

Introduction

Although it is widely acknowledged that the rate of divorce outside of the evangelical church is rising to alarming rates, there is some question as to whether the same rate of divorce is having an impact upon those who call themselves “Christians.” That issue is outside of the scope of this paper, but the fact remains that whether true disciples of Christ are divorcing at the same rate or if it is substantially lower, every shepherd of God will be called upon to give counsel as to how the Bible deals with divorce and remarriage.

With the ever-increasing number of unbelievers getting divorced, those who enter into the Body of Christ with broken relationships of the past and their repercussions are growing at an alarming rate. The church cannot afford to bury its head and ignore the problem hoping that it will go away. We must go to the only reliable source of knowledge, the Bible, and attempt to discern by God’s grace what His instructions for ministering, counseling and maybe even disciplining those within our care.

Although many godly men have disagreed over this issue and have come out with differing views, each man of God must take seriously the admonition of James 3:1, knowing that we will incur a stricter judgment and our counsel will deeply affect many lives. We must, like the Bereans, search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so (Acts 17:11).

The Problem

Just as the Church is divided over issues such as Church government, the role of women in the church, the use of sign gifts today and modes of baptism, so too is it divided over the joint issue of divorce and remarriage. These two related issues cannot be separated, for most of the passages that speak of divorce also speak of regulations (or prohibitions) regarding remarriage.

Since today, as in biblical times, divorced couples often seek to be remarried, we too must consider how the church will deal with the issues.

Of the positions addressed in this paper, the main issue surrounds the understanding of what has been called the “exception clauses” of texts such as Deuteronomy 24:1-4, Matthew 19:3-9 and 1 Corinthians 7. Do these passages speak of any kind of allowance for divorce? If so, are there limitations to these exceptions? If one is allowed to divorce, can one remarry? Are there any constraints in Scripture to remarriage? All of these questions must be answered if the Church is to adequately address the very real issues of divorce and remarriage inside and outside of the Church.

The Major Positions

For the purposes of this paper, only the four major positions will be addressed concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage, although it is acknowledged that there are many more variations of these four views:

The No/No View (No Divorce and No Remarriage)

This view is the most stringent of the four. Although this view allows for remarriage upon the death of a spouse, this is outside the scope of the issue since remarriage after death is not objected by any major view. This view holds that passages such as Jesus’ exception clause in Matthew 19:3-9 can be explained away by Markan priority¹ or given alternate explanations.² Andrew Comes, John Piper and Charles Ryrie are proponents of this view.

The Yes/No View (Divorce Allowed in Some Cases, But No Remarriage)

This view is a bit less stringent, allowing for some cases of divorce, but not allowing any reason for remarriage. This view, as the others, recognizes that many times one person in the

broken marriage is innocent. This view allows for the divorce of a spouse who is habitually committing adultery or has abandoned the spouse. Although this view sees divorce as inevitable at times, it also interprets the relevant Scriptures to state that there is no allowance for remarriage, and to do so would constitute adultery. Proponents of this view include William Heth³, Gordon Wenham⁴ and Geoffrey Bromiley.⁵

The Moderate Yes/Yes View (Divorce and Remarriage Allowed With Restrictions)

As the previous two views, this view also accepts the high regard of Scriptures for marriage, but takes the “Yes/No View” a little farther down the spectrum. This view not only allows for an exception clause to the overarching ban against divorce, but it also allows for some types of remarriage in certain circumstances. This view allows for the more natural rendering of the “exception clause” texts and is the predominant majority view in evangelicalism today. Proponents of this view include: Martin Luther, John Calvin, John MacArthur, Jay Adams, Alex Montoya, H.A. Ironside. Phillip Wiebe, Craig Blomberg, J. Carl Laney, David MacLeod among many others.⁶

The Extreme Yes/Yes View (Divorce and Remarriage Allowed With Few Exceptions)

Of the four views presented here, this is the one least represented in conservative evangelicalism. This view allows for divorce and remarriage, as in the *Moderate Yes/Yes* view, but does not stop with the exception clause of divorce for adultery or abandonment. This view opens the way for divorce for a variety of reasons and leans heavily upon Deuteronomy 24: 1-4 and 1 Corinthians 7 to prove its point. Bernard Ramm⁷ and Joe Sprinkle⁸ are proponents of this view.

Key Passages

The weight of any argument must be firmly founded upon the Holy Scriptures.

Unfortunately because of the brevity of this paper, each of these passages can only be dealt with in a cursory manner. Each passage will be considered regarding its contribution to the debate at hand with appropriate questions and conclusions drawn where applicable.

Old Testament

Genesis 2:24⁹—This passage is the cornerstone of marriage. It points to the fact that a man and women become one flesh in marriage. This passage is quoted by Jesus in Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:7 and by Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:16 as well as Ephesians 5:31. In Genesis 2:22, it was God who brought the woman to the man establishing marriage as God’s institution.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4¹⁰—This passage is referred to in Matthew 5:31; 19:7-9 and Mark 10:4-5. The Pharisees in Matthew 19:7 stated that Moses “commanded” divorce. However, this passage nowhere commands divorce, rather Jesus corrects their misapplication of the text and shows them that the allowance was because of a hardening of their hearts, but this was not the way it was from the beginning (Matthew 19:8). Many of the religious leaders had latched onto the phrase “he has found some indecency in her” as a means to divorce whenever it was beneficial. Of the two major rabbinic schools of thought, Shammai and Hillel, it was the majority view from the school of Hillel that advocated divorce under this passage for a variety of reasons including disobedience or the burning of bread.¹¹ It is this same understanding of this passage that led Bernard Ramm to accept the *Extreme Yes/Yes* view. The term in 24:1 for “certificate of divorce” is כְּרִיתוֹת, from the root כָּרַת which means “to cut off”¹² and pictures a separation or a cleaving of the relationship that once existed.

Isaiah 50:1¹³--In this passage, Yahweh speaks of Israel as being sent away with a “writ of divorce.” As in Deuteronomy 24, the Hebrew term is כְּרִיתָת סֵפֶר. Israel is pictured being put away for her iniquities against the Lord, a theme that is developed greatly throughout the Old Testament prophets. This passage is significant for understanding the divorce issue because those who would deny divorce for any reason must explain this passage and all others that picture Yahweh “divorcing” Israel because of her spiritual harlotry. If divorce is unacceptable in any circumstances, then how are we to understand this picture? If divorce is allowed only for adultery, but remarriage is not acceptable, then how do we understand God’s continuing covenant and love for Israel?

Jeremiah 3:6-10¹⁴--This passage is significant because not only does it reflect the spiritual harlotry of Israel and God’s reaction, but it also shows God’s desire to have His wayward bride return (v.7). Because she failed to return and repent, God is said to have “sent her away” and given her a “writ of divorce” The writ of divorce the same wording as in Deuteronomy 24:1 and Isaiah 50:1. But verse 7 also introduces a new term, “sent her away” (שָׁלַחְתִּיָּהָ) from the verb שָׁלַח, “to send” with the idea of sending away in the Piel form used in this verse.¹⁵

Ezra 9-10—These two chapters show the nation of Israel come to the conclusion that they have been disobedient to the Lord’s command to not intermarry with the pagan nations surrounding them. As they seek forgiveness in their repentance, they come to the conclusion that they must “put away” their foreign wives. The Hebrew verb שָׁלַח (go, come out) is a Hifil infinitive that gives the causative sense “to put out” or “send out.”¹⁶ This term is used in Ezra 10:3 and 10:19. Another term, בָּרַח, which means “to be divided, separate”¹⁷ cannot be denied to

speak of divorce when taken in the context along with the usage of נָזַף. One difficulty presented to the *No/No View* concerns the involvement of the priest Ezra in the massive divorce proceedings. In Ezra 10:10-11, Ezra addresses Israel as being indeed guilty of sin before the Lord, and he calls them not only to confess and do his will, but also to put away their wives. It would seem from this passage that the right and obedient thing to do in this situation was to divorce en masse, and many of these situations even involved children (10:44)! For those who deny any exceptions for divorce, they must answer the mounting evidence for its reluctant allowance in the Old Testament as well as the usage of divorce imagery in reference to the relationship of Yahweh and covenant Israel.

Malachi 2:13-16¹⁸--Although there is some discussion as to how the verb נָזַף should be appropriately rendered due to inconsistencies in most translations and the vowel pointing,¹⁹ it should be noted that the context of Malachi 2 clearly shows that God hates divorce and the treacherous dealings of husbands toward their wives. Let there be no doubt, God hates divorce and nothing in this paper should construe anything otherwise. But understanding this passage along with the other passages gives us a clearer understanding of the teaching of the whole counsel of God.

New Testament

Matthew 5:31-32²⁰--In this passage Jesus Himself addresses the issue of divorce. In verse 31 He quotes Deuteronomy 24:1, with ἀπολύση being the term used for divorce (נָזַף in Deut. 24). This New Testament equivalent for “divorce” comes from two Greek words, ἀπο a preposition which means “from, to, for,” and from λύω a verb that means “to loose,”²¹ making

this word literally mean, “to loose from” or “to set free.” In verse 32, Jesus counters the common view of the day regarding divorce (ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν “but I say to you”). The following clauses are taken in two different ways. Those who take the *No/No View* of divorce lump those who are divorced because of unchastity into the group that is not allowed to remarry or be guilty of adultery.²² The term “unchastity” (πορνείας) can mean to engage in sexual immorality of any kind.²³ Those who take the *Moderate Yes/Yes* or *Extreme Yes/Yes* views see the clause “except for the reason of unchastity” as excluded from the prohibition to remarry in sin. Even if this argument is accepted (and its stands on shaky ground grammatically), it still must be acknowledged that divorce is allowed for here. Piper and others try to redefine this to be one who is betrothed or one guilty of committing sins such as incest or other lewd sexual acts, but this must be read into the natural sense of wife (γυναικα) from the context. And even if the term for wife were considered to be only one who was betrothed, does this still not entail some degree of divorce, the separation and putting away of one who was legally recognized as a “wife” prior to consummation?

Matthew 19:3-9²⁴--This passage is the crux of the debate. The context has Jesus being approached by Pharisees with questions in order to test Him. They ask Jesus the very same question posed in this paper, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?” Jesus begins His answer with a review of the founding of marriage in the Garden by quoting from Genesis 2:24. Jesus demonstrates some extremely important points to consider concerning divorce and remarriage:

- 1) Marriage is a joining (κολλᾶω, literally a “gluing together) of husband and wife.
- 2) This joining together makes the two into one flesh.
- 3) God conducts this joining together in union of man and wife.

- 4) Because God has joined a man and wife together, no man (not even the man or woman in the marriage) should separate (χωρίζω, to separate, as to move away from).²⁵

The Pharisees continue with a follow up question, “Why then did Moses command marriage?” Jesus replies to their incorrect notion that Moses commanded divorce by stating that because of the Jews hardness of heart, Moses *permitted* divorce. In other words, divorce is allowed for some occasions because it is a fact of human depravity that some men will willingly commit sins of unchastity against their spouse and will, because of a hardness of the heart, refuse to repent and return to the husband or wife of their youth. Jesus addresses this issue in verse 9 with the powerful words, “and I say to you.” He moves away from the teachings of Shammai, Hillel and even Moses to stand firmly upon His own authoritative words. In verse 9 we have the clear exception of divorce for immorality as legitimate in the eyes of God.

Some, like Comes, are willing to attribute the inclusion of the exception clauses in this passage and in Matthew 5 to later redaction by the gospel writer as a means to soften Jesus hard words as recorded in Mark 10. Comes, looking through higher critical lenses prefers the Markan version that he considers to be original.²⁶ For those who hold to a high view of Scripture and reject Redaction Criticism, this view is untenable. For Matthew to place these words in the mouth of Jesus is deceptive and unethical, calling into question every word that Jesus ever uttered in the pages of holy writ. In 19:3, the Pharisees use the term ἀπολύσαι (see above treatment of Matt. 5:31-32 for more details), which Jesus equates with ἀποστασίον in His reference to Deuteronomy 24. The noun ἀποστασίον is “the legal document prepared by a husband and given to his wife as evidence of a legal divorce.”²⁷ In verse 9, Jesus uses the same term the Pharisees use, showing that He considered the terms to be synonymous.

Mark 10:2-12²⁸--This passage is nearly identical to the Matthew 19 passage, minus the exception clause and the addition of the restriction of remarriage applied to both husband and wife. Markan priority nonsense aside, those of the *No/No View* see this and Luke 16:18 (which also does not contain an exception clause) as the standard by which the issue should be decided. The reader must understand that just as Jesus' words in Matthew 19 did not point to the inclusion of wives in his restrictions on remarriage after divorce, the passage here requires their inclusion since the whole counsel of the Word must rule. In like manner, since this passage and the Luke 16 passage do not contain the exceptions, it does not nullify its presence in Matthew.

1 Corinthians 7—In his extended discussion on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, Paul gives instructions that, although not all uttered directly by Christ (7:10, 40) carry with them the weight of the apostle's authority as a writer of Scriptures. In verse 8-9, Paul directs those whom he terms "unmarried" and widows to remain single, as Paul was, but if unable to control their passions, they should get married, for marriage is not inherently wrong (v. 28). But who are these "unmarried" that are referred to by Paul? In chapter 7, Paul refers to several groups of people: married, unmarried, widowed, virgins. Since "unmarried" is placed next to widows, it can be assumed that this group is different from "virgins" who are dealt with in verse 25-38. In verse 11, the same term (ἄγαμος) is used to describe the woman who leaves her husband and in verse 34 the unmarried woman and the virgin are placed in apposition to one another, indicating that they are not to be equated with one another.

For those believers who go against God's will and Paul's admonishment to remain married, and divorce, Paul states that they have the option of staying single or being restored to their spouse (v. 11). Verses 12-16 refer to a couple that is unequally yoked in their marriage and the initial admonishment is to stay in the condition in which they are in (vv. 12-13, 20).

However, if the unbelieving spouse desires to leave, the Apostle gives instructions to the believing spouse to let him/her go (v. 15). Although there is no direct allowance for remarriage in such an incident, some have drawn from Romans 7:1-3 and 1 Corinthians 7:39-40 to say that a spouse who has been abandoned by an unbelieving spouse is indeed free to remarry.

Conclusions

There can be no doubt that the Scriptures from beginning to end speak of the holiness and sanctity of marriage. Much more could be written and the issues of the picture of marriage reflecting the mystery of Christ and the Church have not even been addressed! The point is that God hates divorce and the destruction and sin that result from it.

The overwhelming evidence of Scripture supports a biblical view of divorce that is most consistent with the *Moderate Yes/Yes View*. The *No/No View* must explain away the legitimate usage of divorce in the Old Testament as well as the illustrations of divorce between God and Israel. Jesus words in Matthew as well as Paul's words in 1 Corinthians are also a difficult hurdle to overcome for those of the *No/No* camp. On the other hand, those of the *Extreme Yes/Yes View* are in danger of following in the liberal footsteps of the school of Hillel and its allowance of divorce for a wide variety of reasons. Jesus' inclusion of divorce is very narrow, and is always to be approached with a good dose of reality and only after many serious attempts at reconciliation have failed due to unrepentance on the part of the guilty spouse.

For those in the *Yes/No* camp, one must consider the outcome of their view. If a man commits adultery repeatedly and divorce is allowable, how is it just for the innocent party to suffer for the sins of the spouse? Deuteronomy 24 only disallows remarriage to the same husband divorced from earlier. Jesus in Matthew 5 only forbids the marriage of a woman who

was divorced for reasons of her own unchastity, allowing for the injured party to go on with their life and remarry.

If allowance is made for the “unmarried” in 1 Corinthians 7 to refer to divorced believers, then Paul himself states that although he recommends staying single (in view of the times of distress v. 26) he does not outright forbid marriage as sin, but recommends marriage if the unmarried person and widow cannot control their passion (v.9).

All of this combined provides a powerful case for the *Moderate Yes/Yes View* that this writer believes is firmly founded upon the Word of God.

Application of Principles for Counseling

Because of the wide range of possible scenarios in regards to marriage divorce and remarriage, I thought that it would be most profitable to enumerate several applications of this study as they can be applied to my sphere of ministry as pastor of Grace Baptist Church of Wilmington.

1. Marriage is a holy union of a man and a woman before God. He is the One who joins together. Hebrew 13:4 states, “Marriage *is to be held* in honor among all, and the *marriage bed is to be undefiled*; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” This means that any marriages which I perform or which are performed at the church facility will only be done if:
 - a. Both the prospective bride and groom are confessed believers. This may be ascertained with some certainty by interviews and testimonies. If one is a believer and the other is not, I will counsel with both as to the Scriptures restrictions to marry only in the Lord and the need to consider these

admonitions seriously. Sharing the gospel here would be appropriate, but understanding the temptation to “accept” for the sake of going on. A period of watching for spiritual fruit and discernment must be evident before plans could go forward.

- b. Both agree to attend marriage counseling performed by myself or one of the elders of the church.
 - c. Both agree to hold their wedding ceremony and celebration in accordance with the church’s code of conduct (even if the reception is off-campus).
 - d. A public ceremony will not be performed if the bride is pregnant or if the couple has been living in fornication. If they both repent and fulfill the above requirements, then a small private ceremony can be performed with family present. The bride may not wear white, since the tradition is connected to the idea of purity.
2. Divorce is a serious matter and may be inevitable in some circumstances. All efforts to avoid divorce should be attempted, however the following principles should guide efforts for counseling:
- a. Divorce is only permissible biblically for unchastity (adultery) or abandonment by the spouse. Although divorce is permissible, if the sinning spouse is truly repentant and bears fruit in accordance with his/her repentance (ascertained by counseling), then divorce should be avoided. If the case is such that the sinning spouse shows no repentance, then the principles of church discipline outlined in Matthew 18 should be pursued. If there is no

reconciliation after repeated attempts, the innocent spouse may pursue a divorce and is free to remarry if desired.

- b. If the spouse is an unbeliever and commits adultery as above or abandons the spouse, then after appropriate attempts by the innocent spouse and the elder board to confront the sinning spouse have failed, the innocent spouse is free to divorce and remarry.
 - c. If a “Christian” couple desires to be divorced but without biblical grounds, they should be dealt with according to Matthew 18 until either they repent and move toward reconciliation or are put out of the church.
3. Remarriage of divorced men and women will become more frequent inside and outside of the church as the number of divorces rise. The following should help guide counseling for such cases:
- a. In cases where a couple which was divorced from each other and either one or both spouses remarried and then divorce again, seeking to return to the original spouse is not permissible (Deut. 24:1-4).
 - b. Remarriage is disallowed for a Christian couple that is divorced for no biblical reason. The only recourse is reconciliation or remaining single (1 Cor. 7:10-11).
 - c. Remarriage is not allowed if the divorce was unbiblical, even in the case of unbelievers because the divorce is not recognized in the eyes of God. To remarry would cause the one marrying the divorce to commit adultery (Matt. 5:31-32; 19:3-12; Mk. 10:3-12; Lk. 16:18).

- d. Remarriage would be performed for a biblically legal divorce (outline above #2) with the provisions of #1 above. The bride would not be allowed to wear white, although a public ceremony would be allowed if it met the requirement of holy living outlined above.

Although some of the above are not directly supported by Scriptures and are thus preferences of conscience, these conscience-principles may vary from church to church and from pastor to pastor.

 ENDNOTES

¹ Andrew Comes, *Divorce and Remarriage: Biblical Principles and Pastoral Practice* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 186.

² See John Piper, “Divorce and Remarriage: A Position Paper” http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/divorce_remarriage/div_rem_paper.html (24 Mar. 2003) and Charles C. Ryrie, “Biblical Teaching on Divorce and Remarriage.” *Grace Theological Journal* 3:2 (Fall 1982): 192.

³ William A. Heth, “Divorce and Remarriage: The Search For An Evangelical Hermeneutic.” *Trinity Journal* 16:1 (Spring 1995):100.

⁴ William A. Heth and G. J. Wenham, *Jesus and Divorce: Towards an Evangelical Understanding of New Testament Teaching* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1984), 198-203.

⁵ Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *God and Marriage* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 44-45.

⁶ Citations regarding Luther, Calvin and Ironside from David J. MacLeod, “The Problem of Divorce.” *The Emmaus Journal* 1:2 (Summer 1992): 150, 150, 148 respectively. Others cited: Jay Adams, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980); Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*. NABC. (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992); J. Carl Laney, “Deuteronomy 24:1-4 and the Issue of Divorce.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Vol. 149 #593 (Jan-Mar 1992): 3-16; John MacArthur, Jr. *Matthew 16-23*. MNTC (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1988); Alex D. Montoya, *Divorce in the New Testament* (Unpublished Dissertation. La Mirada, CA: Talbot Theological Seminary, 1975); Phillip H. Wiebe, “Jesus’ Divorce Exception.” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 32:3 (Sept 1989): 327-33.

⁷ Cited in David J. MacLeod, “The Problem of Divorce.” *The Emmaus Journal* 1:2 (Summer 1992): 156.

⁸ Joe M. Sprinkle, “Old Testament Perspectives on Divorce and Remarriage.” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 40:4 (Dec 1997): 529-50.

⁹ Gen. 2:24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. (All Scripture from this point shall be from the NASB).

¹⁰ Deut. 24:1 ¶ “When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts *it* in her hand and sends her out from his house, Deut. 24:2 and she leaves his house and goes and becomes another man’s wife,

Deut. 24:3 and if the latter husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts *it* in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife,

Deut. 24:4 *then* her former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again to be his wife, since she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance.

¹¹ C. S. Keener, “Adultery, Divorce” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, edited by Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2000), 6.

¹² BDB, Op. Cit.

¹³ Is. 50:1 ¶ Thus says the LORD,
 “Where is the certificate of divorce
 By which I have sent your mother away?
 Or to whom of My creditors did I sell you?
 Behold, you were sold for your iniquities,
 And for your transgressions your mother was sent away.

¹⁴ Jer. 3:6 ¶ Then the LORD said to me in the days of Josiah the king, “Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and she was a harlot there.

Jer. 3:7 “I thought, ‘After she has done all these things she will return to Me’; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it.

Jer. 3:8 “And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also.

Jer. 3:9 “Because of the lightness of her harlotry, she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.

Jer. 3:10 “Yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in deception,” declares the LORD.

¹⁵ BDB, Op. Cit.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Op. Cit.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Op. Cit.

¹⁸ Mal. 2:13 ¶ “This is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts *it with* favor from your hand.

Mal. 2:14 “Yet you say, ‘For what reason?’ Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

Mal. 2:15 “But not one has done *so* who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did *that one do* while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth.

Mal. 2:16 “For I hate divorce,” says the LORD, the God of Israel, “and him who covers his garment with wrong,” says the LORD of hosts. “So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.

¹⁹ For an excellent discussion regarding the issues related to the vowel pointing and translation of “hate” in this verse, please refer to David Clyde Jones, “Malachi On Divorce.” *Presbyterion* Vol. XV (Spring 1989): 16-22.

²⁰ Matt. 5:31 ¶ “It was said, ‘WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE’;

Matt. 5:32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

²¹ BDAG, Op. Cit.

²² For this view, see John Piper, “Divorce and Remarriage: A Position Paper.” http://www.desiringgod.org/library/topics/divorce_remarriage/div_rem_paper.html (24 Mar. 2003).

²³ Louw & Nida, Op. Cit.

²⁴ Matt. 19:3 ¶ *Some* Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, “Is it lawful *for a man* to divorce his wife for any reason at all?”

Matt. 19:4 And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE,

Matt. 19:5 and said, ‘FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH’?

Matt. 19:6 “So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

Matt. 19:7 They *said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND *her* AWAY?”

Matt. 19:8 He *said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.

Matt. 19:9 “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”

²⁵ Louw & Nida, Op. Cit.

²⁶ Comes, 186.

²⁷ Louw & Nida, Op. Cit.

²⁸ Mark 10:3 And He answered and said to them, “What did Moses command you?”

Mark 10:4 They said, “Moses permitted *a man* TO WRITE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND *her* AWAY .”

Mark 10:5 But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment.

Mark 10:6 “But from the beginning of creation, *God* MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE.

Mark 10:7 “FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER,

Mark 10:8 AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so they are no longer two, but one flesh.

Mark 10:9 “What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

Mark 10:10 ¶ In the house the disciples *began* questioning Him about this again.

Mark 10:11 And He *said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her;

Mark 10:12 and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery.”

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