

Concerning divorce and remarriage, what Jesus said about the man, He said about the woman. Notice Mark's account: *"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery"* (Mark 10:11-12). Disciples are obligated to take in the totality of what Jesus taught on a subject, not just snippets.

For comparison, consider the title inscribed over Jesus as He hanged from the cross. According to Mark, Pontius Pilate wrote, *"THE KING OF THE JEWS"* (Mark 15:26). Luke put it down as, *"THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS"* (Luke 23:38). Matthew recorded it as, *"THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS"* (Matthew 27:37). And John attributed Pilate's accusation as, *"JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS"* (John 19:19). None of these four accounts is incorrect, but, without each other, they are incomplete. One must read them all and conclude that the placard read, *"THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS."*

Likewise, Jesus' instruction regarding divorce and remarriage. Between Matthew, Mark, and Luke, none is incorrect, but each is incomplete without the others. Luke's account is the most basic: *"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery"* (Luke 16:18). Mark's version contains the same information, but also presents equality between genders: *"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery"* (Mark 10:11-12). Matthew's record echoes Luke again, but instead of gender equality, his distinction is to offer up the exception: *"Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery"* (Matthew 19:9). Therefore, it is fair to conclude that Jesus' law on divorce is thus: **Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery against her; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery. And if a woman divorces her husband, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, she commits adultery against him; and whoever marries him who is divorced from his wife commits adultery.**

If it is true that remarriage rights are gender specific, then an awkward conclusion will be forced concerning widowers. All three New Testament passages addressing marriage rights following the death of a spouse mention the wife being free to marry after her husband dies, and never the other way around.

Paul explained to the brethren in Rome, *"The woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man"* (Romans 7:2-3). He said to the saints in Corinth, *"A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord"* (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:39). And he told Timothy, *"I desire that the younger widows marry"* (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 5:14).

Unless those who contend that only a man may divorce his fornicating wife and be free to marry are also willing to claim only a widow may marry after burying a husband, then the assertion fails. That which proves too much, proves nothing at all.

When the apostle stated, *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus"* (Galatians 3:28), this is what he meant. Unless details in context prove a distinction between the sexes, such as the duties of husbands to wives and wives to husbands (Ephesians 5:22-31, then what Christ and the apostles said about men, they said about women, too. Otherwise, it is inaccurate to say, *"God shows no partiality"* (Acts 10:34).

Because God is indeed impartial, what Jesus said about men being saved is equally true of women. The Lord proclaimed, *"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."* (Mark 16:16), but no one regards that "he" as gender specific. Thankfully, *"both men and women were baptized"* (Acts 8:12).

If the Holy Spirit has something to say to one sex, but not the other, that will be clear enough (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11:3-15; 14:34-35; 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:8-15). In the absence of such specificity, it is only right to conclude that "he" or "man" are meant to convey the general sense of "person" or "mankind." That is how language functions.

**"WHAT MUST I DO  
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

**LEARN THE GOSPEL**

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

**BELIEVE IN CHRIST**

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

**CONFESS CHRIST**

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 3:19; 17:30

**BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST**

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF  
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

**SUNDAY**

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

**WEDNESDAY**

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard  
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.  
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN  
ANY TRESPASS...  
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

**CONFESS TRESPASSES**

James 5:16; 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 8:22

**PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS**

Acts 8:22

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS  
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN  
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"If the Bible was manmade, it  
wouldn't go against all  
manmade desires."

**"WHOLE COUNSEL"**

ACTS 20:27

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**GENDER EQUALITY IN DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE**

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Jesus preached a very straightforward rule disapproving of divorce and also of subsequent marriage thereafter, saying, *"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery"* (Luke 16:18). In another text, the Lord made clear there is but one exemption to this rule and that is divorce for fornication. *"Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery"* (Matthew 19:9). As it has been said, "The exception proves the rule." If Jesus forbade all divorce and all marriage subsequent to divorce, and then offered up only fornication as the reason to divorce and afterward enjoy the freedom to marry again, then divorce for addiction, abuse, abandonment, or any other failure is unacceptable to Him. Admittedly, this is strict, but *"there is one Lawgiver"* (James 4:12), so obedience is necessary.

As if Christ's rule governing divorce and remarriage is not already stringent enough, there are some who would bind it even further, suggesting that, as worded, the exemption only applies to the man, and not to the woman. This is an unwarranted conclusion based on superficial study and it must be rejected.

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