

God's law also forbids three classes of people from marrying. First, God's law forbids those to marry who are divorced from their mates who have not committed fornication (Mat. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18). Second, God's law forbids those to marry who have been divorced because of their own fornication (Mat. 5:32; 19:9). Third, God's law forbids marriage to anyone unauthorized by God's law to marry.

May we all be determined to obey the law of Christ concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage, as on every other subject.

—David B. Watson
Jacksonville, FL

[Editor's note: Minor editing done for space considerations.]



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Let us pray for...

Rick & Sheila Beauchamp—his job hunt, mother, her ears
Waynette Davis, Karla Dobbs, Sharon Harp—health problems
Lavonne McClish—macular degeneration treatments
Janice Parks—her health and family burdens
Rick Heimberger, Darrell Conley—health problems

Records you helped make...

Bible Class	12
Sunday AM Worship	12
Sunday PM Worship	12
Wednesday PM Bible Class/Worship	11
Contribution	\$397.00
Contribution average (2009)	\$328.29

Sermon broadcasts...

Both sermons each Sunday are broadcast via Internet, available at our Website, www.northpointcoc.com. The Sunday morning sermon begins at approximately 10:47 a.m., and Sunday afternoon at approximately 1:15 p.m.

Bible class teacher for September
Chairman of Men's Meetings (July–September)
Preacher, *The Lighthouse* editor

Rick Beauchamp
Darrell Broking
Dub McClish

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Sunday

Bible Class	9:30 AM
Worship	10:30 AM
Worship	1:00 PM

Wednesday

B.C./Worship	7:00 PM
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SATAN, OUR POWERFUL AND CUNNING FOE

While our foe in the great spiritual warfare of life fully utilizes men and women who yield themselves to his service, our real battle is not with them, but with him who dominates their thinking and their behavior. This archenemy of Christ and His people is identified as “the devil” (Eph. 6:11) and “Satan” (Mat. 16:23; 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 2:11; et al.). *Satan* means “adversary,” “accuser,” or “enemy” and he is indeed such to all who are striving to serve the Christ. He is described as “the prince of the powers of the air” (Eph. 2:2), even as his agents against whom we wage war are described as “principalities,” “powers,” “the world-rulers of this darkness,” and “the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).

The Lord twice called Satan the “prince of this world” (John 14:30; 16:11). The world is almost completely led, influenced, and dominated by his will. It is in this world that the Lord's soldiers fight the spiritual battles with men and their institutions under Satan's control, even as we receive our orders from the Lord Jesus. Thus, our real warfare is in the “background” with their invisible reprobate prince in the spirit realm. He is described as one who inhabits and pervades the very atmosphere of our earth. Let none think he is not an actual person just because he is a spirit being. He is presently allowed to live in “the air,” but he will eventually be brought down to his final eternal abode of Hell, the lake that burns with fire and brimstone,” prepared for him, his angels, and all of his servants (Mat. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

We are warned of the “wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:11). *Wiles* is from a word meaning “a deliberate planning or system.” The devil is crafty, subtle, and deliberate in strategically seeking out our most vulnerable points. He is a master of deception and subterfuge: “Jesus called him “a liar and the father thereof” (John 8:44). Although his end is certain, he stalks his prey, lurks in the shadows, and awaits his opportunity to devour whomever he may (1 Pet. 5:8). We must not be ignorant of his devices lest he gain an advantage over us (2 Cor. 2:11). He cleverly lays his snares that he may bring men into the captivity of his will (2 Tim. 2:26). He constantly seeks a weakness that he may tempt us (1 Cor. 7:5). His deceptive powers are so formidable that he at times can pass himself off as “an angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14). It is plain from the foregoing that he not only engages in open combat, but that he excels in guerrilla and espionage tactics.

It should be evident from the Scriptural descriptions noted above that we need strength and power beyond that of mere human ingenuity to wage war with this horrible and mighty enemy. The Lord has graciously provided us with adequate armament and weaponry (Eph. 6:10–18). It is up to us to utilize these tools through daily Bible study and prayer. We make a costly, yea fatal, mistake if we underestimate Satan and try to fight him in our own strength alone.

—Dub McClish
Denton, TX



“GOD . . . HATETH PUTTING AWAY”

Malachi 1:1 reads: “The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi” (1:1). God charged Israel with numerous sins, one of which was the sin of “putting away” one’s mate. The people asked God: “Wherefore?” God responded:

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? . . . 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 . . . (Mal. 2:14–16a).

Let us take heed to the three following themes: (1) The Covenant of Marriage; (2) The Courts and Marriage; and (3) The Classes of Marriage.

The Covenant of Marriage

God is the maker of man (Gen. 1:26–27). God first created the male (2:7) and then the female (vv. 21–23). Christ confirmed this centuries later (Mat. 19:4). God made man a moral being, capable of distinguishing between good and evil (Isa. 5:20; 7:15–16). God obligates all men to choose the good and refuse the evil (Jos. 24:14–15; Heb. 11:24–26). God is also the Maker of marriage (Gen. 2:24). Christ concurred (Mat. 19:5–6), as did Paul (Eph. 5:31). In marriage, the husband and the wife have the privilege and responsibility of sexual relations with one another (1 Cor. 7:1–5; Heb. 13:4), but with none others (Rom. 13:9). From the beginning, God willed that a man and a woman whom He has joined in marriage are not to be “put asunder” until death parts them (Mat. 19:4–6; Rom. 7:2–3 [with one exception to be noted later]). If either mate puts the other mate away without authorization from God, he/she commits sin. This is the sin that Israel committed and that God condemned in Malachi 2:14–16.

Marriage is a moral/spiritual lifetime covenant. The term *covenant* simply means an agreement, a contract, a pledge, a commitment. Marriage is not merely a two-party covenant between a man and a woman, but a three-party covenant between God and a man and a woman. The man and the woman are joined by God (Mat. 19:6) and bound by God’s law for life (Rom. 7:2–3). We may illustrate this by envisioning a triangle with God at the top angle and the man and the woman at the two bottom angles. The man and the woman are connected to God and to one another by God’s moral/spiritual law on marriage.

The Courts and Marriage

God has also ordained civil law (Rom. 13:1–7; 1 Pet. 2:13–14). He “removeth kings, and setteth up kings” (Dan. 2:20–22). “The most high ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” (4:17). Civil rulers, therefore, have no intrinsic power, but rather derive their power and authority from God. God has granted civil government limited power and authority (John 19:11). We are thus told to “Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (Mat. 22:21). Alfred Edersheim explained:

Christ’s kingdom is not of this world; a true Theocracy is not inconsistent with submission to the secular powers in things that are really its own; politics and religion neither include, nor yet exclude, each other: they are, side by side, in different domains. The State is divinely sanctioned—and religion is divinely sanctioned—and both are equally the ordinance of God. On this principle did Apostolic authority regulate the relations between Church and State, even when the latter was heathen (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 1:386).

Another writer correctly pointed out the following:

Jesus simply recognized that, within its sphere, the state can demand what belongs to it: money, taxes. But it is not placed on the same level as God.... We have, for Caesar, the image of Caesar which is impressed upon a coin, for God the image of God which is impressed on human beings. Give Caesar his money; give yourself to God.... Thus, while Jesus placed no limits on God’s claims, Caesar’s claims, while valid, are strictly circumscribed.... On the one hand, the State is nothing final. On the other hand, it has the right to demand what is necessary to its existence—but no more. Every totalitarian claim of the State is thereby disallowed (Robert D. Culver, *Toward a Biblical View of Civil Government*, pp. 203–04).

We can also illustrate **this** relationship with a triangle with God at the top angle and the man and the woman are at the two bottom angles. Besides being connected to God and to one another by the moral/spiritual law of God, The man and the woman are also connected together by civil law **if such does not conflict with God’s law**. However, if a conflict arises between the civil authority and Divine authority (concerning marriage or any other issue), “we ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). If civil laws allow a “marriage” that God’s law forbids (e.g., homosexual, polygamous, incestuous, group, et al.), “we ought to obey God rather than men.” If civil laws allow a divorce that God’s law forbids, “we ought to obey God rather than men.” If civil laws allow a remarriage that God’s law forbids, “we ought to obey God rather than men.” No mere civil law can negate, supersede, or overrule God’s law.

The Classes of Marriage

God’s law authorizes three classes of people to marry. First, God’s law allows those to marry who have never been married (1 Cor. 7:2, 28, 36). Second, God’s law allows those to marry who have been married but whose mates have died (Rom. 7:2–3). Third, God’s law allows those to marry who are divorced from former mates who have committed fornication (Mat. 5:32; 19:9).