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UNTIL DEATH DO US PART
By Glenn Griffith

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FOREWORD

The discussion contained in this pamphlet is written after months of hesitancy, as well as much prayer and fasting. And surely it is written with a heavy heart as the blessed Holy Ghost has burdened me to make certain statements.

First, I want to clear my conscience by saying that I wish to take full responsibility for publishing this pamphlet. I am not writing it as a leader of a group of people but as a Christian minister, feeling my responsibility to a neglected generation. I wish to bring to its attention a flagrant evil -- that of Divorce -- the chief cause of the wrecked homes and broken hearts which we see everywhere today.

I have always taken a definite stand regarding marrying anyone who has been divorced, and have preached strongly against the evil. Yet, until a little over two years ago -- as a leader in organizing an evangelistic group to meet the tremendous need of these late hours just before the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ -- I did not realize what a vital and also tragic question I should have to deal with -- that of divorce and remarriage.

I could see, through the vision God had given me, that something must be done to stem the tide of liberalism, compromise, and apostasy, which was sweeping into the church and ministry, robbing them of the power of the Gospel message of deliverance from sin. The details involving the launching of a mission to fight such evil did not appear until we were in the thick of the battle.

I had, previous to this time, taken a more or less commonplace stand on the issue of divorce and remarriage. I had written an article saying there was surely a common ground where all sincere Christians could be melted together, even though they had different convictions on this subject, so that all together could reap the harvest of the last days.

I am now made to wonder if there is not such a thing as "hereditary belief" in religion -- much like some of us possessed in politics. We were Republicans or Democrats because our fathers were; and we never thought deeply about the subject until we faced it under responsibility which we had never realized before. I think some good people, who feel there is a place for

divorce and remarriage, have never put aside every "taken for granted" statement, freeing themselves from any influence that might color their thinking and prayerfully searching the Word of God to let its truth be the determining factor.

After listening as the subject was argued pro and con, I finally found myself unsettled about this vital matter and promised God I would search His Word as never before. I asked Him for wisdom -- that He would keep me free from any biased thinking or sentimental influence of friends or loved ones. And I prayed that He would bring me to a definite conclusion which would give me rest on the question continually demanding my attention.

While I have had to retract various views of my first position relating to divorce and remarriage, I would not try to save face. I only ask forgiveness for my carelessness, even though I might take the attitude that there were many demands crowding in constantly on my attention, and I did not have the time properly to settle the question. Those acquainted with the pressing situation will understand and be merciful. However, I believe the main reason I was slow in being aroused to the gravity of the subject was the sympathy I felt for those involved. I realized what loneliness and self-restraint Bible commands would inflict upon these unfortunate victims of someone else's sin, though we dare not go beyond the "Thus saith the Lord." However, sympathy must not sway my better judgment. Sentimentalism must not be my guide in so vital an issue. I must, at all costs, be faithful, abiding by the Word of God. Yet may the Lord give me not only wisdom but a heart of sympathy at all times.

I believe the issue of divorce and remarriage has, more or less, lain dormant in the thinking of the modern church and its ministry. And because of the pulpit's silence upon this matter, the subject has grown unnoticed to the gigantic monster that it now is. Its slimy tentacles are wrapped around our generation until nearly every home feels its deadly embrace, and almost every institution suffers from its deadly poison.

May God awaken us in this crisis hour from our smugness and from our biased sentimentality to realize our civilization is crumbling because of moral decay. The very fundamentals of purity and self-respect are dying in the bosoms of men and women.

Before we consider the details of this question of divorce and remarriage, I again want to explain why I am entering this discussion. I tremble and pray now, as I have done in the past, as I waited, perhaps too long, before writing this pamphlet. I realize that the truth I have to present from the Scriptures may not prove too welcome to many individuals and that it will probably be very painful to others. I sincerely wish I could avoid the situation in which I find myself. But as God has given me light from His Word -- after so long neglecting to search the Scriptures on this vital subject -- I feel the importance of walking in it. I really have no choice in the matter. If I am to continue to be a faithful minister of God -- faithful to my commission to preach and teach the Word of God -- I must bring to you what I believe to be the clear teaching of His Word. I do not intend to legislate. But I am coming to you in intense earnestness, with a desire to help those who have become ensnared in the divorce evil; and to warn as well as endeavor to protect those who are, as regards this subject, about to yield to the temptation of Satan. God has helped the writer, across the years, to love and sympathize with such unfortunate persons, and he has conscientiously tried to direct them to God whose help is ever available.

May God give us wisdom as we look into the depths of the vital question of divorce and remarriage!

Yours for this lost generation,
Glen Griffith

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Chapter 1 TRADITION CRIES OUT AGAINST DIVORCE

We have only to think back a few years to when it was not just a church member who, because of his conviction, condemned divorce, but entire communities, both saved and unsaved, pointed with much gravity to a person who was a "grass widow" or "grass widower," as a divorced person was called. It was almost a scandal for such to remarry.

It was also understood, a few years ago, that a young man or woman could keep company with various persons of the opposite sex, in a group. But it was an unwritten law that when a couple became engaged, they were from that time on, exclusively and ONLY for each other. And there was no more promiscuous dating. No one tried to interfere with the couple, but considered them as good as married.

Now, however, the influence of motion pictures and television, piping immoral sewage into homes, has produced a carefree atmosphere in which men and women become the prey of a voluptuous spirit. Many take the attitude that every man and woman are "open game" if you can get them -- whether they are engaged or not, or even married. That old-fashioned respect of society to keep hands off is dying fast in the thinking of today.

Broken hearts everywhere cry out against the slimy octopus of divorce. Orphanages, with their thousands of homeless boys and girls, cry out against a broken home. And they have a right to a home, and their real mother and father. They had nothing to do with being in this world, and they deserve more than to be cast upon the currents of life to suffer whatever treatment institutions or step-parents may see fit to bestow upon them. Whether good or bad, others can never take the place that a mother and father would give them when love is in their hearts, even though the family must live in poverty.

Many of the children from these institutions are making up the personnel of teen-age vandal gangs. Possibly this is not the fault of the institutions, but is the result of the bitterness that has grown in the hearts of the children, because of the fact that they were discarded by their parents who were responsible for their being here. These parents continue to make excuses for their own conduct, while the children suffer the stigma of being children of divorcees. Many times these children lose faith in humanity and live with a growing spirit of "getting even" with society. The following incident is an example of such a case --

In the great city of Chicago, at the close of the sermon in a service in which I was the speaker, a young man about twenty years of age, with hot tears on his cheeks, arose to his feet and asked if he might say a word or two. Being urged to proceed, he said something like this:

"Reverend, I have been saved only a few months. I had been in serious trouble with the law, but God had mercy on me beyond measure and I praise Him for it.

"I am one of the unfortunate children you spoke of tonight. My parents are separated, and I have been shifted about here and there. Finally I grew bitter toward life and society at large. Joining a careless gang, I ran riot in sin, not really caring what became of myself, if only I could give vent to my bitterness.

"But I praise God tonight that He loved me even though I had no love at home; and I'm saved now, only through the mercies of God."

This is the indictment of a former delinquent against divorce and remarriage. He was fortunate to find Christ after coming from such an atmosphere.

If the devil can break up and ruin a home, he knows he is destroying the most important unit of a nation or civilization. And I know of no greater home wrecker than the divorce evil. The fact, that America has more divorces than any other nation on earth, ought to awaken every leader and also every father and mother to action, resulting in such a burden of soul travail that they would not be able to rest until God did something about it.

I heard a minister of international note say in his city-wide revival campaign in San Francisco, that that city, with its ideal location for one of the greatest seaports on the Pacific coast, and known for its natural beauty, is considered one of the wickedest cities in America. "ONE out of every TWO marriages ends in divorce!"

It is not hard to see that if this rate keeps increasing, it will not be long until the institution of marriage will be a forgotten sacrament, and the law of the jungle will rule. No wonder our nation is in the throes of moral madness; for it is impossible to build a strong nation or society if the home, which is the cornerstone of civilization, is destroyed and its sacred law of chastity violated by unscrupulous divorce lawyers.

Tradition in nations is opposed to the divorce and remarriage craze. One nation, England, was willing to accept the abdication of King Edward when he married Wally Simpson, rather than have a divorcee as queen.

The frown of all churches was on the subject of divorce and remarriage until very late years. We hear much today about the standards of the church -- how they should be held high. We hear convictions stated against worldliness in every form -- in dress, make-up, and bobbed hair. I probably do as much preaching on these topics as anyone, and I feel we should denounce worldliness. But here is an issue -- divorce and remarriage -- which some feel is not a vital one and they would have us be so lenient as to pass it off with a gesture of sentimentalism almost as weak as water.

Remember, when I point out the truth to you, I am also pointing it out to myself. And it is a fact that divorce has broken thousands of hearts, ruined thousands of lives, and robbed thousands of a definite experience of salvation. I have known very few persons who are mixed up in divorce and remarriage, but who, on coming into contact with searching Bible truths in a revival, when the Spirit of God comes down in intensified conviction, become unsteady in their religious experiences. And regardless of what they have testified to before, they now are unsettled; and many seek at the altar of prayer, wrestling over the very subject we are considering.

God forbid that any rocks be thrown here, for in the thirty-two years of my ministry I have prayed and sympathized with such persons -- I have loved and tried to help them to mind God, It is when dealing with a soul at this point that about the only advice one can give (and it is sound advice) is that he seek the counsel of God's Word, without pity for his mistake. And he must not only earnestly pray to ascertain the will of God, but be willing to do it. Then he can prove the truth of John 7:17, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

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Chapter 2 MARRIAGE, HOLY AND ORDAINED OF GOD

May you turn your thinking with me for a moment and let us look at the first portion of this question. In Genesis 2:7, 18, 21-24 we find the beginning of the true state of marriage as inaugurated by God.

"And 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 soul.

"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto 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.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Marriage is the climax or consummation of the highest human ideal. There is not a more beautiful act of life, as far as humanity is concerned, than when two people, who, after mingling with many friends, finally choose each other for life together under the law of God. Their friendship has grown to LOVE, and they see in each other the qualifications that draw them apart

from everyone else. Their every plan, in courtship, is made for each other. They can hardly be away from each other. Both see their ideal in the other and they betroth each to the other, not on a sensual, sexy basis, but on the higher ideal of a life of companionship, in which happiness thrives and lives are brought into full fruition.

This is a UNION, not a CONTRACT. God thus joins two lives together into ONE. This marriage union is the strongest human tie in existence. God ordained it so. When a couple stand or kneel before an altar, they make sacred vows. They take each other "for better, for worse; in sickness and in health; TILL DEATH DO US PART." This UNION was made by the law of God, while the CONTRACT is made by the law of a state. The laws of man may BREAK the legal contract, but man cannot SEPARATE the UNION. Death is the only thing that can free either partner to marry again. This is the Word of God, not human opinion.

Marriage is so sacred and also so binding that a person is desperately foolish who trifles with it, who enters into it without being sure of deep, sincere, and constant LOVE on a plane higher than the physical. If one does, he cannot blame God for his mistake and must expect to pay the penalty.

Jesus likened the sacred relationship between husband and wife to that existing between Christ and His Church. The beginnings were similar, in that the union was strangely and divinely made. God caused a deep sleep to come upon Adam and as he slept He took a rib from his side and made his wife, Eve. Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." In other words, Eve was his life since she was a part of his own body; the "twain" were made one. When Christ sought a Bride, she came from His wounded side. While He was in the grave, He was preparing the way by which she could be made one with Him in holy wedlock. He was in the grave three days and three nights, and then came forth to claim His Bride through Pentecost. He will come again to receive her to Himself -- all who remain faithful.

One Husband -- One Wife

Since marriage is of divine origin, God's creatures who enter into such a relationship must be subject to His divine law. He is no respecter of persons and His law is uniform and good. I believe this is consistent with the tenor, or course of thought, running through the Scriptures. The rule of interpretation of the Word is that we must not base our judgment or beliefs on just one isolated verse or text, but whatever Scripture is used must harmonize with the entire tenor of the Scriptures throughout the Bible. Now let us turn to the Bible for further light.

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Chapter 3 THE SCRIPTURES CRY OUT AGAINST DIVORCE

The Scriptures are plain on the marriage, divorce, and remarriage questions. If we read prayerfully, with an open heart and deep searching of the truth -- regardless of whether we are condemned or inspired by it -- God will lead us into victory, He will lift us above our problems as we walk in the light of His Word. The Scriptures are a true witness crying out against divorce and

remarriage. Its laws on this subject, as all others, are uniform. Here are the main Scriptures from which we can find God's laws and purposes:

Gen. 2:18. "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet (not plural) for him."

Gen. 2:24. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Deut. 24:1, 2. "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

"And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.

Mal. 2:14-17. "Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

"And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

"For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the Lord of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

"Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?"

Matt. 19:3-9. "The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"

"And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

"And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?"

"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

"They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?"

"He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

Mark 10:11, 12. "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

"And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."

Luke 16:18. "Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

Rom. 7:2, 3. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

"So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

I Cor. 7:10, 11. "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

"But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."

I Cor. 7:39. "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."

Notice again the first Scripture of our reference, Genesis 2:18. God said, "I will make him an help meet for him." God did not say "help meets" -- expressing the plural -- for His intention was that man have but one "help meet." This idea is again confirmed in the next Scripture, found in Genesis 2:24, where God said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be ONE FLESH." Now, turning to the New Testament, we find that Jesus, referring to the above Scriptures, made their meaning even stronger by adding these words, found in Matthew 19:6, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but ONE FLESH. WHAT therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

Jesus did not say, "WHOM" God hath joined together but "WHAT" God hath joined together. Some persons would argue that God did not join them together because they were just out "on a lark" and dared each other or they acted just for spite, or they were influenced by liquor or lust. "Therefore, we separated," they explain. However, the Word of God, in saying, "WHAT," does not refer to individuals but to the MARRIAGE STATE; the joining of "male and female."

Had it meant individuals, the Bible would read, "Whom God hath joined together." The implication is a union of lives, joined together by God -- not a legal CONTRACT, made by the state, that can be broken. I believe the entire tenor of the Scriptures will bear out this statement.

When God brought Israel up from the land of Egypt, He said He would make her a peculiar treasure to Him. God had cautioned Israel to be faithful to His commandments and walk in His precepts -- and she was to have no other gods (husbands) before her. But Israel disobeyed. She went seeking other lovers and committed adultery with them -- Israel was filled with whoredoms. And as long as she remained in that state, the wrath and judgments of God were upon her; but when she repented and gave up her strange gods and paramours, returning to her one faithful God (husband), God forgave and accepted her again. He said He was "married" to backslidden Israel -- if she would return, she need not die away from God.

Some would cite the instance of a couple who were out in sin when they were married, but who later were divorced, and then each remarried -- at which time they both were saved in a revival meeting. The question is then asked, "Did God forgive them for remarrying, since they did not have the LIGHT?" Before I reply, let me say here, if they do not remarry, there is still the possibility of their returning to their first love, and of a home being united. But if one should remarry while the other still lives, it almost shuts the door for the estranged husband or wife to become reunited to his or her former companion.

Matthew 5:32 says, "WHOSOEVER shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of FORNICATION, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." This not only includes those persons who have had the light, but also those who have not had the light. "Whosoever" here means just the same as it means in Jesus' declaration, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." They both are all-inclusive, meaning everyone. Therefore, the responsibility for one who has had light and one who has not remains the same, and the law of restitution applies to both equally.

In Revelation 2:4, 5 we read, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and REPENT, and do the FIRST works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Again the thought is conveyed in the Old Testament in Malachi 2:14-17: "Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: YET IS SHE THY COMPANION, and the wife of thy COVENANT. And did not he make ONE? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore ONE? That he might seek a GODLY seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let NONE deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that HE HATETH PUTTING AWAY.

It seems to be very plain that in the beginning God intended every man to have his own wife -- He would join man and woman together, making them one. And this is still the plan of God, regardless of how tangled they become in their marriage relationship. After making them one, God intends that they remain thus -- "until death do us part." The apostle Paul bears this out in his letter to the Romans (7:2, 3): "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then

if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

Now the Scriptures are very clear on the matter of divorce and on who is able to get a divorce. This could be answered in almost one sentence. We read in Matthew 19:3-9 that the Pharisees also asked regarding this question and Jesus replied by saying, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female . . . and they twain shall be ONE FLESH? What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." However, the Pharisees were not satisfied, for they were the sticklers for the law, and desiring to tempt Jesus they asked, "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?" They were referring to the Scripture found in Deuteronomy 24:1, 2, which reads, "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house, And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife."

Now there would be a chance for argument, if this were the only Scripture pertaining to divorce and remarriage. Constantly this Scripture is being brought up to try to justify remarriage of divorced individuals. Please pay close attention to the answer the Master gave the Pharisees:

"He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts SUFFERED you to put away your wives: BUT FROM THE BEGINNING IT WAS NOT SO." He admits it was "suffered," but He implies it was still wrong. just one man and one woman married for life was God's plan from the beginning. Under the law, Moses PERMITTED divorce and remarriage because of the hardness of the Jews' hearts, It was still wrong and contrary to God's original plan and His Law. Neither Moses nor God endorsed nor justified it, It was allowed but never sanctioned.

From these Scriptures, it is revealed that God never intended that there should be a divorce -- and without a divorce, there is no need or opportunity for remarriage. However, Jesus in answering the Pharisees, admitted one ground for divorce, even though God's original plan did not include it. In Matthew 5:32 Jesus says, "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

Now I feel we should consider the word, fornication -- its definition, how Jesus used it, and how it was used in the Pauline letters. Webster's dictionary reads, "Fornication is illicit intercourse between single persons." It is fornication on the part of a single person who mixes with a married person; but to a married one, it is adultery. The definition given for adultery is, "Illicit relationship between married men and women."

Some are saying that these two terms, fornication and adultery, are interchangeable. I would like to ask if these two terms really are interchangeable. Webster makes a distinct difference, It is of vital importance that we be sure about the interpretation of these two words, for

we are dealing with eternal truths. The Bible very distinctly shows the two words to have different meanings. The following are examples of this:

Matt. 15:19. "Out of the heart proceed ... adulteries, fornications."

Mark 7:21. "From within ... proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications."

I Cor. 7:2. "To avoid fornication (not to avoid adultery), let every man have his own wife (St. Paul is here urging marriage.)."

Gal. 5:19. "The works of the flesh are ... adultery, fornication."

I Cor. 6:9, 10. "Neither fornicators ... nor adulterers ... shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Heb. 13:4. "Fornicators and adulterers God will judge." -- Weymouth.

The question comes to my mind, "Why do the inspired writers use both words fornication and adultery, in the same connection, and this repeatedly, if the words mean the same?" Note in each one of the verses quoted above, the two words are used together. On the surface, it looks like a waste of words in repetition; but rest assured, God makes no mistakes. They do NOT mean the same. Fornication has reference to the unmarried and adultery to the married, in the relationship being discussed. In Matthew 19:9 Jesus qualified His statement with the phrase, "Except it be for fornication." Neither here nor anywhere in the Scripture did He include adultery.

In Matthew, Jesus was dealing with the strict Jews, subject to the law, and He necessarily answered them according to the law. It is easy to understand why His words applied particularly to the Jews, for they were the ones who had asked on what ground one might put away his wife. And fornication was given as the only ground for divorce. But in Mark and Luke, when the Master was speaking on the same subject to His disciples, to Greeks and Romans and the world at large, no ground is mentioned.

It is not hard to see that the frown of God is upon the putting away of wives, It is true that Moses suffered their being put away because of the hardness of the hearts of the Jews. But neither he nor God ever sanctioned divorce, for from the beginning God did not intend it to be a part of life -- He "HATETH PUTTING AWAY."

There is no more serious matter than marriage; and God means for us to regard it as such. It is a sacred vow, "Until death do us part." This means that mental cruelty, desertion, adultery, or any other less important reason is not sufficient to part those joined in marriage. "Until death do us part" means just one thing -- until one or the other person dies.

Jesus made it clear that any marriage made while one's companion lives is adulterous. Only the "innocent party" (Matt. 19:9), who marries a fornicator in a fraudulent marriage, can put away a companion and remarry, without being called an adulterer. Where does God say that the innocent party in any other case, even adultery, may put away a companion and remarry while the guilty companion still lives? I have found no such place.

Since we can see by the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, that from the beginning God did not ordain nor sanction divorce, and Jesus Himself gives but one ground for divorce, namely fornication, we are now ready to consider the question of remarriage.

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Chapter 4 REMARRIAGE

The controversy arises over the question of the remarriage of divorced persons while their companions live. Some sincere persons say that only the innocent party is allowed to remarry; others teach that either of the parties has the right to remarry; and still others believe that neither party can scripturally be remarried during the life of the other mate. While this controversy waxes hot and people argue back and forth, the monster Evil increases, leaving in its wake broken homes, broken hearts, broken lives, immorality, and juvenile delinquency. Surely there has been a breakdown, somewhere along the line, from God's original purpose in the forming of the Christian home.

Our sympathy for persons whose lives have been wrecked by divorce might have the tendency to cause us to try to be more merciful and just toward the parties involved, than an infinite God Himself. But we dare not question His mercy or His judgment.

Sin must be penalized and sometimes innocent persons must suffer. Many times, if the innocent wife or husband is willing to suffer by living separately for a time, the guilty party has an opportunity to think over the situation and realize what a vital mistake has been made. He or she can then repent and return to ask forgiveness of the one wronged but still loved. A home can thus be saved and children made happy.

But if the innocent party immediately goes to the state and receives a legal divorce from the guilty party, he or she opens the way for the guilty one to remarry and live in adultery the rest of his or her days. And if the innocent party remarries, he or she, too, not only lives in adultery but also makes it impossible for the guilty party to return to obtain forgiveness. Such a mistake is not easily worked out, and many times it means much heartache for all concerned, even suicide and murder.

Remember, we are approaching this subject solely from a scriptural standpoint where sympathy and sentiments must not enter in. So let us now look once again into the Scriptures, asking God for wisdom from above.

Let us read what Paul has to say about the remarriage question in First Corinthians 7:10, 11, 39: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, LET NOT the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her REMAIN UNMARRIED, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife ... The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband LIVETH; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; ONLY IN THE LORD."

Again we must not take an isolated verse, so we select a passage from Romans 7:2, 3 -- and note that it is in keeping with the tenor of the Scriptures just quoted: "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he LIVETH; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

Let us observe that in the first passage, Paul is speaking to the married, yet not he but the Lord. He commands that a couple remain together; but if they do separate, they are to REMAIN UNMARRIED, or be reconciled to each other, as they are bound by the law of God as long as either lives.

Some say that if husband or wife commits adultery, he or she is dead to the innocent party, who then is free to marry again. NO, friend, the death that releases those bound by the marriage relation is not a theoretical, typical, or symbolic death; but it is a genuine physical death. And just as we are freed from the law of sin only by the death of Christ (Rom. 7:4), so we are freed from the law of marriage only by the death of our companion.

Some argue that barring the innocent party from remarriage is both unjust and unreasonable. But this is a case of finite reasoning attempting to supersede the infinite wisdom of the Omnipotent. A "Thus saith the Lord," should forever stop all caviling.

In John 8:41, the Pharisees told Jesus they were not born of fornication (out of wedlock), insinuating that He (Jesus) was. You can find in Matthew 1:19, that, until the Angel came to Joseph and told him differently, Joseph was thinking of putting Mary away, believing she was a fornicatress. So, according to this Scripture, a man may put away a woman when he discovers that she is a fornicatress -- not a virgin, which she is supposed to be when they marry.

This corresponds with the law of the Old Testament found in Deuteronomy 24:1: "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house." This uncleanness (fornication), was found out after they were married, thus giving grounds for divorce.

What about remarriage? Look at the next verse, "And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife." What man? The one with whom she had been defiled. Through the act of being defiled, the former man and she were united in marriage under God's law, thus, because of fornication, making the second marriage fraudulent, and thereby giving the second man the only scriptural grounds for divorce and remarriage.

I have heard the question asked many times, "Why do so many believe that there is a scriptural ground for divorce and remarriage, other than on the grounds of fornication?" With all respect to those who have carefully studied the problem, we personally believe the masses who take such a stand, have failed to get down to a definite, prayerful, and careful search of the Word of God.

In the Old Testament, Leviticus 20:10, those guilty of adultery were stoned to death, freeing the innocent party to remarry. However, we are not now under the same law but under grace and, under this dispensation, Paul gives advice to those Christians married to unbelievers. He says, If they be pleased to remain with their unbelieving companions, they should do so; for in thus doing, they may be able to save them. But if they depart because of adultery, God commands that they remain unmarried, that there may be an opportunity to become reconciled.

Why the wholesale putting away of husbands and wives? A summary of opinions of prominent ministers was that for whatever cause a divorce was granted, no truly righteous persons would marry again while his or her former companion was still living.

A prominent Judge who handles five thousand divorce cases each year, declared he was confident that in ninety per cent of those cases, the persons seeking divorce found somebody else more appealing to them than the one they had married.

Listen to this! Judge William J. Gaynor, of New York, made it quite clear to the jury, in the famous Powers divorce case: that they could have nothing to do regarding the sacramental or religious character of the union of a man and woman. And he warned them not to consider that phase.

Judge Gaynor's instructions to the jury are as follows: "Something has been said here about prejudice against, and about, the matrimonial bond, and you have been examined in particular, to some extent, before being accepted as jurors. Consider the DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A STATE LAW BREAKING A CONTRACT and a SACRED UNION HOLDING STILL AFTER VERDICT GIVEN. If you decide for divorce in this case, remember you only cut the knot tied about the parties by the state's law, but you absolutely do not touch the sacramental bond which states that persons are married 'till death do us part.' I charge you, gentlemen, that so far as concerns any religious or sacramental or church bond existing between these people, we have nothing whatever to do with it. If these people are bound by a sacrament or any religious church bond, you and I are not seeking to sever that obligation. When we are through with this case, that obligation is left untouched. We do nothing whatever with it. They are just as bound by a sacrament or any religious bond after we get through with them, as they were before. We do not sever it, we do not break it; and that is something, that seems to me, is very often misunderstood."

Let us look back again at the Scriptures. In First Samuel 15:22 we read, "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to OBEY is BETTER than SACRIFICE, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

Those who object to breaking up the homes of those who have been divorced and remarried again should remember that each union of this kind represents one or more homes, already destroyed through divorce, which should be restored. We are confronted with the fact that when some persons start divorcing, there seems to be no end to it. Certainly obedience to God's law of marriage is better than sacrifice, and no amount of sacrifice can atone for the sin of adultery. Only full repentance is accepted by God.

Look once again at Malachi 2:14, "Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: YET is SHE thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant."

When Jesus' disciples (not Pharisees) came to Him privately asking Him concerning divorce and remarriage, His statement was definite. We may read it in Mark 10:11, 12: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."

A similar definite statement against divorce and remarriage is made by Jesus in Luke 16:18, which proves to me that Jesus Christ did not believe in homes being broken. If a home has already been disrupted, it should be restored, if possible, with father, mother, and children being again united, thus averting the possibility of more lives being wrecked.

In bringing this discussion on divorce and remarriage shortly to a conclusion, I should like to lead you to the Book of Hosea, where God reveals the depth of His love to His people Israel. It was this people to whom He said He was married; if they would return from their whoredoms, and turn from their paramours, He would forgive and receive them. He compares the relationship of husband and wife to that of Christ and His Church. The marriage relationship is primarily holy; and true holiness will help preserve the bond that unites them, through any test. In First Corinthians 13:4, we read, "Charity [divine love] suffereth long, and is kind." It is kind while it suffers. In Second Corinthians 6:6 are the words, "By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned."

God vividly pictured this wonderful love, through the minor prophet Hosea (Hosea 1 and 2). While Israel was away from God and committing whoredoms, God told Hosea to marry, and he selected for a wife, Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim. She bore him two children. But we are told, in chapter 1, verses 8 and 9, that when the third child arrived, a boy, God said, "Call his name Lo-ammi: for ye are not my people" (that is, the child was illegitimate -- not Hosea's son).

The story goes on to reveal that Gomer played the harlot, running riot until even her paramours who had supported her while they cheated on Hosea, cast her off. And she fell so low that she was about to be sold as a slave in the common market of cast-offs. But when Hosea, who loved his wife Gomer, heard of her being down in the slave mart -- even though she had broken his heart and disgraced his name -- he went down to the slave market to buy Gomer back. And amid the shame of the slave market atmosphere, as Hosea saw Gomer brought out to the block in chains, a slave to be sold to the highest bidder, his love went out to her. And when the auctioneer put up Gomer, Hosea lifted his voice and said, "Fifteen pieces of silver, and an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley!" (chapter 3:1, 2). So Hosea bought Gomer. And I believe it was when Hosea took her down from the block, unfastened her chains, and looked into her eyes (no doubt they fell in surprise and embarrassment) that he said to her, "Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee" (chapter 1:3).

In other words, Hosea took Gomer back to their humble home. And, I think, as they entered the door, Hosea the lover said, "I forgive thee, and thou wilt be only mine"; and as they embraced,

all heaven looked on and God sealed a home. Hosea did not get a divorce, but suffered a while -- and God made up to him all he had lost.

I have seen a similar incident portrayed in life, in which God kept a true Christian wife while she suffered her husband's drunkenness and all that goes with it. And she won her husband to Jesus, and saved her home and her children.

This account brings to my mind and my unworthy heart a scene, nearly thirty-three years ago, when my wicked soul, chained with the bonds of sin and carnality, was on the block, when hope seemed gone, and I was doomed. Then out of the darkness and confusion of my life there came One to my aid, "Jesus, Lover of my soul." Many years before I had pledged Him my life, and He had saved me, but I lost Him out of my heart, And the years had rolled by as I had run the gauntlet of sin, almost, and deserved nothing but death. But that day He looked on me with mercy and love, and said, "If you will confess your sins, I will be faithful and just to forgive you your sins, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness." And so, that dark day, Jesus bought me, but not with silver or gold. He went down to the slave market and purchased me with His own blood. I will never forsake Him again. I will be only for Him. Bless His Holy Name! I expect to be at the Rapture, and be with Him, the Bridegroom, forever.

I am sure there are many questions concerning the vital relationship of marriage that can be, and are asked, which the finite mind cannot answer satisfactorily to everyone. BUT we can be sure if we go to HIM who is Infinite Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent, He has the answer, and His Word is eternal. On it we stand or fall, and by it we shall be judged when we have run the course of life, and stand before Him.

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Chapter 5 CONCLUSION

We feel that with all this scriptural evidence standing against the evil of divorce, we must agree that it is always a result of sin. If sin had not entered our world, there never would have been any divorce -- any broken homes or abandoned children. Behind every divorce there is always this monster, SIN -- sin on the part of, at least, one of the parties and, too often, sin on the side of both parties. A hasty or mixed marriage, or being unequally yoked together with unbelievers, is the cause for many of the divorce problems. Many persons are so confused that only God could untangle them.

Divorce is a sin against God, a sin against society, a sin against the family, and a sin against one's body and soul. There is nothing good to be said about divorce!

During the last two decades, the divorce rate has increased with such astonishing speed, that in a generation or two, if the present trend continues, the whole sacred sacrament of marriage will have vanished. The race will be mongrelized and something like jungle mating will be instituted or at least practiced. Common-law marriages are increasing now at an alarming rate. In such cases, a man and woman live together as man and wife without an official marriage.

While there are many other Scriptures we might have mentioned, which frown on the evil of divorce, we feel that there has been enough evidence brought to bear upon the subject by the Scripture references we have submitted, at least to put an honest seeker of the truth to searching the Bible, in it "ye think ye have eternal life."

In writing this pamphlet, it has not been the intention of the author to give the harsh, dogmatic person something with which to whet his sword, or the careless person something to lean upon. I have simply written the truth as I see it. I have never found any situation in which the influence of divorce has been for good; but contrariwise, it has cast a shadow over homes and given a stigma to children who do not deserve it. It never really settles anything and is nearly always followed with regret.

But the problem of divorce is here and we cannot ignore it. While we must face it scripturally, we want also to remember to be gracious, understanding, forgiving, and sympathetic at all times, even with the most guilty ones. I feel that as Jesus sympathized with the woman caught in the very act of adultery, forgave her, and said, "Go and sin no more," I also must be merciful. For if the law had been enforced in this case, both the man and the woman who were guilty would have been stoned to death. The Pharisees were trying to entrap Jesus, but did not succeed; instead they were rebuked by Him with His forgiveness of the woman who confessed her sin of adultery.

This opened the way for her to go back to her husband and he to his wife and for homes to be reunited. Though adultery is a great sin, yet the same Christ who forgives lying, stealing, and coveting, when they are confessed and forsaken, will also forgive the sin of adultery and fornication on the same grounds of repentance.

And now we come to the close of this discussion of a complex problem. May I again solicit you, whether or not you agree with me on all points, to remember that I have not made any statement hastily, or without sympathy; for I have only wished to be a help to those involved in marital difficulty and to warn those who might be contemplating making a venture into a situation that can only mean disaster. I have tried not to set myself up as a judge, but only as an adviser and one with a burden -- to stand in the gap in this awful age of carelessness and recklessness. I trust my humble effort will save someone from tragedy and regret.

I ask you to forgive me if I have seemed severe. Pray for me as you try to give me credit for having been faithful to the trust committed to me as a minister. For I have presented the truth in the fear of God, attempting at the same time myself sincerely to walk in the light of the Scriptures.

I would plead with you in closing, especially you young people who listen to or read this pamphlet, to realize that the road of divorce and remarriage is a most dangerous road, and is one of the surest ways of wrecking your future hopes to be happy in this world.

The sin of divorce is not unpardonable; but with true repentance on the part of the sinner, God will forgive. However, it is far better in the first place to listen to God and His Word than to enter a wrong - relationship blindly and without serious consideration and prayer, thus causing heartaches that must have sad memories.

The only safe way for you young married couples -- and older -- is to be sure that you are both Christians. Be sure to pray much. And see that you remain in love with each other. Remember, yours is a UNION of lives until DEATH. Only the abundant grace of God can take you through the dark places, helping you to survive the severe storms that will break across your pathway as you journey together through life.

Remember that only true love will weather the sicknesses and financial reverses that come, and the many crises that arise when two personalities do not agree on a certain decision to be made. For life is made up of highlights and shadows. And it is only true love in the hearts of two persons whose lives are blended together that will reach its consummation in married bliss. Infatuation will fail in crises, and look for other loves; it will refuse to suffer as only love will -- but it will break hearts and spoil homes.

Finally, I trust, reader, that you will consider this truth in the light of the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who said: "FOR as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, MARRYING AND GIVING IN MARRIAGE, UNTIL the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the COMING of the SON OF MAN BE" (Matt. 24:39).

Surely we can see that the sin of divorce and remarriage is NOW the sin of the age. And surely we remember that in every evil generation which God visited with judgments, a similar moral condition prevailed. May the blessed Holy Ghost in this evil time stir us and awaken us, that we will not be caught unawares, indulging in the prevailing sins! "Dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Cor. 7:1).

Remember that the Antediluvians, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the later nations of Greece and Rome, fell through their moral madness. I believe God is moving the Bride closer to Himself and she is becoming more deeply spiritual, while the professed and infatuated lovers of Christ are in this time, when iniquity is abounding, waxing cold in their devotion to the Bridegroom. They are neglecting to read the love letters from His own hand of inspiration, which tell not only of His love but also of His soon coming.

This writing is offered to you, dear readers, through prayer and earnestness of spirit. And I am trusting in God, that He will lead us all into the place of sincere searching of His Word, for in it we have eternal life. Please, before you make any comments or draw any conclusions on the subject which has been discussed, will you not set aside any preconceived ideas and earnestly pray, letting the Word enter into your final decision? "Let us pray."

Yours with mercy and deep sincerity,
Glenn Griffith

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THE END

