

CHAPTER D13

DIVORCE

EXCEPT IT BE FOR FORNICATION

As noted in the previous chapter, divorce is a *legal* procedure. (In this chapter I use *divorce* as a synonym for the Scriptural term *putting away* because of modern usage, customs, and legal procedures. However, it may be that the “bill” or “writing” of “divorcement” invented by Moses (**Mt 19:7,8**) is, in God’s eyes, neither efficacious (**Mt 5:32b**) nor the same as “putting away” a wife.) But no legal procedure (no matter what it’s called) can do anything to keep a person from dying if you divorce his head from his body – as in cutting his head off. In a consummated marriage the man and wife become one flesh; he is the head and she is the body. And that is why divorce, for any reason, legal or otherwise, is just *not possible* when a union has been consummated. However, the legal giving and taking part of marriage can, before the consummation, be reversed by another legal procedure. But in order to satisfy the law, in order that the divorce/putting away be legal, the divorce/putting away must be based on a legal reason. And according to the Lord Jesus Christ the only legal reason for putting away a wife is *fornication* (**Mt 19:9**).

Many people confuse fornication and adultery, but it’s really very simple: Fornication is premarital sin; adultery is post-marital sin. Because Mary was pregnant *out of wedlock* it was believed she was a *fornicator* (**Jn 8:41**). On the other hand if you are married, “stepping out” on your spouse is *adultery* (**Le 20:10**). Notice in Mt 19:9 the Lord’s use of *fornication* and *adultery* is consistent with the meanings of the words. While we’re in that verse let’s look at another common misunderstanding based on tradition. Some say Mt 19:9 can be used as a proof text for New Testament monogamy because it means a married man can’t marry again without committing adultery. But since the verse doesn’t *say* that, they are merely letting their tradition force a meaning that is not only not in the verse, but one that contradicts the rest of Scripture and is inconsistent with the picture of salvation painted by the Bible’s teachings on sex, marriage, judgment, consummation, divorce and damnation. What then is meant by the verse when it says a man who *illegally* divorces his wife, and is therefore still legally married to her, is an adulterer if he marries again? It means the same thing **Ja 2:9,10,11** does: If you transgress the law by divorcing your wife for an *illegal* reason, you are guilty of adultery, murder, stealing, etc., because *any* transgression makes you a lawbreaker, a sinner. That is, you’re guilty of any and all sins because you’ve *broken the law!* You see, the problem isn’t this sin or that sin, it’s becoming a *lawbreaker*, and *any* sin makes you an outlaw. (There is a speck-in-your-eye, beam-in-mine lesson on forgiveness in that.) The Bible teaches a lot about sin and forgiveness that is ignored: If you commit a sin, anything else you do that isn’t a sin *becomes sin* (**Hag 2:11-14**) because it’s done by a filthy sinner. In other words an outlaw is an outlaw until the law has been satisfied. But in Mt 19:9 the Lord goes further than that by saying an innocent man who participates in sin by marrying an illegally-divorced woman becomes an adulterer. That is what the verse is about, not polygamy or monogamy. This is supported by reasoning with Scripture: Mt 19:9 *cannot* be saying marrying another woman (polygamy) is adultery. Why? Because God never would have sanctioned polygamy in the Old Testament if *polygamy* violated His Commandment against *adultery* (**Ex 20:14**).

Once the union is consummated the bonds of marriage can be broken *only by death* (**Ro 7:2**). Therefore a Christian’s *consummated* union with Christ can never be broken since neither Christ nor the saint *can ever die*. That’s the good news. The bad news is consummation with Christ does not happen at the new birth; our entire Christian walk takes place before the marriage supper, the Judgment by Christ, and consummation. It is our Christian walk that will be scrutinized in accordance with the word of God in order to determine if we are chaste virgins or premarital (pre-consummation) fornicators. Fornicators will be put away and damned. The Judgment Seat of Christ will not be a joyous event; the Bible attaches the word “terror” to it (**2 Co 5:11**). In fact, Matt Seven and five other unprepared virgins show that *surprise* is another element some Christians will experience at Judgment.

Matt Seven? I lump the “many” rejected Christians at Judgment in **Mt 7:21-23** into one person named Matthew Seven. Matt Seven was saved, was a spirit, and therefore was part of the spiritual Kingdom of God. He wanted to inherit the **promise**, which includes the new Kingdom of Heaven and its everlasting, physical real estate (**Mt 7:21**), but was disinherited/divorced by Christ because Matt disregarded the first half of **Mt 6:33** by doing what **1 Jn 2:15** told him not to do. Matt knows he is saved and is not lying to his Judge when he defends himself by listing his works, his fruit of the Spirit, the evidence of his faith (v.22). He has a reason for arguing; he believes in “eternal security” and thinks if he can just prove he is a son of Abraham (as if God didn’t know) then he *can’t* be cast away! But Matt, like too many others, doesn’t understand sex and marriage – in spite of the fact that they are obviously important because of God’s use of them as types of His relationship with His bride. Matt thinks “once married always married” because he saw some guys behind pulpits wave their arms and shout, “God doesn’t have an eraser!” (God uses a blotter: **Ex 32:32,33; Dt 9:14; 29:20; Re 3:5**.) This and other traditional clichés, along with society’s conservative “moral values”, became the foundation of his thinking because, having never bothered to study things like sex, marriage, divorce, and fornication in the Bible, he had no alternative but to believe what seemed right in his own eyes.

That’s why, when an incredulous Matt Seven is told by Christ it is legal to put him away because “I never *knew* you,” Matt has no idea the meaning of *knew* in this context includes/means *consummated* (**Ge 4:1,17**), or even that it is a *legal* term because he never examined the connection between sex, judgment, and marriage (**Dt 22:13-21; Ge 24:67; 2 Co 11:2**). (To verify it is born-again Christians who are put away by Christ at Judgment, notice the word *see* in both **Jn 3:3** and **Lk 13:28**.) That’s why Matt, when he found out he was being rejected at Judgment, argued by listing proofs of his Christianity. David would never have done that because David didn’t believe in eternal security (**Ps 51:1-11**). But Matt and many other Jews (including Nicodemus in **Jn 3**) did not understand salvation and thought God would never mistreat one of His wives by throwing her into hell. That’s why one of the things Matt did was to remind Christ that he – like all brides of Christ – took God’s name upon himself and therefore did his works in His name. Christ knew many Jews thought eternal security/no divorce was God’s policy. Therefore He picked up on Matt’s marriage analogy in order to teach that what the Jews did know and practice about marriage should be applied to God at Judgment: “I can legally put you away because I never *knew*/consummated you.” There is a common misconception about Christ’s reply that may be profitable to touch on. Some people think Christ said, “Your iniquity is in the fact that *I never knew you/you are a stranger/unsaved*.” In other words they think Matt had to be

unsaved *because* he was full of iniquity. These people also think the word *wicked* in the Bible always applies to the unsaved – never to Christians. This is a perfect example of letting denominational doctrine determine what a verse in the Bible says rather than letting all of the Bible and all of its teachings, types, and examples that rightly fit together without contradiction determine church doctrine.

Matt is not alone in his surprise. Note the similarities between **Mt 25:11** and Mt 7:21-23. The pleading “Lord, Lord” of the former is the same as that of the latter. The desperation in the attempt to be prepared in **25:7-10** is similar to the desperation behind the listing of Christian works in 7:22. And the “I never *knew* you” of 7:23 matches the “I *know* you not” of **25:12**, and both fit the *consummation* meaning of *know*. The reason the Lord has to explain to these foolish virgins why it is legal to divorce them is an obvious one – *they don’t understand the subject!*

This is not to say the word *knowing* always refers to consummation. Look at **2 Th 1:8,9** and let’s use it to demonstrate two things. First, it can be correctly read two ways: 1) “Christians who aren’t consummated go to the lake of fire.” 2) “Christians who don’t understand who God is via the teachings in His Book go to the lake of fire.” In fact, as you continue to study the Bible along with this book you’ll increasingly realize many born-again Christians today have no idea who Jesus Christ is – their god isn’t the God of the Bible. The second thing we can learn from 2 Th 1:8,9 is how much people insist upon clinging to denominational doctrine and letting it determine what the Bible says. For example, if you show these two verses to someone who believes in eternal security and who has also gotten as far in this book as you now have, they will open their mouths and say, “Oh, but that’s obviously talking about the unsaved because they go to everlasting fire.” They have failed to learn the lessons of the earlier chapters and/or have failed to apply them. If they learned anything from chapter D7, *The Quick and the Dead*, they learned to never ignore the *second body*. They learned the second body is the spirit body of the new man, it can only be gotten from Christ via the new birth, and unless you have the second body you absolutely cannot enter eternity – including the lake of fire. Had they learned and applied that and other lessons they would no longer allow tradition to blind their understanding of verses like 2 Th 1:8,9.

Those two examples make it clear that the terror experienced by *many* Christians at Judgment will take them completely by surprise because their Bible study was inadequate. When they heard preachers shrill, “I don’t know about you, brother, but I’m glad God doesn’t believe in divorce! Amen?” they failed to search the Scriptures to see whether those things were so. But Matt Seven’s behavior at Judgment reveals more than ignorance, it reveals the complete absence of the discipline and mindset required of Christians. Why? Because Matt does something horribly and shockingly impertinent and impudent – he argues with God Almighty! (I won’t say he goes as far as insolence, because he’s not intentionally contemptuous of Christ.) This shows Matt’s character development stayed in the carnal, immature, self-on-the-throne, babe-in-Christ stage because as Christ’s bride he never took authority seriously enough to learn a wife never argues with her husband because that is independence and rebellion. You say, “But Matt had to be mature because he cast out devils in Jesus’ name!” And I say the Bible doesn’t say casting out devils is a sign of maturity. Because the issue in the Bible is authority, a good Christian will develop the mindset of a humble, obedient servant whose life is to do the will of his master. The Christian wife of Christ lives to glorify God as the omniscient, omnipotent, majestic king He is. Therefore *whatever* He says is instantly accepted as law. Let’s examine how Matt would have reacted to the same circumstances had he been a good Christian:

Matt, a good wife of Christ standing before her Husband and God at Judgment, has just been condemned to hell. Because that is a devastating thing to hear, the body, the old man, the carnal gut, experiences an emotional reaction strengthened by surprised terror. The carnal mind, which does not agree with or like the verdict, comes up with great arguments intended to show the verdict is wrong. The carnal mind and body quickly, instinctively, send a flood of words rushing toward the mouth. However, while all this is happening the new man has been doing his duty; ruling in accordance with the will of God as revealed in His holy word. The new man has learned to rule well his house/body. He is used to applying the Bible to both the inputs of the body and the circumstances of life. He often allows the body to satisfy its wants and needs when appropriate, but he has trained the old man to render instant obedience to any and all orders. In this situation the head, numbed with shock, is struggling to come to grips with the situation. But it notices the body, *on its own*, sending words to the mouth. That in itself is wrong, but to back-talk an authority is disrespectful of authority and is rebellious. So the head quickly says “no” while it addresses the situation. The well-trained body needing no more than that quick command remains silent and waits for further instructions. The head thinks on: “The Lord cannot be wrong; His word is truth. Period. Accepting and building on that, I realize arguing will not change a truth even if I don’t like that truth. (Oh, I’m horrified and ashamed that my mouth came so close to rising up and resisting Him!) OK, based on His words I now accept that I’m a stinking goat to Him. No wonder He wants me to get out of His presence! And, not that it matters now, but I agree with Him – I shouldn’t be in His presence; I *belong* in hell.” Suddenly without hope and without a cause, Matt feels his strength ebbing; everything is lost. This is the telling moment (**2 Ch 32:31**). With tears of despair and agony over the loss of the Supreme Loved One, Matt endures to the end and glorifies God by obediently turning and walking to, and over, the brink into everlasting torment.

Had Matt been a good Christian, of course, he would not have been damned. But because it is our *duty* to become that kind of dedicated, selfless servants whose only *real* goal in life is the Lord, we *must* develop the qualities highlighted in the above scenario. If we take what the Bible says seriously, if we let it dictate the kind of servants we are, and if, in the daily trials and occasional real tests God sends our way, we demonstrate, even unto death, the above qualities, we will be good and faithful servants and will not have to experience the shock, the terror, and the agony of the above scenario. But remember, in order to avoid that horrible situation at Judgment, we must become the kind of Christians who would behave properly even in that situation. We have the honor and distinction of being His espoused wives; let us therefore lay aside the weights and fears that so easily beset us and bring our bodies under subjection by forcing ourselves to act just as if fear were not present, and with no other objective than glorifying God with obedient service in accordance with His word.

The Bible makes it very clear that those under authority are directly and unambiguously ordered by God to obey, submit to, please, and faithfully serve their authorities – even if those authorities are froward. A perfect example is Jesus Christ ordering His people to obey the very Pharisees Christ knew to be evil. And that duty to please our authorities means the fact that Matt Seven was a *divorcee* (because he was divorced by Christ at Judgment and thrown into hell) *is its own indisputable proof* that Matt Seven was a lousy, sinful, rebellious, selfish bitch rather than a proper servant/wife who pleased his heavenly Husband Who, admittedly, is a hard Master (**Mt 25:24**). When we apply that Biblical truth to life we have no alternative but to conclude – if *we* are selfless wives who strive to please our heavenly Husband – that any woman who is divorced is, Scripturally speaking, a lousy, sinful, rebellious, selfish bitch rather than a proper servant/wife of Christ who obeyed God’s

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order to please her earthly authority/husband. The simple fact is no husband – froward or not – is going to throw out a servant with whom he is well pleased. The issue is not *right and wrong*; the issue is *submissive obedience to authority*. The penalty for not being a selfless, submissive wife who lives only to please her hard Master...is divorce.

Before we move into the next section I want to illustrate what happens to our thinking when we do understand sex, marriage, and divorce. Again I'll use Matt Seven and his apparent belief in "eternal security." This is what would have happened to that "doctrine" had he understood marriage and divorce: These would have been his thoughts:

"Even though God talks about divorce I don't think He believes in it because it is contrary to eternal security. And His Scripture doesn't contradict itself. But wait, He even tells us *when* divorce is permitted – for premarital fornication. For pre-consummation sin. That's what the Bible says. Naw, that probably applies only to the unsaved. But that doesn't make sense because divorce only applies to those you're *married* to; it's not possible to divorce someone you're not married to! The unsaved are not Christ's body, His church, His wives. Therefore the unsaved will never be divorced by Christ, and that means the only people divorced at Judgment are Christians. But that can't be right because at marriage we become one flesh with Christ, and that renders divorce impossible. Uh-oh, the *consummation* is what makes us one flesh, *not* the espousal. And not only does a man not divorce women who are not his espoused wives (the unsaved), when it comes to *fornication* (the only valid reason for divorce) no man can accuse a woman of being unfaithful to Him if she isn't His to begin with. Joseph could only divorce Jesus' mother, *Mary*, for fornication, he couldn't divorce *Mary Magdalen* because she wasn't his wife. We Christians are, according to the Bible, only *espoused wives*. And the unsaved aren't Christ's wives to any degree. Therefore *divorce*, from God's perspective as our Husband, applies *only* to His wives. The belief that Christ's espoused wives have 'eternal security' is a contradictory product of gross ignorance and a failure to *apply* the lessons of the Bible!"

Another example of how ignorance of the Scriptures allows false doctrine to flourish is **Jn 10:28,29**, which is one of the darlings of eternal security advocates. They readily admit the "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish" part is not a true proof because – like **Jn 3:16** – it could be only referring to the fact that the new birth replaces the mortality of the flesh with the immortality of the spirit. It is the word "neither" that makes this passage so important to them because it signifies a change of topic: Even if the "eternal life" part doesn't prove eternal security, they think the part after *neither* is an indisputable proof because it says nobody can pluck anyone who is in Christ from His/His Father's hand.

The problem with Jn 10 as a "proof" is it only lasts for five more chapters: In **Jn 15:1,2,6** Christ says the Father, who is greater than all, *is the very one who casts Christians out of His hand!* V.1 identifies Christ as the vine, and the Father as the husbandman/pruner. V.2 says every branch "**in me**" (in Christ) that proves to be unfruitful is pruned by the Father. And then v.6 says these pruned Christians that didn't "abide in me" are cast into the fire and burned. *Abide* means *stay*, *to not leave*, *to endure*. So, the Father casts those Christians who were "in Christ" but didn't mature and bear fruit into hell.

The point is, the more we understand the Bible the more our modern doctrinal inconsistencies will jump out and get our attention. What we are discussing *is* important.

UNTIL DEATH DO US PART

Wedding ceremony liturgies today often include something like, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" or "...until death do us part." As we saw in the first section those pronouncements are premature because they only apply when the union has been consummated. Once the marriage is consummated there is no longer a legal procedure by which to terminate the marriage. In fact, a consummated marriage can be terminated only by death. Death is certainly a curse, but because of its marriage-ending ability it turns out to be a blessing as well. Let's see how.

We were all born mortal. Mortality is a picture of our relationship with the Devil because, just like when we are born again our new man belongs to He Who is Life and we are owned by Him, in bondage to Him, and are His wives and children, so is our old man owned by he who is death, and we are in bondage to him as his wives and children. Yes, we, in our flesh, *are* the brides of Satan, and that can be deduced by applying your Bible knowledge to **He 2:14,15**. But the real proof is all of **Ro 7** which tells us we are married to the Devil (v.4), and are, in our flesh, our old man, his body (vv.14-25). Verse 4 just comes right out and says it: "...that ye should be *married to another*." That means Christ is, from our perspective, *another* husband. The verse doesn't say "that ye should be married," it says "to another." Ro 7 tells us how to get free of our marriage to Satan so we can wed another, how the old man continues to plague us, and ends by saying, "Oh, who will deliver me from the struggles and temptations that accompany being Satan's body? Jesus Christ will, if I walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Obviously, Christ's death substitutes for our own in order that we can be freed from our marriage to Satan and marry Christ. We then demonstrate our preference for Christ by *reckoning* our old man to be dead by dying daily to its inputs and by making our new man rule our lives in accordance with the Bible. But here's where it starts getting interesting: Since Christ died *once* for sins and will not die again, and if eternal security is doctrinally correct, we should only have to die once, and that one time should be **Ro 6:4**! But, because eternal security is false, we must die over and over and over again and again and again (**1 Co 15:31**)! Why? Because we didn't *really* die with Christ on the cross – we're only *reckoned* to be dead. You see, Christ had to die in order to satisfy the *law*. His death has been *legally* applied to us, but not in reality. It gives us the legal chance to serve Him, but because we are really still walking around in our old-man/devil's-bride bodies, we are also still able to serve Satan – that is the treacherous subtlety and internal warfare we face *daily*.

Instead of Christ having to *die* for us why couldn't we just *divorce* Satan? The answer should be apparent since you're now beginning to understand marriage and divorce: Consummated unions cannot be terminated by divorce; they can only be terminated by the death of one of the partners. Christ not only *had* to die a real death to save us, He had to die a *substitutionary* death in order to *legally* free us from our consummated union with the Devil. Don't just be shocked and deny it: reason together with the Lord by applying the Scriptures He gave you. The reason Christ didn't somehow divorce us from the Devil is *He couldn't*. And the reason He went to the awful extreme of dying in our place is *He had to*. That alone is enough to lead us to the conclusion that, since we already know we are Satan's bride, we are unfortunately not just espoused to the Devil, we are his consummated wives until death do us part.

Our being Satan's consummated wives makes sense and is consistent with Biblical marriage and divorce. But there are also some clues in the Bible about how Satan may have consummated his union with us. It may have happened in the garden of Eden. Tradition says Eve was alone with the Devil when he made her a fallen woman, and that she later got Adam to go along with the sin. But the Bible says *Adam was with her when it happened* (**Ge 3:6**). Was the "it" that happened sex? It seems so if you read the following verses, compare them with each other, and apply them as types: **Jn 8:38,41,44; Ep 2:2; Mt 16:23;**

2 Sa 16:22; and **Ge 3:7/Ge 9:22/1 Jn 3:12**. This raises the possibility that one of the meanings of Adam and Eve's realization that they were *naked* was that they'd been seduced sexually (if you research the meaning of nakedness in **Le 18:8,14; 20:11; Dt 27:20**). However, physical sex is not necessarily required in order to consummate a union. (Although, as we'll see in a later chapter, the "oral sex" represented by eating the forbidden fruit could substitute for the more traditional way of consummating a marriage.) Note another possible clue. When Adam and Eve decided to eat the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they were Enlightened, they were thinking on their own. They were using their carnal minds, their *carnal knowledge*. And carnal knowledge is a term sometimes used as a reference to sex.

So, if the Devil did in some way consummate a union with Eve (or with both of them), we know Eve was naïvely seduced but Adam knowingly consented to the sin (**1 Ti 2:14**). Adam's consent, therefore, could constitute the legal part of a marriage, while the carnal knowledge constituted the consummation. But remember, this scenario is only a *possibility* and is built on the *probability* that our *certain* marriage to Satan was consummated. We are merely letting what the Bible says be our guide instead of tradition, and we are marveling at the consistency of it all.

Christ's substitutionary physical death allowed us to be legally freed from our marriage to the Devil, satisfying a legal loophole. However, because we are really still physically alive and have not been, and cannot be, divorced by Satan (because of the consummation), if Christ were to take us as His wives He'd be an adulterer. That problem was solved by the new birth. Our new man is *legally* espoused to Christ while our old man remains in bondage to the Devil. We have two husbands. Which husband we serve in this life is how we determine whose wife we'll be for eternity. With that in mind read **Ro 6:16** and **8:4-14**. Then with that last verse (14) in mind read **Jn 8:33-47** where Christ and His people argue about what it is that makes a person "of God." By taking into account the previous verses we understand that all born-again Christians have two bodies and two husbands. We choose one husband or the other with our *service*. Service means *work* – not lip service. If we are carnal we have served – and therefore chosen – our husband, Satan, making him our father and rejecting God.

That's all fairly simple to understand, and this war would be an easy victory for all of us if we didn't have our Enlightened old man to contend with, subdue, and rule on a daily basis. In fact, our old man is such a formidable adversary none of us would make it unless we were freed from the law.