

The Keys Of The Kingdom

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Contents

<i>Our Staff</i>	<i>Pg: 3</i>
<i>Editor's Note</i>	<i>Jim Miller Pg: 4</i>
<i>William Tyndale</i>	<i>Tim Bench Pg: 9</i>
<i>Practical Suggestions On Prayer</i>	<i>Dub McClish Pg: 14</i>
<i>Apostolic Authority</i>	<i>John Mabrey Pg: 20</i>
<i>True-Words</i>	<i>Stephane Maillet Pg: 25</i>



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Editor's Notes

By Jim Miller
Gray, Maine

Welcome to the June issue of TKOTK.

We lost brother Terry Short last month to a massive stroke and he will be missed. I ask you to keep his wife Donna in your thoughts and prayers as she struggles with the loss.

We hope you are all enjoying and learning from our writing efforts. We also want to remind you that if you have questions or comments just contact us and we will answer you as quickly as we can.

Consider Mat:10:34 and Following

Jim Miller
Gray, Maine

I want you to consider the words of Christ from the book of Mathew. *Mat 10:34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. Mat 10:35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. Mat 10:36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. Mat 10:37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Mat 10:38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. Mat 10:39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.*

To many this sounds like a great sacrifice, yet actually when you sit down and study the scripture with honest intent seeking to do Gods will it is clear that nothing is worth losing your salvation over.

Just like the rich young ruler who had followed all he knew to do yet was unwilling to give up his riches rather that secure his eternal home many today

can not or will not make the needed sacrifices to secure theirs. All one needs to do is look around and see all the false religions that men have devised for themselves in order to satisfy their own beliefs rather than embrace the word of God and change or give up the things they want.

Some folks rather than investigate the truth for themselves sit in the pew and let others tell them what to think. Religion has become like an old fashioned lunch buffet where you can simply pick and choose what you wish to believe or what sounds good to you. If you do not like something no problem skip it it won't matter they say. You do not like baptism no problem but you like getting drunk on Saturday night before you come to church well go ahead we won't say anything to hurt your feelings.

Many good men get up every day and they put on their armor and pick up the sword the word of God and go out and seek to bring the truth to others. They battle against the whiles of Satan striving to bring others to Christ and the knowledge of how to obtain true salvation. There are far to few these days in my opinion.

These Godly men do not stand by and let false doctrines be taught they stand on Gods word and rebuke and reprove false teachers showing them for who and what they are. It becomes more difficult everyday because people seek to have their ears tickled with false praise rather than the truth. When these false teachers are confronted and their doctrines are proven false they do not turn to God and repent the go on the attack and do and say whatever they think will keep them looking good in the eyes of those they have deceived seeking the glory for themselves not the Lord.

These false teachers tell their followers that they can not understand Gods word that they must be told how and what to believe. The false teacher knows that the minute someone follows what is written in second Timothy 2:15 that he will lose that follower. 2Ti 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. These false teachers know that Timothy was warned that he should shun the false teacher..... 2Ti 2:16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

Do not be fooled these men are very cunning and can twist Gods word till it is hardly recognizable. They shun the context of what is written cherry picking what they choose to teach and have you believe. Let me remind you again of what is written second Timothy Four verses three through five 2Ti 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own

lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 2Ti 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 2Ti 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

We are set at odds so to speak with any who refuse to follow the Lord whether it is family, friend, or the things of this world and there is a clear simple reason for this we have free will to choose God or the world. We are instructed to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness in Mat: 6 v33 As always I implore you to open your bible and search the scriptures you can understand them just as I do just as millions of other Christians can and do. I am asking you today will you be as the rich young ruler or will you come stand with God? It is a choice only you can make.

Footnote: Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the KJV Bible.

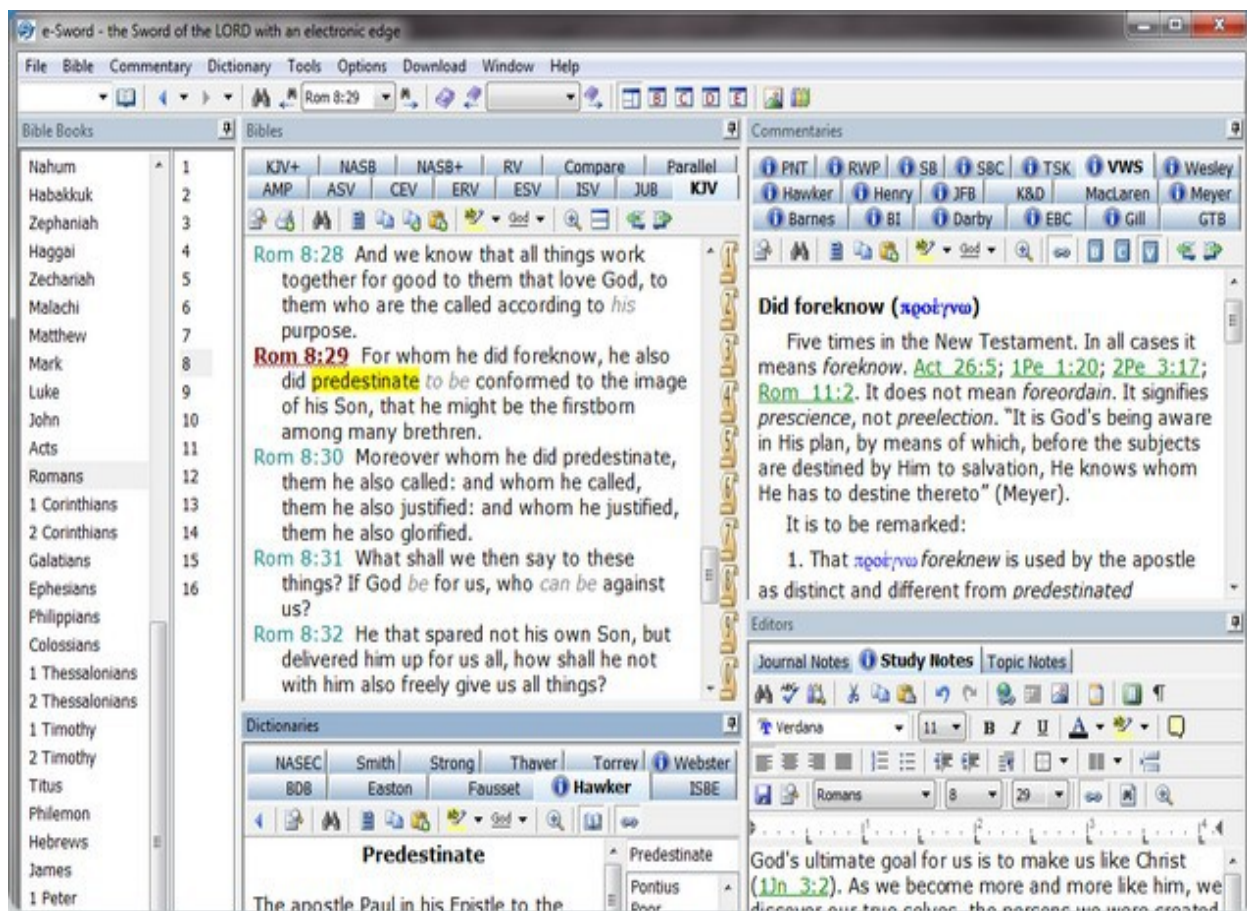
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William Tyndale

Tim Bench
Abilene, Texas

“His life is a testimony of faithfulness to the gospel truth, even unto death at the hands of those who would gag, muffle, or otherwise silence that saving message. William Tyndale was possessed of one overwhelming passion: to see that God’s words in Scripture be conveyed to the hands and into the ears of the common people, that they might know the freedom of life in Christ and the joy of obeying God’s gospel law of love.”

from “WILLIAM TYNDALE: Covenant Theologian, Christian Martyr, Part 1: Background and Early Biography” by Jules Grisham.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Roman Catholic Church was at its zenith of power. The Papacy and the Pope not only exerted complete and de facto dominance of organized religion, but its power was so great and so dominating that the RCC-controlled entire governments, as well. The Catholic Church controlled untold millions of people's lives, from cradle to grave, over the course of multiple centuries....

“The papacy was stronger then than in any other time of history. The Church had gained victory over persecution and now ruled the State with but few exceptions....

The entire life of man was dominated by religion. The Church as a visible organization never had greater power over the minds of men.

During this era, the Catholic Church was determined to make absolutely certain of two specific things.....first, that the Bible would NOT be made available to the general masses.....and second, that “Latin” would be decreed to be and to remain the “official” “language” for translation, interpretation, and application of the Bible (keeping the Bible strictly translated into Latin only would, via the overwhelming rates of illiteracy across Europe, allow the Papacy to promote non-Biblical “additions” to scripture such as “Purgatory”, “Limbo”, and “indulgences”). Translations into languages such as German, French, or into the emerging language of English were criminal acts, punishable by death, under

order from the Roman Catholic Church....

“The Romish Church in England had forbidden the Bible to be translated into the common tongue. The church was adamant about this and did everything in its power to enforce this rule. There is no question about it but that the reason was simply that the Bible in the hands of the common people would reveal how totally corrupt the Romish church had become. The church did not want people to know this. One cleric with whom Tyndale spoke about translating the Scriptures raged: "We had better be without God's laws than the pope's."

From “William Tyndale: Father of the English Bible”, Protestant Reformed Churches of America.

“In 1408 the Roman Catholic Hierarchy proscribed the translation; transgressors were under penalty of major excommunication. In 1414 a Hierarchy-inspired law decreed that all who read the Scriptures in English should "forfeit land, cattle, life, and goods from their heirs forever". The henchmen of this vile religious gang hunted down possessors of Wycliffe's translation as if they were wild beasts. Readers of the Bible were burned at the stake with copies of it around their necks; children were forced to light the death-fires of their parents...”.

From “Equipped for every good work” at www.strictlygenteel.co.uk.

"Book burnings which included Bibles were common after 1521. Sometimes the translators and publishers themselves were also burned. Possession of Bibles became criminal offenses and often resulted in the execution of the accused. There are cases on record of people executed by order of church for the "crime" of teaching their children the Lord's Prayer or the Ten Commandments in their own native tongue.“

from “What Happened this Day in Church History”, Christian History Institute.

Several well-known opponents of the Papacy would emerge during this time, to do battle with the Church and do everything within their powers to get the Bible into the hands of the masses, Martin Luther most notably, but also including others such as Jan Hus, John Wycliffe, and others. In this article, I would like for us to spend just a few moments looking at one man in particular.....

“God, who foresaw the coming greatness of the English-speaking world, prepared in advance the agent who early would give direction to the course of its

thinking. One man stands out silhouetted against the horizon above all others, as having stamped his genius upon English thought and upon the English language.

That man was William Tyndale.”

from “Our Authorized Bible Vindicated”, 1930, by Benjamin Wilkinson.

In 1525, with the assistance of Martin Luther, Tyndale completes the first Bible translation into English.^{1,2} Tyndale's goal was simple: to make the Bible accessible to EVERY man and woman, in their native tongue, allowing people to study the words of God for themselves (which would obviously enlighten people to Catholic farces and deception, such as the infamous sale of “indulgences” for the removal of sin, which Luther so detested and served as the fulcrum for his posting of the “95 theses” on the door of the Wittenburg Church, effectively declaring war on the Catholic Church). Tyndale had fled Germany due to bounty hunters on his trail, the price on his head courtesy of the Pope. The Catholic Church burned every Tyndale Bible it could seize, claiming it contained thousands of errors and possession of a Tyndale Bible is decreed punishable by death.

“An estimated 6,000 English New Testaments began to flood into England inside bags of wheat and bales of cotton. Nearly all were confiscated and burned in front of St. Paul's Cathedral by order of Catholic Church and the King. An act of Parliament (35 Hen. VIII. cap. 1) forbade the use of all copies of Tyndale's "false translation.”

His translation angered Catholics and the King not only because the scriptures were published in English, but he deliberately selected the word ecclesia as ‘Congregation’ instead of Church; ‘elder’ in place of ‘priest’; and ‘repentance’ for ‘penance’.”

from www.Gospelhall.com

“As soon as Tyndale’s English New Testament reached England there was a great demand for it, by the common people, that they might read it, and by the ecclesiastical authorities, that they might burn it.

The (Catholic) Bishops liberally contributed to buy up whole editions to consign to the flames....an English merchant at Antwerp by the name of Packington was a friend both of Bishop Tunstall and of Tyndale. The Bishop made a contract with Packington to buy all the books he could, at any cost, and send them to him so that he might burn them at St. Paul’s Cross.”

“The Ancestry of our English Bible” by Ira Price, page 247, 1906.

Why did Tyndale oppose the Catholic Church so vehemently as the enemy of all mankind?

"The preaching of God's word is hateful and contrary unto them. Why? For it is impossible to preach Christ, except thou preach against antichrist; that is to say, them which with their false doctrine and violence of sword enforce to quench the true doctrine of Christ. And as thou canst heal no disease, except thou begin at the root; even so canst thou preach against no mischief, except thou begin at the bishops"

from *The Obedience of A Christian man*, 1528, see also "The Works of Tyndale", page 220, edited by Thomas Russell.

"I defie the Pope and all his lawes..."

from www.storyofredemption.org. See also "The Battle for the English Bible at www.reformationsa.org.

Tyndale comments, which would ultimately stir the Catholic Church into action and retaliation.....

"Christ is with us until the world's end. Let his little flock be bold therefore...For if God be on our side, what matter maketh it who be against us, be they bishops, cardinals, popes, or whatsoever names they will?"

from "God's bestseller" by Bryan Moynihan, page 155.

"What a trade is that of the priests, they want money for every thing: money for baptism, money for churchings, for weddings, for buryings, for images, brotherhoods, penances, soul-masses, bells, organs, chalices, copes, surplices, ewers, censors, and all manner of ornaments. Poor sheep! The parson shears, the vicar shaves, the parish priest polls, the friar scrapes, the indulgence seller pares all that you want is a butcher to flay you and take away your skin He will not leave you long. Why are your prelates dressed in red? Because they are ready to shed the blood of whomsoever seeketh the word of God? Scourge of states, devastators of kingdoms, the priests take away not only Holy Scripture, but also prosperity and peace; but of their councils is no layman; reigning over all, they obey nobody; and making all concur to their own greatness, they conspire against every kingdom."

from Tyndale's "The Obedience of the Christian Man", 1528. See also "Heroes of the Truth", page 61, by William King Tweedie.

"This seest thou, that it is the bloody doctrine of the pope which causeth disobedience, rebellion and insurrection: for he teacheth to fight and to defend his traditions, and whatsoever he dreameth, with fire, water, and sword; and to disobey father, mother, master, lord, king, and emperor; yea, and to invade whatsoever land or nation, that will not receive and admit his godhead: where the peaceable doctrine of Christ teacheth to obey, and to suffer for the word of God, and to remit the vengeance and the defence of the word to God, which is mighty and able to defend it..."

From Prologue to "Obedience of the Christian man". See also "Martyrs and Players in Early Modern England", page 46, by David K. Anderson.

Tyndale's most famous quote, and his timeless rationale for providing scripture in the native tongue of readers....

"Defending God's law to a supposedly 'learned' divine, the cleric had retorted to Tyndale that 'we were better without God's law than the pope's'. To this assertion of the primacy of the Pope over God's Word, Tyndale is said to have replied 'I defie the Pope and all his laws...if God spare my lyfe ere many yeares, I wyl cause a boye that dryueth ye plough, shall knowe more of the scripture then thou doest'."

from "THE AUTHORISED VERSION: The Influence of William Tyndale's Translations" by Dr. Jonathan D. Moore, page 3.

Tyndale is eventually arrested and jailed by the Catholic authorities, his crime sedition and violating Catholic decrees forbidding translations of the Bible....Tyndale was certain of his inevitable fate, and his fear of what would soon be his fate was coupled with his environment while jailed.....

CONTINUED NEXT MONTH

IS MATTHEW 19:3–12 REALLY SO HARD TO UNDERSTAND?

By Dub McClish
Denton, Texas

Introduction

For several years an average of fifty percent of the couples in our nation who say, “I do” have later said, “I don’t.” In some states the ratio has been much higher. Until about fifty years ago divorce was almost universally stigmatized, and it was difficult to obtain one apart from the cause of adultery. Then the social engineers did their work. Legislators and judges began to liberalize divorce laws, which have steadily discouraged lifelong marriage commitment. “No fault” divorce is now almost universal. The “Women’s Liberation” movement of the 1970s strongly contributed to negativism toward the Biblical concept of marriage and the home. These developments have so cheapened marriage that (surprise!) millions of couples now shamelessly cohabit and breed, no more bothering to marry than brute beasts. These changes regarding marriage have now brought us the abominable and idiotic “same-sex marriage” ruling (an oxymoron if ever there was one) The Lord’s body has increasingly felt the effects of the societal marriage-family revolution (though the opposite should be true [Mat. 5:13–16]).

In Matthew 19:3–12 Jesus summarized God’s perfect will for the marriage relationship and that alone, which, in His perfect will, dissolves it. As one reads this passage he should note that the Lord speaks in literal, rather than figurative, terms. Further, Jesus states His doctrine in the form of obligatory legislation, not as mere optional advice. This context is the bedrock of Biblical teaching on the subject. If one fails to interpret all other New Testament passages on the subject in harmony with Jesus’ words here his understanding of them is necessarily flawed.

Liberal Attitudes

Tragically, instead of preaching and teaching the Truth on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, urging men and women to conform their lives thereto, some brethren have egregiously compromised with the world. They have taught and are teaching devilish, degenerate doctrines to excuse the violation of Divine law on this subject. They have devised perhaps two dozen clever (but corrupt) loopholes to Jesus’ statement of Divine law in Matthew 9:3–12.

The guile-laden question of the Pharisees (they came “*trying him*”) indicates their liberal attitude toward divorce and remarriage: “*Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*” (v. 3). Were the Lord on earth today this question would be most appropriate because it reflects the prevailing current

view (including that of not a few brethren), namely that divorce and remarriage are acceptable on almost any pretext. We need not wish Him here if to gain His answer to this question. The definitive answer He gave in A.D. 30 is the same one He would give now, for His objective Truth does not change from age to age, person to person, or circumstance to circumstance.

Universal Application

One of the contrivances seeks to limit the application of Jesus' doctrine to Christians. However, Jesus bases His teachings on God's law governing marriage from the beginning of man's existence (v. 4 [Gen. 1:27]; v. 5 [Gen. 2:24]). Obviously, God's statements in Genesis 1 and 2 predated by ages the distinction He later made between Jew and Gentile by giving the law through Moses. The assertion that Jesus' words applied only to the Jews (God's "covenant" people then), and that they therefore apply only to Christians now (God's "covenant" people today), is as absurd as it is baseless. The purpose of this quibble is to allow men and women to divorce and remarry without limit **before** they obey the Gospel and then **remain** with their last-married mate. However, the Lord manifestly emphasized Deity's all-time, universal, fundamental principle for marriage: **one** man, **one** woman, joined by God to become **one** flesh for life (**not** one man joined to one man or one woman joined to one woman).

Jesus also indicated the universality of His teaching by applying it to "whosoever" (Mat. 19: 9). There is no justification for limiting *whosoever* unless or to what extent the Lord Himself limits it (which He does, v. 12). Even then, any such limitation must be restricted solely to that which He sets. In His complementary statement (Mat. 5:31–32), Jesus used *whosoever* twice and *everyone* once to emphasize the universal application of His teaching.

Another forceful indication of the universality of Jesus' marriage doctrine in the context deserves more emphasis than it has received. The disciples obviously understood the import of Jesus' words and mildly complained at their harshness (v. 10). Jesus responded, "Not all men can receive this saying, but they to whom it is given" (v. 11). In other words, the *whosoever* of verse 9 does have exceptions. The **only** ones Jesus excludes are eunuchs (those unable to consummate marriage)—natural-born, man-made, or self-made for the kingdom's sake (v. 12). Note who are **not** excepted: **Not Gentiles** before the cross **or non-Christians** since the cross (i.e., "non-covenant" people). The Lord's teaching thus applies to **all others** but eunuchs, and no one has the right to exclude **any others**. Whatever Jesus teaches in this passage applies to all human beings except eunuchs.

The Divine Rule Stated

The Lord answered a decisive "No" to the Pharisees' question, "*Is it lawful for a*

man to put away his wife for every cause?” By *lawful* they meant “God’s law.” Jesus stated that casual and careless divorce is a violation of God’s law because it rejects:

1. The authority of the Creator of man, woman, and marriage “*from the beginning*” (v. 4)
2. God’s explicit law, intended to permanently govern marriage: “*a man [singular]...shall cleave to his wife [singular]; and the two [only the two] shall become one flesh [singular]*” (v. 5)
3. The fact that the two are joined (made one) not merely by men or by the man and woman, but by God (v. 6)
4. The fact that no man has any right to tamper with, nor can any man undo the Divine arrangement for marriage is (v. 6)
5. The fact that this is not a new teaching, nor a new interpretation of an old teaching, but it is God’s law from the very beginning (vv. 4, 8)
6. The fact that divorce on various grounds came in by human reasoning and weakness (vv. 3, 7–8)
7. The fact that divorce for any but the one stipulated exception of fornication involves one in adultery if one remarries (v. 9)

Jesus left no doubt in the minds of the tricky Pharisees, nor should there be any in ours, about divorce and remarriage.

The Divine Exception Stated

The Pharisees’ strategy was to place Jesus in conflict with Moses (or at least with one of the popular rabbinical interpreters of Moses), thereby discrediting Him with the multitude (vv. 7–8): “You say divorce is unlawful, but Moses commanded it. Whom should we follow?” After identifying human rebellion (“*hardness of heart*”) as the basis of Moses’ concession to which they referred (Deu. 24:1–4), Jesus immediately took His stand upon God’s law from the beginning, although it meant:

Correcting Moses, the most revered by the Jews of all of their prophets and teachers

Directly condemning the Jews for their “*hardness of heart*”

Contradicting the moral compromise of His time (cf. Mark 6:18)

Calling upon His hearers to completely change their thinking and practice

Arraying His authority against the Jewish judicial authorities

Contradicting the religious leaders of His time and of His immediate company

When we stand uncompromisingly upon the teaching of Christ on this issue **we**

find ourselves in almost the identical relationship toward comparable contemporaries.

The exception Jesus states in verse 9 involves two elements: (1) The conditional right to divorce and remarry and (2) the only Scriptural condition upon which God allows divorce and remarriage. The Pharisees likely had selfish excuses in mind for divorce and remarriage in their question (i.e., “May I divorce my wife and marry another if I grow tired of her or find someone I like better?”). This spirit firmly grips our times and influences young people daily. The past two or three generations seem to have largely adopted the view that marriage is a meaningless throwaway contract: “If this marriage doesn’t work out, I can always try again with someone else.”

By contrast, Jesus gives the **only** Divinely authorized exception to lifetime marriage: fornication in one’s spouse. *Fornication* translates the Greek word *porneia*, the “umbrella” Greek term for every sort of sexual impurity, including harlotry, homosexuality (both male and female), bestiality, and adultery. Divorcing one’s mate for such behavior would most likely be for a basically **unselfish** reason—not in order to take up with a new mate, but to protect one’s own person and home from the corrupting influence of immorality. Christ does not **command** divorce or remarriage in such cases. However, He **allows** both divorce and remarriage of the innocent mate, or His words mean nothing.

Some Attempts To Avoid the Consequence

One who divorces one’s mate and remarries for any cause besides the mate’s fornication (assuming the two were Scripturally married originally) commits adultery (v. 9b). Does the guilty mate have the same Scriptural right as the innocent to remarry, once fornication has occurred? If so this is the only sin one can commit to his own benefit. Again, If so, **why did the Lord even bother to discuss the matter?** His words actually imply a strong prohibition of remarriage for the fornicating spouse.

Some would mitigate the sin of adultery by defining *adultery* to mean merely breaking the marriage contract. They then argue that one can divorce and remarry if one “repents” of the “adultery” by simply saying, “I’m sorry for breaking up our marriage.” Those who introduced this absurdity should have been laughed to scorn. Instead, the pursuit of “loopholes” to circumvent the Lord’s teaching has been so feverish that some have adopted it, seriously argued it, and even split churches over it. However, Greek lexicons universally attest that one cannot define the physical act of adultery apart from sexual intercourse.

Another common ploy is the assertion that the adultery in an unscriptural marriage is only a one-time act, rather than a continuing behavior. They then argue that couples in unscriptural marriages are not “living in adultery.” Thus

they allege that only their **first act** of copulation constitutes adultery, and that they can continue in the marriage as long as they “repent” of (say they are sorry for) that first act. This outlandish position reveals the desperation of some to avoid the force of Jesus’ teaching. Its advocates conveniently reserve this idea of “non-continuous” sin for adultery alone. However, Colossians 3:5–7 mentions “fornication” (which includes adultery) and other sins and then says that they had formerly “*lived in these things.*” The adultery of Matthew 19:9 is committed just as often as one is intimate with one’s forbidden mate. The only way to repent of an adulterous union is to sever it and cease the intimacy. When children are involved in these unions emotions are naturally stirred in sympathy for them. However, it is clear from Jesus’ teaching that their presence does not alter His doctrine. Neither does the presence of children render the separation of unscripturally married partners “intractable,” as some have asserted. Rather, **remaining in** an adulterous, unscriptural marriage is, in light of the eternal consequences, the “intractable” situation.

Conclusion

Brethren have invented many other far-fetched exceptions to Jesus’ one exception. Not surprisingly, the self-indulgent, secular, Biblically illiterate condition of so many church members has led to the wide acceptance of such exceptions. A preacher seriously suggested to me a few years ago that if we do not lower our standards on this subject we will soon run out of people we can convert because so many are involved in “adulterous marriages” as defined by “our traditional position.” Such is unabashed situation ethics and doctrine. When two people are married (by civil law) **who have no right** to be married, Divine law, not “tradition,” determines such a marriage to be “adulterous.”

Against all such compromises, Jesus’ teaching is narrow, dogmatic, and unapologetic—and so must ours be. His doctrine is therefore as unpopular now as it was when He uttered it. We must stand with Him on this issue, as on all others, for to reject His Word is to reject Him (John 12:48). Hebrews 13:4 declares that God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Will His judgment be any less sore on those who have deceived fornicators and adulterers into believing that they are not such, thus allowing them to reach the Judgment lost because of their impurities?

Endnotes

All Scripture quotations are from the American Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.

I wrote this MS for and it originally appeared as an “Editorial Perspective” in the September 2001 issue of *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL*, of which I was editor at the time.

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APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY

John P. Mabrey
Hilham, Tennessee

“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” (I Cor. 2:4-5)

This world is full of smart men. There are those that have high educational degrees. There are “wizards of Wall Street” that have proven track records in the field of amassing great monetary wealth. And there are those that present their ideas very well. Men of proven qualities are sought out and desired for leadership positions. The same was true at Corinth. There were men who spoke words of wisdom. There were men who were great communicators. And, there were men who “made sense.”

There is a problem however, with the thoughts of men. Many times a man’s thoughts are contradicted by another man’s thoughts. This is seen in the existence of political parties. Different political parties exist because men's thoughts do not agree. Oftentimes even within a political party (and we are seeing this more today than in any other time in this preacher's memory) men just cannot agree. This is seen in various schools of thought. It is especially evident in the existence of so-called “Christian” denominations. In fact, it is the reason for the development of various religions that exist world-wide. The problem is that the thoughts of men cause division. The old philosophy of man says that power must be exercised, just as the Gentiles had their hierarchy of power. Thus inducing further fracture in the Lord’s body, the church.

My friends, there is no division in the character of God. Deuteronomy 6:4 says, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is ONE Lord:” The solution to the problems of the divided brethren begins with a recognition of Paul’s authority. If Paul had authority in the church, then we must also recognize the authority of all of the apostles because Paul said he was least among them. (I Cor. 15:9) “For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.” Recognizing apostolic authority solves the church’s problems today, and brother, believe it or not the church HAS some problems today Lack of Unity. Filled with worldliness. Recognizing what true worship is—and attending that worship at every opportunity. A lack of leaders who are grounded in the truth. There are women being placed in leadership roles that the Bible specifically says those roles are to filled by men. And then there is apathy, some people are Laodiceans—THEY JUST DON’T CARE!!!

The first thing we need to realize is that apostolic authority equals God's authority. Let's begin with the sovereignty of God. Deuteronomy 4:39 says, "Know therefore this day, and consider in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else." Remember as well the authority of Jesus—Matthew 28:18, when Jesus said, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth...." Remember the subjection of Jesus in John 12:48-50—"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." Jesus did not speak his own words, he spoke the words of Almighty God. Jesus gave that same word to the apostles, John 17:8—"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." This was done through the Holy Spirit. (John 14:25-26) "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Also, in John 16:13 we read, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." Many men in various religions today claim privileges that neither the Holy Spirit nor Christ has. On the other hand, many people reject the authority of the apostles, and say, "Unless the words of the Bible are written in red, I do not feel compelled to follow such doctrine." And if you think such people do not exist, just get out and about and talk to some of your neighbors. The apostles recorded in written form all they were told to do and all they were told to speak. Paul says they were the commandments of the Lord. "If any man speak of himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (I Cor. 14:37) Now, let us compare that with Deuteronomy 4:1-2—"Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." You say, oh, but preacher, that is in the Old Testament, we don't live under that today." Then look to the book of Revelation . Revelation 22:18-19—turn and read it for yourself. We are warned not to go beyond what is

written. *“And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes: that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.”* (I Cor. 4:6) Even Peter stated that Paul’s writings were scripture, (II Pet. 3:15-16) *“And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation: even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”* (II Pet. 3:15-16)

Apostolic authority in written form was confirmed. It was confirmed by signs. *“And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”* (Mark 16:20) It was confirmed *“with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.”* (Heb. 2:3) Look at John 20:30-31 for confirmation of the written word. *“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”* Also in John 21:24-25—*“This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.”* Peter was authorized to give God’s terms of pardon on the day of Pentecost and we know it because his words were confirmed when he said in Acts 2:38—*“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sin and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost and said only what was given him by inspiration. Acts 2:3-4 says, *“And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* Paul claimed apostleship and confirmation. *“Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God...”* (I Cor. 1:1) Also look at verse 6—*“Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.”* Paul performed the signs that only an apostle could do. (II Cor. 12:12) *“Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.”* (II Cor. 12:12)

How then shall we treat a message from an apostle? We must treat it *“as it is in truth, the word of God.”* (I Thess. 2:13) We must follow it. Paul wrote: *“Be ye*

followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” (I Cor. 11:1) We need to follow the example of the first converts on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:42—*“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”* We must obey it. *“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from that heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.”* (Rom. 6:17) We must not go beyond what is written. We must take heed not to add to, nor take from the written word. (I Cor. 4:6; Deut. 4:2; and Rev. 22:18-19) We cannot substitute any other doctrine for it. *“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As I said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”* (Gal. 1:8-9) When we speak, we must speak as an apostle speaks; and in doing so we are speaking the words of God. *“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.”* (I Pet. 4:11) We must trust it. It is our trust in the apostles writings that give us hope of the resurrection. *“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”* (I Cor. 15:54) By trusting in the written word which the apostles left us by authority of God through the Holy Spirit, we have forgiveness of sins. *“I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.”* (I John 2:12)

We should come to the conclusion that the words of an apostle are equal to the words of the Lord. Just like the voice of God on Mt. Sinai, God spoke the word to Moses, and Moses carried that same word to the people of Israel. Just like the voice of Jesus on earth, Jesus spoke to his apostles and taught them what to say while he was in the flesh here on earth. The apostles delivered that unaltered message to the world, beginning on the day of Pentecost. And we must deliver that same message to others. It was God’s plan to speak through chosen men. We know that this is true because of the confirmation by signs and wonders. Recognizing these things should cause us to trust apostolic authority, that their message is the message of God. God will be pleased when we obey it. And, we will be with Jesus, if we but trust and obey.

**All scripture references are taken from the KJV unless otherwise noted.*

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Jim and the Staff**

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True-Words

Stephane Maillet
Canada

These are the truest words you will ever hear during this vapor of a life we now inhabit (Psalm 144:4). Pay attention, are you listening, can you see? (Jn. 8:32) Look at how beautiful, wonderful and awesome it is to see our God add to His church (Acts 2:47) by washing away a believers past sins (Acts 22:16). To come out of that water, born again (Jn. 3:3, 5) with robes washed clean (Rev. 22:14) to forever remain faithful to His church (Mt. 6:33). It is indeed cause for rejoicing (Acts 8:39).

The gospel you see being obeyed in this earthly image represents a spiritual operation (Rom. 6:3-4). Look in the mirror. Are you pure and honest enough of mind to understand what you see? "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?" – Jesus Christ (John 3:12.)

The word of the cross (1 Cor. 1:18) will always be rejected by whoever does not believe and obey His gospel (Mk. 16:16b). But for those of us who have opened our minds to the truth and purpose of life, we are being saved (Mk. 16:16a). Not perfect, forgiven.

Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God (Mt. 16:16). He was crucified, buried, and rose from the dead (1 Cor. 15:1-4) in order to save all souls from their sins (Rom. 1:16). Upon this truth He promised to build His church (Mt. 16:18). His promise was fulfilled when it was built on the day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2. All souls from that moment on needed to obey the commission commanded by Jesus Christ (Mt. 28:18-20). Peter, His apostle, inspired by the Holy Spirit unveiled the key: "Repent and be immersed everyone of you with the authority of Jesus Christ FOR the forgiveness of sins." (Acts 2:38).

There is no other way to heaven (Jn. 14:6), no other name (Acts 4:12), no other church but one of His (Rom. 16:16), where the saved are gathered (Acts 2:41, 47). Absolutely nothing in life matters without this hope in heaven, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?" (Mt. 16:26). If you are willing to be a repentant (Lk. 13:3) believer (Jn. 3:16) confessing Christ (Rom. 10:9). Contact us immediately and come forward, God has made all things ready for your salvation. AddedSouls.com

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Thank you
Jim Miller

Contact Information

**Chuck Verkist, 906 East 2nd ave. Ellensburg, Wa. 98926
(509) 925-2593 or cverkist@kvalley.com**

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