

## **“WHOEVER MARRIES HER WHO IS DIVORCED”**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- A.** A certain couple who were members of this church for several years dropped what they referred to as a “bombshell” one week ago today when they emailed 60% of the congregation to announce they are withdrawing membership. If you did not receive that email, understand that neither did I. I was informed second-hand. If you are learning about it for the first time now, I am sorry, but there is no way to minimize the difficulty of the situation.
- B.** Among other troubling issues, they cited their marriage: “I've been lying to everyone for three decades. You see, [she] and I have been together for 34 years and in a marriage that you will reject, without question. [She] was married before we got together and the divorce would not be considered scriptural. But I do not hold the same views that you do, and please do not attempt to convince me otherwise. I've heard and read every argument that has been presented by the conservative churches for 25 years. I'd never even considered that [she] and I were in an unacceptable marriage until we'd been Christians for over 20 years. I wholeheartedly ascent to the views of brother Hailey in his infamous (among the conservative churches) book, ‘The Divorced and Remarried Who Would Come to God.’ I didn't feel like we were wrong before I read that book, but brother Hailey only reinforced what I already believed.”
- C.** Since our brother neglected to cite a single Scripture in defense of his situation, only mentioning what a preacher wrote in a booklet in 1991, it is necessary to go to that material for context: “Nowhere did Christ or an apostle teach that repentance demands the breaking of a marriage relationship such as we have been discussing when one obeys the gospel” (The Divorced & Remarried Who Would Come to God, Homer Hailey, Second Edition, Nevada Publications, 1998, page 72). On the penultimate page of Homer

Hailey's treatise on the subject of divorce and remarriage, he summarizes the issue as twofold:

1. Whether the Lord's instructions pertaining to divorce and remarriage apply before souls obey the gospel, and
2. Whether repentance of sin may ever necessitate the end of a marriage.

## I. CHRIST'S LAW ON MARRIAGE APPLIES TO NON-CHRISTIANS

- A. **Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 10:13; Matthew 7:24**

Every time Jesus spoke about divorce and remarriage, He applied His teaching to "whoever." That applies to the same people His invitation of salvation applies to.

- B. **Matthew 28:18; John 17:1-2**

Who, exactly, is not amenable to the authority of Christ?

- C. **John 12:48**

Jesus' authority applies particularly to people who reject that authority.

- D. **Romans 3:23; 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:4; Romans 4:15; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 9:21**

If sin is the violation of law, and all have sinned, then all are under law – specifically, the law of Christ.

- E. **Mark 16:15; Romans 8:2; James 2:10**

If even partial submission to a law requires total submission to that law, and all alien sinners are accountable to the law of Christ for salvation, then all alien sinners are accountable to the entirety of Christ's law, including what He said about divorce and remarriage

- F. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:9-11**

Before being washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, some of the Corinthians were guilty of specific sins, including adultery.

## II. REPENTANCE APPLIES TO SINFUL MARRIAGE

- A. **Acts 2:38**  
Baptism only remits sins that have first been repented of first.
- B. **Matthew 12:41; Jonah 3:10**  
Repentance means turning away from evil ways. Baptism does not change evil ways into good ways.
- C. **Ezra 10:1-3, 10-12, 44**  
The exact nature of the sin varied for the Jews who returned from Babylonian/Persian captivity, but the problem was the same: they were married to people God said not to marry. The solution was to end those sinful marriages.
- D. **Luke 18:29-30**  
Jesus did, in fact, say that some disciples would need to leave the women they were with in order to please Him.
- E. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:39; Romans 7:2-3; Matthew 19:3-6**  
Marriage is intended by God to be a lifelong bond. Therefore, the first marriage still counts, unless the Lord specified otherwise.

## CONCLUSION

- A. **Hebrews 13:4**  
God will judge adulterers
- B. **Revelation 2:21-22**  
When the Lord wants us to appreciate the severity of some sinful behavior, He often compares it to adultery because adultery is a thoroughly rotten behavior. Adulterers get punished. That should frighten those who are told their marriages are adulterous.