.

There is the love that is so great when children are born that way and are fed from their mother's breasts. Plus, not only that, all the babies fed that way—which God intended.... Babies are not born with Similac in their hands. By the way, that's the worst kind of thing you could ever give your children. I know some people may be mad at me, but I'm just telling you the straight facts. When children are nursed by their mothers, they pass on all the immune to their children. Did you know that? That helps hold down a lot of these so-called 'childhood' diseases. Certain sicknesses come along so that the baby's body can build up it's own antibodies, as well.

We have learned that when our children would have a fever—and I never will forget when I came home from a long trip and David was cutting his eyeteeth, and they were just something. When they cut teeth they get cranky and miserable and irritable. Their diapers and everything becomes almost like they're putting out a pure acid, which eats everything up. I came home from this trip and poor Delores was sitting there after being up night and day for two days. I walked in and she said, 'Here, I'm going to bed.'

I said, 'Wait a minute.' I fixed up a poultice to go on his chest and on his back and in five minutes, just the greatest, longest, greenest gob came out of him and he was much better from that time on. That also helps build up immunity in the system. Little childhood sicknesses that come along, don't fret and don't run off to the doctor immediately. If they've got a temperature that's a little bit of temperature, don't worry about it. God made the temperature to kill the virus or the bacteria, or whatever it is.

Now, if it is something serious and you need the help of a doctor, well, do that. You need to also pray for your children, have them anointed—God will intervene and heal and raise them up. That's all part of life.

I met Great-Grandpa Alexander today. I looked at him and said, 'Look what you started!' You never know what your family is going to grow to. All of those things are really very important, and if through it all you can keep love for each other, love for God, love for your children, love for your family—because you're going to have all the ups and downs of every family.

How many have had a perfect marriage, with perfect children and never had one bit of trouble in all their lives? *No takers!* What we go through is

common to all human beings and all marriages. But God has called us to rise above it.

When we come together in the wedding tomorrow, we're all coming before God to rejoice in God's creation, God's love, God's goodness, and bringing together a young man and young woman.

Your Sacred Marriage Covenant

We are here today in the presence of God...

Just like we are on the Sabbath.

...coming before His very throne in heaven above and we asking God to join you as husband and wife. Therefore, in accordance with God's Word, each of you should solemnly promise before God and in the presence of these witnesses to accept the sacred marriage covenant according to the conditions set forth and imposed by Almighty God as revealed in His Holy Word.

Do you, (his first name) enter into covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses to take (her full name) to be your lawful wedded wife until death and as the Scriptures command, for better or for worse, in sickness or in health, in want or in wealth, to cleave unto her, to love her as Christ loves the Church, to honor her, cherish her and provide for her? (I Do!)

I told Chad, when I say 'provide' *it's bucks for her, fella!* That's when you are to say 'I do.' When the money is on the table, it's 'I do.'

Now then do you, (her first name), enter into covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses to take (his full name) to be your lawful wedded husband, until death as the Scriptures command, for better or for worse, in sickness or in health, in want or in wealth; and to submit yourself to him as unto the Lord, in everything in the marriage estate, as the Church does to Christ; and to honor and reverence him? (I Do!)

Since we are asking God to join you as husband and wife, and praying for His binding and blessing of this covenant marriage, it is appropriate to follow the Biblical example of laying on of hands to set you apart for this sacred covenant. So then, you will now join your right hands with the laying on of my hands, we will ask God to join you as husband and wife.

Let us kneel!

Special Prayer Blessing the Marriage
Presentation of the Rings
You may kiss the bride!

By the authority vested in me as a minister of Jesus Christ—in the Name of Jesus Christ, I now pronounce you husband and wife.

I thought since the wedding is tomorrow and all of our minds are on that, that it would be good not only for the wedding coming tomorrow, but for all of us, that if we could go back and understand about the whole purpose of marriage, creation and God's great plan for us, brethren.

When we do that and really understand that and see what Christ has for us then we can be inspired and want to change and grow and overcome. Inspired to change our lives and let Christ's Spirit change it for us, so that we can be in the blessing of God in everything that we do.

There's going to be a wedding ceremony in heaven above with the first resurrection. It's going to be a grand wedding ceremony, and there's going to be a grand wedding supper. All the angels are going to do the providing for us—right? *Of course, they will!* I wonder what kind of food we're going to eat? *The kind of spiritual food that is going to be absolute perfection that we're going to eat at the wedding feast.*

I wonder what it's going to be like when God the Father is standing there and Christ is at His right hand and the whole Church standing there on the Sea of Glass before Him. And the special wedding ceremony and the special wedding covenant is given between Christ and the Church. God the Father then goes through and gives the covenant. That will be a whole different covenant for us, brethren, when that marriage covenant takes place and then Christ says, 'I do!' This time it will be for all eternity!

Then God the Father looks out to all of those who are the Bride of Christ and He reads the covenant words for the covenant marriage between the Lamb and the Bride, and all those of the Bride say, 'I do!' That's going to be some ceremony— isn't it?

Revelation 19:1: "And after these things I heard *the* loud voice of a great multitude in heaven..." There will be those in the first resurrection, part of the body of Christ that will rise and meet Christ in the air. That's not the third heaven, clear up to where the throne of God is, because God is going to bring the throne down to the Sea of Glass. It will be right there in the clouds. We'll be up there until the wedding ceremony is over and all that has to take place then. Then we

come back to the earth. You talk about congregational singing! You talk about shouts of joy! This is what he heard:

Also referenced: Booklet:
The Scared Wedding Ceremony

“...saying, ‘Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power *belong* to the Lord our God. For true and righteous *are* His judgments; for He has judged the great whore, who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and He has avenged the blood of His servants at her hand.’ And they said a second time, ‘Hallelujah! And her smoke shall ascend upward into the ages of eternity.’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, Who sits on the throne, saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’ And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all His servants, and all who fear Him, both small and great.’ And I heard a voice like that of a great multitude, and like *the* sound of many waters, and *the* sound of mighty thunders, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For *the* Lord God Almighty has reigned. Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’ And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write: Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the true words of God’” (vs 1-9).

That’s how every marriage that we have within the Church, this is the ideal that we need to look to. Whenever our marriages—because of human nature and things have difficulties and problems—always remember the perfection that God has called you to and aim to that. Work for that and grow in grace and love, in service, so that all of these things can work together for good.

Brethren, that’s the whole purpose of marriage. I really hope and pray that this can help many, many people in their marriages and help them to refocus on the whole purpose of God because of it.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*
by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 33:1-9
- 2) Psalm 148:1-14
- 3) Genesis 1:1-11, 14, 20-22, 24-28
- 4) Genesis 2:7, 15-25, 1-3
- 5) 1 John 1:3
- 6) Romans 6:1-5
- 7) Ephesians 5:30
- 8) Revelation 19:1-9

Why Marriage?

Fred R. Coulter

What is the meaning and purpose of marriage? Human beings are the only ones that marry. Look at the animal kingdom. There are some who mate for life, but others don't. Look at all of the different things that God has created—male and female—yet, none of them have a ceremony where there is marriage. Marriage is designed by God; it's an institution from God. It's meant to be based upon love and relationship with God and relationship with each other in a way that designed to preserve and protect the society, the family and each individual.

Let's go back to the beginning. This is where marriage began, at the beginning. This gives us one of the keys and clues as to the understanding about marriage. I think one of the biggest reasons, for example, that evolution has made such big inroads into people's lives is because religion has made a fool of itself, or it's been so oppressive. Like I saw on the Oprah Winfrey Show the other day, there were five people on there, and when this one black lady got up and said, 'The Bible is of no private interpretation' she quoted 2-Peter 1:20 and that you have to be led by the prophets, you have to be led by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit and that is the only interpretation. The Catholic priest said, 'The Holy Spirit isn't with us.' Everybody lit into just an argument you couldn't believe. They were all arguing!

This one gal stood up and said, 'What if I'm a Buddhist in China and I'm studying Buddhism and you say the only way is with Christ. You mean that I can't receive salvation?' The other gal said, 'No, you can't.' Boy! They started arguing and they were about ready to have a knockdown drag out, all because people don't know why they're here; all because people don't know the purpose of life. One of the biggest purposes in life and the meaning of life is brought out to us by the fact of God's creation and the institution of marriage.

Genesis 1:21: "And God created great sea-animals, and every living creature that moves *with* which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged fowl after its kind. And God saw that *it was* good." Man's not content with that today. He's got to have genetic engineering and we're soon going to have 18 lb. chickens and we're going to have specialized cows, calves, and pigs that can all be patented.

Did you realize that? That they're going to be able to have a patent on each one. Now man becomes 'god.' Well, you know what the result of that is going to be. The way that God created everything, He saw that it was good.

Verse 22: "And God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the fowl multiply in the earth.'" I want you to remember that blessing, because when we get to the blessing of men, then we're going to see that it's a little different. He tells them something a little bit different.

Verse 24^[transcriber's correction]: "And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind—livestock, creeping things, and beasts of the earth—each after its kind.' And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the livestock after their kind, and every creeping thing upon the earth after their kind. And God saw that it was good" (vs 24-25).

Then God comes to the most important part of His physical creation. Of course, God saved the best to the last.

Verse 26: "And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness...'" Right there in that one verse holds the key as to why we are here and the reason for humankind, and the reason why people are people. ***We're made after the image of God!*** None of the animals did He say were made after His image. He didn't even say that they were made after the image of angels, but we see in other parts of the Bible that some angels look like certain of the animals that God has created, although, it doesn't say so directly here.

This is the whole thing, and the rest of the Bible then tells us that not only are we made in the likeness of God, in His image, but we're also going to be after His kind, to be His very offspring in the Kingdom of God. We'll get to that a little later as we get a little further into the study.

Since God gave us minds and God gave us abilities, He said, v 26: "...and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth."

That's a tremendous responsibility. God certainly gave us a lot as far as being able to have responsibility, development—here's the whole earth! Isn't that something! How God said, 'Here, you have the whole world.'

Verse 27: "And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and

have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (vs 27-28). Did you catch the difference between what He told humans to do and what He gave in blessing to the animals?

In the blessing of the animals, v 22: “And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the fowl multiply in the earth.’”

But He said to man, v 28: “...‘Be fruitful and multiply, and **replenish** the earth...’” Man’s rule and dominion is different. To replenish means to repopulate or replace. It’s the exact same word that is used when God blessed Noah after the Flood. and said, ‘multiply and I bless you, and replenish the earth.’

So, here again, this gives us another clue and indication that the angels, when they were with God, lived on this earth, developed the earth and they’re the ones who had rule over the earth.

So it says, “...replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.’ And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree upon which *is the* fruit of a tree bearing seed—to you they shall be for food [‘meat’ (KJV)].” (vs 28-29). It doesn’t mean a replacement for meat. That means *for food*. Most vegetarians turn there.

The first education that I had in dealing with a Seventh Day Adventist was he turned right there and this shows that we’re to have vegetables for meat. But this is *for food*. It is still true, whether we eat meat or whether we eat the vegetables; it all comes from the things that God has created.

Verse 30: “‘And to every animal of the earth and to every fowl of heaven and to all the living creatures that crawl upon the earth, every green plant *is given* for food.’ And it was so. And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, *it was exceedingly* good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day” (vs 30-31). That’s why they say that man’s number is six.

It’s interesting that this latest prayer thing that the pope had—speaking of six—was held on the sixth month, the sixth day, and it went to 12 nations, which two times six; carried on 18 satellites, which is three times six. It’s interesting, when man gets involved to do something, six is always there. It’s like six and human nature are just kind of locked in together.

So, God says that it was fine, it was good, it was beautiful. We’ll bypass where it talks about the

giving of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. We’re not going to get into that at this particular point.

Genesis 2:18: “And the LORD God said, ‘*It is* not good that the man should be alone.... [It just isn’t good, and that means that it’s not good for woman to be alone. That’s one of the reason that we’re going to have a wedding tomorrow, so that we can make sure that it’s going to be something good and take care a little deficit here.] ...I will make a helper compatible for him.’ And out of the ground the LORD God *had* formed every animal of the field and every fowl of the air—and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them....” (vs 18-19). That tells us a lot.

Adam was created with a language, a thought process, a reasoning process. How is he going to name the animals unless he could speak? God obviously was there talking to him and whatever God called the animals or however He brought them by, He said, ‘Okay, Adam, what do you think of this? What are you going to name it?’ Whatever the names were at that time, I imagine that derivation of some of the names that we have for the animals today go clear all the way back to Adam and Eve and crosses over with the changing of the languages there at the Tower of Babel.

There also was a lesson in it, v 20: “And Adam gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field, but there was not found a helper compatible for Adam.” God made them male and female and brought all the animals and everything by, and there was nothing for Adam.

Verse 21: “And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall over Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs, and *afterward* closed up the flesh underneath. Then the LORD God made the rib (which He had taken out of the man) into a woman, and He brought her to the man” (vs 21-22).

Someone always comes up with the argument: Do men have one less rib? God could take it out in such a way that it would grow back. And even if it didn’t grow back, it didn’t change the genetic creation of Adam, so it wouldn’t be passed on his children. There are even some blind parents who have sighted children. There are people who lose their hands, arms, etc., and their children aren’t born handless or armless.

Verse 23: “And Adam said, ‘This *is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. *She* shall be called Woman because *she* was taken out of Man.’ For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife—and they shall become one flesh” (vs 23-24). And that’s the whole

purpose of it.

God created each human being deficient being alone. That's just the way God made it, so that there could be this institution of marriage and of love. Of course, the best way for a marriage to work is for both people to love God and love each other. That's the way that it's going to work.

This being of one flesh is a very, very important thing. We find that Adam and Eve were both naked, v 25: "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed."

We find in Heb.13 that it says that 'marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled.' The reason that God has marriage for the purpose of sex and procreation, as well as love and the other things, is that to bring children into the world—as we see around us—creates a tremendous responsibility. Therefore, to have the unit of society begin with a husband and wife is the greatest factor

- for love
- for economic stability
- for companionship
- for longevity
- for all the good things that people want to have out of life.

However, just like every good thing we have in human life, it can also be turned around the other way and become something very difficult and very dangerous and very bad. God has created laws whereby that the marriage will be blessed by Him, and they will have a good and a happy life.

Happiness is not based upon just being in love. Being in love also carries with it a responsibility. Happiness is something that you work at and produce. Love is something you work at and be responsible in. All of these things then help the marriage be what it is. ***God is the One Who invented marriage!***

Let's go to Ephesians, the fifth chapter, because this tells us one of the secrets of marriage. It's one of the things that God teaches us and shows how God wants things run.

This is really the antithesis of today. I suppose if you got up and read this to the National Organization of Women that you would get shouted down just holding up the Bible. This is the way that God has ordained that it should be. It does not give the husband the right to intimidate and beat up on his wife. And it does not give the wife the right and so forth to cause problems one way or the other.

Ephesians 5:22: "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord." I think if

people would follow that—because it's a living law of God—that there wouldn't be the problems and difficulties in marriage that you would have. I think it would eliminate an awful lot of divorce and remarriage. I think it would eliminate an awful lot of wife-beating. I supposed today, husband-beating.

I heard on one of these talk shows about intimidated husbands. There's a whole group that are beat up almost every night by their wives. I was shocked to hear that! We don't live out there in the world. We are *in* the world, but we are not *of* the world, so we're not used to all this kind of thing.

Even though we all have our troubles and ups and downs, even in our own marriages there are little fights and arguments that come along, at least we're striving and going the way that God wants us to go. That's the important thing: *to be going in the way that God wants us to go*, based upon the principles that God has given. God says that He will *bless* when these things are done.

Verse 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."

- How far did Jesus go to serve His wife?
- How far did Jesus go to serve the Church?
- What did He do?

First of all, He emptied Himself of His Divinity to become human. Then He lived a perfect life for all those who would accept His sacrifice. ***He gave Himself!***

That's a tremendous example for every husband to keep in mind, of how much that Jesus Christ did for the Church and ultimately for all mankind, but especially for the Church, because there's a special relationship that's going to be with the Church that won't be with other people who will come into the Kingdom of God. We're going to see that that is going to be a marriage-type relationship, because the first resurrection will be a special *covenant relationship* with Jesus Christ for all eternity, that's going to be different for those who come into the Kingdom of God after the first resurrection. No one is being slighted!

For example: My wife and I have a special relationship that no one else has. Even our own children don't have it. But they are part of our family. They are part of us. Likewise, when Christ returns and the Church enters into this relationship with Christ, that is going to be that kind of relationship that a husband and wife have—which is going to be a tremendous working relationship. It also implies, as we have seen in other Scriptures, co-ownership of the inheritance with Jesus. That boggles my mind. Every time I think of that, that

boggles my mind. That's an awfully big statement.

Right now, Joan Collins is having this divorce. They sat down and had a pre-nuptial agreement, which says, 'My property is my property, and your property is your property. In the event that we split up, I keep mine and you keep yours.' What a way to start out a marriage! Think about it!

(go to the next track)

Let's go to Revelation 19—here is where it talks about Christ and the Church being married. There's always the question: How is it that women can be the 'sons of God' in the Kingdom of God? They're women! People have spent an awful lot of time asking that question—right? *Yes, they have!*

How is that men, being men, when they're in the Kingdom of God they're going to be married to Christ? You think on that for a minute! Obviously, as Jesus said: there's 'no male or female, and they aren't married or given in marriage' in the Kingdom of God. But it is to teach us the *relationship* that the Church is going to have forever with Jesus Christ. We are called to this!

Revelation 19:7: "Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." We have work to do to make ourselves ready. There is a time, and it is going to take place.

Sometimes it isn't in our minds, we go along from day-to-day and we do some planning, but not all the plans that we plan will work out the way that we want. But sooner or later there comes the time when something has to happen. There's going to come a time when we're going to enter into that covenant relationship with Jesus Christ. Once we enter into that covenant, then we will be in that relationship with Jesus Christ forever! It's called *the marriage of the Lamb*.

Verse 8: "And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he said to me, 'Write: Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'...." (vs 8-9). So, there's a tremendous blessing in it.

Matthew 22 talks about this wedding. It talks about those who are called to the wedding. Matthew 22:1: "And again Jesus answered and spoke to them in parables, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man *who was* a king, who made a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast; but they refused to come. Afterwards he sent out other servants, saying, "Say to those who have been invited, 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my

oxen and the fatted beasts are killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding feast.'".... [There is time when this is going to take place.] ...But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, and another to his business. And the rest, after seizing his servants, insulted and killed *them*" (vs 1-5).

Almost like us going out into the world and preaching the Gospel in this particular case—it sure does! That's exactly what it's likened to, because the Gospel is the calling to the wedding; that's exactly what it is. Answering the call is accepting the invitation to the wedding.

Verse 6: "Now when the king heard *it*, he became angry; and he sent his armies *and* destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy; therefore, go into the well-traveled highways, and invite all that you find to the wedding feast." And after going out into the highways, those servants brought together everyone that they found, both good and evil" (vs 6-10).

It doesn't depend on who you are, it depends on what your attitude is. That's what it is! Are you willing to follow God?

"...and the wedding feast was filled with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, *he* noticed a man there who was not dressed in *proper* attire for *the* wedding feast; and he said to him, "Friend, how did you enter here without a garment *fit* for *the* wedding feast?".... [What did we read what the wedding garment was? *The fine linen, clean and white*—which is the righteousness of the saints! We're to be clothed with that righteousness of Jesus Christ.] ...But he had no answer. Then the king said to the servants, "Bind his hands and feet, *and* take him away, and cast *him* into the outer darkness." There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few *are* chosen." (vs 10-14).

That's quite a statement, too. This shows the whole process of the Gospel, the whole process leading up to the wedding of Christ, and leading up to the work that we will be doing. There's one other thing we need to cover concerning Jesus Christ and what He's going to be doing with that work.

Let's go to Isaiah, the ninth chapter. Here's concerning the prophecy and the birth of Jesus. I've had people ask me: How can God the Father be the Father, and Jesus also be called 'the everlasting Father'? Do we have one father or two fathers? Somehow that is difficult for their minds to grasp.

Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon

His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *His* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and over His kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this” (vs 6-7). You can be guaranteed it’s going to be done!

Now, how is it that Jesus is going to be a Father? I think the answer is this: The wedding that takes place between the Church and Christ is going to take place after the resurrection, but prior to the return of all of us back on the earth. Then the work we have to do in running the government of God and bringing salvation to all mankind is going to produce children for the Kingdom of God. At that time, Jesus will be a Father! He’s not one now, but He will be. Just like with my own children. None of my sons are fathers, but they will be fathers when they marry and have children. Then I’m a father, and they’re a father and so forth. That’s exactly how it’s going to work with Jesus Christ.

Let’s see part of the work that it’s going to depict, spiritually speaking, as to what Jesus Christ and the Church is going to do. Revelation 22:17: “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who thirsts come; and let the one who desires partake of the water of life freely.”

This is going to be the work of the Church and of Christ. The Spirit here is referring to Christ in this particular place. We’re going to be doing this work together, bringing salvation to all humankind. Isn’t it going to be absolutely fantastic when that happens? I tell you, this world is just set for disintegration—you can see it happening every day. People are polarized. It’s pretty bad when they have five shootings on the Los Angeles freeways. Just think about that! Things are so bad that people go along and get so frustrated, angry and hateful that they just pick up a gun and start shooting at people.

The world is headed for a lot of disintegration. We’re going to have the opportunity

- to really bring it back
- to show them God’s way
- to bring them eternal life

That’s going to be fantastic. This is showing what the work of the Church and Christ is going to be.

I don’t know what it’s going to be like in New Jerusalem, but you talk about a tremendous wedding present from God the Father. You think about that! That’s going to be the wedding present from God the Father. You read about people who get

married and they’re rich and whatever and that have some great mansion someplace. Well, God the Father is going to provide all this for us, which is going to be absolutely marvelous beyond belief!

There’s one other thing we need to do and follow and what our lives need to be, not only for marriage but everything we do. Romans 12:1: “I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy and well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service.” That is to love and serve each other the way that God wants us to.

Verse 2: “Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God.” That’s what we need to do, also, in marriage and in serving each other that way.

Here’s the thing that’s going to make any marriage work. It comes back to the practical things, attitude, service and love:

1-Corinthians 13:1: “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give away all my goods, and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, I have gained nothing. Love is patient and is kind...” (vs 1-4). That goes a long way in any marriage.

“...love envies not, does not brag about itself, is not puffed up.... [How many marriages have been ruined because of these things right here.] ...*Love* does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth. *Love* bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. **Love never fails....**” (vs 4-8). That is implied in all the work that needs to be done to make these things come together.

By some standards I’m a young ‘whipper-snapper’ (age 53), however I can see that just by living, a lot of things in experience, I’ve learned. I can see very clearly that love has a lot of work and labor to it. Lots of times it has to always have the attention and be stroked. It isn’t going to work, because these things are done in a private and individual basis to where love becomes very responsible. That’s a really key and important thing. That’s one of the things I’ve learned down through the years that we’ve been married.

I’m happy for this opportunity for this wedding tomorrow; it’s going to be a wonderful

occasion and I'm just looking forward to it an awful lot. It's going to be a mighty happy event and it's going to be good for everybody concerned.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*
by Fred. R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 1:21-22, 24-28, 22-31
- 2) Genesis 2:18-25
- 3) Ephesians 5:22-23
- 4) Revelation 19:7-9
- 5) Matthew 22:1-14
- 6) Isaiah 9:6-7
- 7) Revelation 22:17
- 8) Romans 12:1-2
- 9) 1 Corinthians 13:1-8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Peter 1:20
- Hebrews 13

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