

PERSPECTIVE PAPER
ON
MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE

WITH CONCLUSIONS, OBSERVATIONS, APPLICATIONS

BY

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As I present this Perspective Paper, I will cite various passages from the Holy Bible. Each biblical passage will be noted by being underlined.

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PREFACE

It was not until 1997 when my own 24-year marriage ruptured that the unbelievable burden of pain placed its grip upon me and made me realize the gravity of the horrendous statistics that are sweeping across our nation. Those statistics had now hit home. My home.

Because of previous struggles off and on in our marriage, I did not overly panic. Believing issues would soon again “die down” and be resolved, I purposed within myself to patiently wait, presuming time would be my friend. However, a few months passed and divorce papers were served. When that happened, I realized that I must begin to discover and follow **exactly** what our Heavenly Father says about marriage, divorce, and remarriage/reconciliation in His Book. Granted, I acted irresponsibly by waiting so long to delve into Scripture this deeply, but that is what I permitted to happen, none-the-less.

I had been faithful to weekly church services from the time of my salvation and had formed some rather firm views from Bible reading, pastoral care, tape ministries, radio teachers, commentaries, and Christian books, etc. As I began to assimilate the views I had come to understand, I knew all too well how wrong divorce was. Now, facing my own, I was compelled to dig even deeper into God’s Word with renewed passion to “fill in” a few questions and solidify my thoughts and heart for what would become the biggest battle, thus far, of my life.

What emerged, in part, is the “Perspective Paper” you are reading. Now you must know, I am not a pastor, have never been to seminary, and certainly, I am no theologian. As such, I do not claim to report anything close to the last word on this matter. I can assure you that many men, far more godly than I, have different views. My attempt in this paper is to report what I have come to understand. Having found myself crushed by pain beyond what I am able to express in words or text, I laid myself before our Lord as broken and humble as I had ever been. In a bit you will see what my Heavenly Father has revealed to me.

“SALVATION FIRST”

I respectfully need to preface any comments that follow by stating my absolute conviction that without a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, most of what I say will fall on an unreceptive heart. Your ability to accept or reject the flavor of the comments given, as well as the discernment associated with the comments, **must** be filtered against the indwelling of God’s Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:14). God’s Holy Spirit will be bestowed upon you as God’s deposit, guaranteeing what is to come -- eternal life (2 Corinthians 5:05) -- as you accept the work finished by Jesus Christ as He died on the cross for your sins.

One of the more common introductions that will present these facts is referred to as “Five steps down the “Roman Road.”

- Step 1. If you will turn in a Bible to the New Testament Book of Romans, chapter 3, verse 23 you will see that God declares that sin is universal. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). That means everybody – and that means you. The first thing you must do is to acknowledge that you have sinned. It makes no difference if your sin was a “big sin” or “little sin.” You simply must acknowledge that, according to God, you are a sinner.
- Step 2. Now turn in your Bible to Romans 5:12 and you will see that the consequence of sin is death. “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.”(Romans 5:12) The death that is being spoken of is more than physical death; it is spiritual death as well. This verse is saying that when the first man, Adam, disobeyed God, sin entered the human race and that sin leads to both physical and spiritual death.
- Step 3. Please turn to Romans 6:23 -- “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in (or through) Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23) The first part of this passage repeats what was stated in Romans 5:12, but then goes further to introduce you to God’s remedy for the death that looms ahead. As you know, physical death is something that is all around us. So as not to confuse you with what Scripture says about future physical death, let’s just presume, for now, that physical death will continue. However, this passage is dealing with the spiritual life and death that will last for all eternity - not a hundred years, not a thousand, or even a million years. This eternal life or death will last forever and ever and ever; even beyond what we call time itself. The imperative thing you must notice from this verse is that the gift of eternal **life** is God’s gift to you by virtue of His Son, Jesus Christ. Eternal **death** is the consequence of your sin; eternal **life** is the gift God gives to you in Jesus Christ.

- Step 4. Now turn back to Romans 5:08. “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (*Romans 5:08*) This verse tells us that because of God’s love for us, even though we are sinners, God allowed (even sent) His Son to die for us. Remember what we’ve touched on so far. Sin deserves death, both physical and spiritual, and Christ was dying, but Scripture states that He was dying for **us**. As you accept what the Bible teaches, you will come to understand that Jesus was sinless. Jesus had no cause to die; yet He did, and that death was for you and me. The death Jesus experienced was more than physical. As Jesus hung on Calvary’s Cross, he also experienced spiritual death ... not his own (He was sinless.), but the spiritual death you and I have “earned” for ourselves. Jesus was bearing the consequences of **our** sin in his body as He died for us. We did not ask for Him to die for us, we did not even have the right to ask for this, but He did die for us because He loves us. Having seen our sins from “eternity past” God made one provision for our “eternity future.” That provision was that God gave His son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to pay the penalty for our sins.
- Step 5. Now, in my experience, I’ve come to appreciate that many people have no particular aversion to what has thus far been outlined. Unfortunately, this same group of people has presumed that because their sins have been “paid for”, they have a license to live as they see fit. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Bible also tells us that because of the price paid for our sins, we are to honor God with our body (which means our mind, heart, and our actions -- see 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The next step you need to take down this “Roman Road” is found in Romans 10:9-10. “⁹That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved” (*Romans 10:9-10*). These two verses are your encouragement that you must personalize Christ’s death for your sins as well as His resurrection from death, which He has experienced for your sins. The Bible is telling you that if you profess that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that Jesus is who He says He is, as well as the fact that God has raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved from eternal spiritual death. And, as proof, God will give to you His Holy Spirit as His token of your rebirth (see Ephesians 1:13-14). Again, a real quick review:
- a. You are a sinner.
 - b. You deserve eternal death because of your sin.
 - c. You are helpless to alter your status, but you acknowledge that God has provided a way to escape your dilemma.
 - d. God’s provision was to pay for your sins by giving His sinless son, Jesus Christ, as payment for your debt.
 - e. By believing and confessing the facts outlined here, you accept the gift God has for you, the Lord Jesus Christ, and ask God to come into your heart that you might know His will for you and have eternal spiritual life.

May I suggest a simple prayer such as:

Dear Lord:

Thank you for hearing this prayer. As I pray to you at this time, I confess that I am a sinner. I have lived a life that is not holy, honest, or pure. Because of the sin in my life, I understand that I do not deserve to enjoy eternity in heaven with you. I also understand you love me regardless of the offenses I have committed against you. I understand that your love is so great for me that you have asked your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to carry the debt of my sin in his body as he died for me. I thank you for your gift to me and accept the gift of your Son's shed blood and death as payment for my sins. I ask you to forgive me of my sins, both great and small, as I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. As best as I know how, I leave my life in your care. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit and guide my life from this moment forward.

I ask this all in Jesus' Holy Name, Amen.

Now, I suppose if at any time within this "Perspective Paper" I'd be inclined to start preaching, it might be now. I simply want to make clear a couple of things that are often misunderstood.

- ❖ I don't believe God is impressed by somebody's ability to use all sorts of "fanciful" or pious sounding words while praying. For sure, you are not to approach prayer flippantly, but quietly and reverently speak to God as you would speak with your dearest friend by simply being yourself. As a guideline, begin by expressing gratitude for something you appreciate, if the subject at hand is dealing with others; then pray for the needs of others, after which you may humbly present your own concerns. Be honest, sincere, and open. Conclude by thanking God that He will grant a response to your requests as He brings about what is best for your life, and acknowledge that your ability to speak with God is by and through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❖ A second important observation is your need to realize that God will meet you right where you are at this moment of your life. Do not make the mistake of believing you must somehow first "clean up" issues before you place your life in the Lord's hands or that the Lord cannot accept you as you may be living your life. God already knows your mind and heart. The death Jesus experienced for you is such that your current status, no matter how unbecoming it may be, will be dealt with by the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross. Scripture tells us that ".... Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2b)

- ❖ My third observation stems from the need of salvation immediately. We simply do not know when we will breathe our last breath. Everyone hopes to see a ripe old age, but the reality is that accidents and illnesses loom all around us continuously. If physical death could approach you at any moment, and physical death without salvation is spiritual death, you must seek spiritual life now. Do not presume that because of God's love He will make more than His first provision, the Lord Jesus Christ, as atonement for your sins. You need to understand there will not be any last minute pardons, no plea bargains, and there will not be a "shrink" to defend you by saying you didn't know what you were doing. If you die and do not have Jesus in your heart, you will die in your sins. And, not to be disrespectful to the loved ones and friends you'll leave behind, but no number of candles, or someone praying over you, will change the destiny of where you will spend eternity. That fate will be sealed within one second after your last heartbeat. You simply must understand your need of Christ's death for you and accept His death as payment in full for your sins.

Now, from this point forward, I'm going to outline my views as if I'm communicating to a brother or sister in Christ.

I believe the best way to spell out the views I've come to understand is to simply cite the passage(s) found in Scripture that deal with the relevant issues. I will then present my understandings based upon this foundation.

“GOD’S FOUNDATIONAL STANDARDS”

1. Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:24, Romans 7:1-3, 1 Corinthians 7:39 — Tells us what God’s perfect plan for marriage is.

- So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)
- For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. (Genesis 2:24)
- ¹Do you not know, brothers – for I am speaking to men who know the law – that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? ²For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. ³So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man. (Romans 7:1-3)
- A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 7:39)

1.1. I have begun with the six verses above because they reflect God’s standard for marriage. I will refer back to the standards above throughout my paper, but we must keep in mind what God expects of us if we hope to be obedient to him.

1.2. Throughout this paper I will refer to marriage as being “legitimate” or “illegitimate.” If a marriage is established based upon the guidelines of the six verses recited above, I refer to it as legitimate. If the marriage is outside of the parameters of these six verses, I refer to the marriage as illegitimate.

2. Exodus 20:14 — Forbids us the sin of adultery.

- You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)
- 2.1. Unfortunately, we must also deal with the five words above. This Seventh of the Ten Commandments is so intricately linked to divorce that we must also acknowledge this command of God.

“GOD’S DECLARATION ON PRACTICES”

3. Mark 10:11-12, Luke 16:18 — Calls all illegitimate marriages after divorce adultery.

- ¹¹“...Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. ¹²And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.” (Mark 10:11-12)
- “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” (Luke 16:18)

- 3.1. The three verses above show that God still considers the union between husband and wife to be valid even after a divorce has ended the marriage. We know this because if either the man or woman marries someone other than who they had previously been legitimately married to, they commit adultery.
- 3.2. The passages combine to show the fact that either gender who divorces and remarries another is committing adultery.
- 3.3. The root word for adultery in Greek is the word **moichos**. In studying these two passages, we see they combine to show both the active and passive tense of adultery (moichao & moicheuo). In Luke we see that the individuals who marry illegitimately are doing so with the complete knowledge that what they are doing is adulterous, yet they forge ahead. In Mark we see the passive commission of adultery. The focus of the individual(s) is to marry another and, whether they know it or not, in doing so the natural and automatic consequence of the new “marriage” is the sin of adultery.
- 3.4. As we read the three verses, the statements are so straightforward that no room for exceptions is found. Anyone who is divorced and marries another commits adultery.
- 3.5. All too often we define adultery as an improper sexual relationship. We need to understand that God defines adultery as an illegitimate marriage. We can find God’s definition of adultery in the three verses above as well as the two verses that will follow in issue four.
- 3.6. Although we have not covered the Jewish social views of that day, a study of the verses leading up to these three passages will make it quite clear that Jesus is taking serious issue with the cultural practices of His time; practices not at all unlike those of today.
- 3.7. One final important thing we need to notice and train our mind upon is how divorce will end a marriage but cannot end the “one flesh” union. (Please re-read issue 3.1.) I will have more to say on this throughout this paper.

4. Matthew 5:32, Matthew 19:09 — Do not teach that divorce or remarriage are permitted because of adultery, but that divorce or remarriage to another causes adultery.

- But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to commit adultery, and anyone who marries a woman so divorced commits adultery. (Matthew 5:32)
- “I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery.” (Matthew 19:09)

4.1. The two verses above are commonly referred to as the “exception clause” to the absolute standards God has otherwise spelled out in His Word. I will address the words of exception in a moment, but for now I want to highlight a couple of stunning observations.

4.1.1. The first clearly states that merely divorcing one’s wife causes her to become an adulteress. That is, if the wife were unfaithful to her husband, she has already made herself an adulteress. If however, she remained faithful to her husband, the “except for marital unfaithfulness” would not apply, and the verse would be interpreted to read: ‘But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife...causes her to commit adultery, ...’

- ❖ The fact that the wife has had her marriage fail exposes her to become an adulteress, but does not in-and-of itself make her an adulteress. Any remarriage by her, even though innocently divorced, is what causes her to become the adulteress (presuming the man she had been married to is still living).

4.1.2. Now logic says that if the innocent wife becomes guilty of adultery when she remarries after divorce, the wife who instigates a divorce would certainly be all the more guilty. To argue that the guilty wife is free to remarry while the innocent wife is not free to remarry (because unfaithfulness breaks the “one flesh” union) is wrong. To make this suggestion would imply that if the innocent wife were to commit immorality it would then become lawful for her to remarry. Not only would this elevate unfaithfulness to the improper status of making/breaking a marriage covenant, it is just plain contrary to what Jesus says. The long and short of this is that unfaithfulness does not nullify or vacate the “one flesh” union of marriage. If either the innocent or guilty party in a divorce remarries, they commit adultery, a sin that is forbidden by commandment. In other words remarriage to anyone other than the legitimate partner by either the innocent or guilty party is forbidden. The reason being, neither divorce nor unfaithfulness has broken the “one flesh” bond. Even though a couple is no longer married to each other, they are still considered by God to be husband and wife of each other.

- 4.1.3. The social view of today would suggest an interpretation and conclusion from either of these passages that is different from the conclusion of paragraphs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2. This interpretation would have us believe that the innocent party is permitted to divorce and ultimately remarry because of the unfaithfulness of their spouse. However, when you actually take this view and apply it to what Matthew records, you fail to justify divorce and remarriage for even the most innocent spouse. If, for instance, we presume the man in Matthew 5:32 was faithful and his wife were unfaithful, we would conclude that he is the innocent party and his wife is the guilty party. If we were then to paraphrase this verse with the purest of arguments, it would still say; “The innocent man who (is) divorced (by) his wife (because of her unfaithfulness) and who marries a woman so divorced (also innocently divorced) commits adultery.”

If we apply this “current” interpretation, with all of its varied possibilities of who is guilty or innocent of: a) promoting the divorce, b) being unfaithful, c) getting remarried, to the entirety of either of the two verses, we reach exactly the same conclusion as was expressed in paragraphs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2. Any remarriage after divorce, while your legitimate spouse is still living, is adultery.

- 4.2. So, what does “except for marital unfaithfulness” refer to and why is it in Matthew and not in Mark and Luke? Beyond the fact that Matthew was writing to Jewish readers who are familiar with the idiosyncrasies of Old Testament Law, and Mark was writing to the Romans, and Luke to the Greeks who had no such knowledge, we need to dig a bit deeper. To iterate what Mark and Luke recorded, there are simply no exceptions for remarriage after a divorce, either stated or implied. In order to begin to answer this question, we need to look at Matthew 15:19.

For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. (Matthew 15:19)

Why this verse is so important is that it shows Matthew is delineating in his narrative between adultery (moicheia) and sexual immorality (porneia) in his recording of what Jesus has said. In both of the “exception” passages, Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:09, Matthew uses the Greek word porneia (except for immorality/unfaithfulness) and **does not** use the Greek word moichos, (or any noun or verb form of moichos) which he could have if he meant adultery as we typically consider it. This is an extremely crucial point to keep in mind.

- 4.3. Now, before I can show how this is important to us today, we need to understand a bit about the Jewish wedding. A brief overview of some of the key points of the Jewish wedding are:
- a. The prospective groom would travel to the home of the prospective bride to negotiate the price to pay her father. This dowry was compensation to the father of the bride for the father’s guarantee his daughter was a virgin as well as the economic loss the father’s household would suffer if his daughter were to leave the family.

- b. If the price were agreed upon and paid, the father would offer his daughter to be married to the man.
- c. A ceremony was held and vows were exchanged that pledged the groom and bride to each other. In the midst of this betrothal ceremony, the groom would offer the bride a cup of wine. If the bride accepted and drank from the cup, the covenant was established and the groom and bride were now legally bound together and considered husband and wife.
- d. After this ceremony and the establishment of the covenant, the husband left to return home. He would spend nearly a year building a room onto his father's house in order to provide for his own family. The wife would spend the year learning and preparing for married life by gathering her wardrobe and needed household items.
- e. After the twelve month period of separation, the husband, the best man, and other male escorts would travel (usually a torch light procession at night) back to the wife's house. She had a pretty good idea of when her husband was coming, but did not know the exact time. The best man would announce the husband's arrival with a shout.
- f. The husband would receive his wife and the wife's female attendants and the wedding party would then travel back to the couple's new house/room that had been built by the husband.
- g. While the best man stood guard, the husband and wife would enter the privacy of the new house/room to consummate their relationship by entering into their first physical union. The other male and female attendants would prepare for a one-week celebration referred to as the marriage.

The reason for reviewing a bit of the Jewish wedding is to highlight the one-year separation of the husband and wife that took place between their betrothal ceremony and when they consummated their marriage. It was during this time, and this time only, that a divorce could be granted for immorality/unfaithfulness (porneia) if it was found that either the husband or wife had been unfaithful to their betrothal partner. Many scholars also hold that a divorce could also be granted if, at the first physical union, the husband learned that his wife was not a virgin at the time of betrothal. The fact that the wife was not a virgin at the time of betrothal gives rise to what was considered a fraudulently established marriage. The dowry had been paid in exchange for the father's guarantee that his daughter was a virgin, a guarantee that had "fallen short." Unlike our current engagement, the Jewish betrothal was a legally binding covenant and could only be broken by divorce or death. The best example of this is what took place with Joseph and Mary prior to Jesus' birth. Joseph and Mary were husband and wife (Matthew 1:18, 20) and were betrothed/pledged to each other. They had not had any sexual union; however, Mary was found to be pregnant. Matthew 1:19 tells us that Joseph presumed Mary had been sexually immoral/unfaithful (porneia). Joseph, being a righteous man, had in mind to divorce her quietly. This divorce for sexual immorality/unfaithfulness prior to the consummation of the betrothed couple was permitted and is what Matthew is referring to in his "exception clause."

4.4. As you understand what Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:09 actually say, you realize they are in perfect concert with Mark 10:11-12 and Luke 16:18; that is, any remarriage after divorce, while your legitimate spouse is living, is adultery.

5. Matthew 19:1-8, Mark 10:1-9 – Are the passages where Jesus confronts the false teachings of the Pharisees by correcting their views as well as reasserts God’s purpose in creation that separation is not to take place.

- ¹When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan. ²Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there. ³Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?” ⁴“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ ⁵and said ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ ⁶So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate.” ⁷“Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?” ⁸Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.” (Matthew 19:1-8)

- ¹Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan. Again crowds of people came to him, and as was his custom, he taught them. ²Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” ³“What did Moses command you?” he replied. ⁴They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.” ⁵“It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,” Jesus replied. ⁶“But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ ⁷For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, ⁸and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one. ⁹Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate.” (Mark 10:1-9)

5.1. Jesus himself was being tested on the legality of divorce. The motive of the Pharisees was most likely to have Jesus say something that would offend King Herod, and thus, to end up dead like John the Baptist. Jesus took advantage of the plot against him to restate God’s original and perfect plan. The question was, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife...?” (Matthew 19:3b and Mark 10:2b). “Haven’t you read...”?, — Jesus responded by pointing back to the verses of Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24. Of course the Pharisees knew perfectly well what Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 said, but in asking them, Jesus was confronting the Pharisees on their failure to believe and obey God’s written word. Jesus then boldly underscored what Moses had recorded in Genesis with his own pronouncement that “what God has joined together, let man not separate.” (Mark 10:9b)

5.2. Still wanting to test Jesus, the Pharisees then (evidently having Deuteronomy 24:01 in mind) asked Jesus why did “Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?” (*Matthew 19:7b*). Deuteronomy 24:01* merely states that “¹If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her, and sends her from his house,”²... The first thing to note is that Moses did not command anything. Moses merely stated that **if** a man **did** publish a certificate of divorce and send his wife from his house... However, Jesus chose to give an answer to this question by saying that “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard.” (*Matthew 19:08a*). However, in the same verse, and the very next sentence Jesus pronounced what God has to say by reflection that “But it was not this way from the beginning.” (*Matthew 19:8b*). Once again Jesus was taking issue with the Pharisees’ views and their failure to acknowledge God’s foundational design for marriage. God made them male and female (*Mark 10:6b*), and the man was to be united to his wife ⁸and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one. (*Mark 10:7b-8*). In doing so, Jesus confronted the Pharisees and refocused our attention away from the selfishness and sin of divorce and towards God’s permanent foundation of the “one flesh” union.

5.2.1. ***Exegesis on Deuteronomy 24:1-4**

Issue 5.2.1 is a significant departure from the intentions of this “Perspective Paper.” As such, you may wish to “skip” the comments expressed here in 5.2.1 and resume the primary theme of this “Perspective Paper” with issue 5.3 on page 18. I have included this nested section in my attempt to more thoroughly address the prohibition for remarriage that is cited in Deuteronomy 24:04 and the apparent contradiction of this with the nearly identical Hebrew wording found in Jeremiah 3:01 and the resulting reconciliation found immediately thereafter; Jeremiah 3:1-14.

The question of how applicable the mosaic pronouncement in Deuteronomy 24:04 is for us today is something I simply could not avoid. Here is a bit of what my studies have revealed about Deuteronomy 24:1-4.

¹If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house,²and if after she leaves his house she becomes the wife of another man,³and her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies,⁴then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of the Lord. Do not bring sin upon the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. (*Deuteronomy 24:1-4*)

“If a man divorces his wife and she leaves him and marries another man, should he return to her again? Would not the land be completely defiled? But you have lived as a prostitute with many lovers – would you now return to me?” declares the Lord. (*Jeremiah 3:01*)

A most popular understanding for the injunction or rule found in Deuteronomy 24:4 seems to be the Israelite view that a man is prohibited from further sexual relationships with his wife after she has had intercourse with another man. In Deuteronomy 22:21-22 we see she was to be stoned to death whether her intercourse took place prior to or after the consummation of her own marriage. **Even when the intercourse took place after divorce (Deuteronomy 24:1-4) or under duress (2 Samuel 16:21-22, 20:03), the wife became so unclean that further sexual cohabitation with her was inconceivable. Thus, here we have to do with a deeply rooted view of the wife's sexual relations with her husband. She is defiled by intercourse with any other man. On the other hand, her husband may have intercourse with many women without becoming defiled. (*A)**

We do find, however, the Israelite was not consistent in the application of this notion. In actual practice, and with few exceptions, only priests and the High Priest actually refused to take widows or divorced women as wives.

Some of the facts and interpretations I have come to appreciate on Deuteronomy 24:1-4 are:

- To begin with, what we have translated as four verses is actually only one sentence in the original Hebrew.
- It is worthy to note that the original husband is always referred to as “husband” (even after the divorce and remarriage of the “wife”) while the second man the woman is married to is called merely “man” in the original Hebrew. Also, our version has the word “wife” in verse two to indicate her second marriage. The word “wife” is implied in translation only. The correct Hebrew word for “wife” is not used because her relationship with the second man is illegitimate. There is no word given in Hebrew for this woman because of the illegitimate relationship between this woman and the second man.
- In the verses of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 we see a situation wherein a great deal of inequity exists between men and women. **To marry a wife, according to this, is to take property into possession, hence to become her lord. (*B)** The idea of a man casting his wife aside was understood by Moses to **contravene the order of nature and of God (*C)** as defined in Genesis 2:24. The flavor of these passages reveals most convincingly that divorce is only tolerated by Moses as an already existing practice, which Moses does not care to endorse or embrace.
- The commentaries I've read have put forth at least three somewhat contradictory views on the possible reason for the rule prohibiting reconciliation between a husband and wife wherein she had contracted a second intervening marriage.

- 1) The forbidden sexual relationships outlined in Leviticus 18 came into play here. Because the original “one flesh” union is acknowledged by Deuteronomy 24:1-4 to still subsist, a remarriage would essentially constitute a marriage/sexual relations within one’s own family – a form of incest, if you will. The paradox being that the first marriage between the two had established a union that cannot be dissolved, thus making the man and woman kindred just like the vertical lineage of grandparents, parents, and children, as well as the horizontal kindred of in-law relationships.

- 2) The second idea of why this rule of Moses is found revolves around the notion that Moses was attempting to mitigate even greater evil. In this economy, men considered their wife to be property. If the husband had been prohibited from divorcing an unwanted partner, the very life of the wife was at increased risk. Even when less diabolical plans are presented, the overwhelming concern for protecting the wife can be found in these interpretations:
 - a) **The thought, therefore, of the impossibility of reunion with the first husband, after the wife had contracted a second marriage, would put some restraint upon a frivolous rupture of the marriage tie: it would have this effect, that whilst, on the one hand, the man would reflect when inducements to divorce his wife presented themselves, and would recall a rash act if it had been performed, before the wife he had put away had married another husband; on the other hand, the wife would yield more readily to the will of her husband, and seek to avoid furnishing him with an inducement for divorce. (*D)**
 - b) **The pointing in the original makes it clear that Moses does not institute or command divorce. The pointing in our version implies that he does so. He is merely prescribing limitations or regulations to a prevailing custom, which was not in accordance with the institution of marriage, and was only permitted there in this limited sense, and under these restrictions, “for the hardness of their hearts.” At the same time all these directions tend evidently to prevent any hasty or passionate rupture of the marriage bond, and to guard the interests of the wife as the party most needing protection. (*E)**
 - c) **Moses could not absolutely put an end to a practice which was traditional, and common to the Jews with other Oriental nations. His aim is therefore to regulate and thus to mitigate an evil which he could not extirpate. (*F)**

My impression is that the formulation of this second reason for the rule prohibiting reconciliation between a husband and wife is based upon assumptions and values, which were not elucidated until a later time, perhaps not until the time of Christ.

- 3) The third suggested reason put forth, for the prohibition is one I've already alluded to, one that concerns the re-establishment of sexual relationships with a wife who had had intercourse with another man.
 - a) **The purpose of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 is not to give legal sanction to divorces and regulate the divorce procedure but only to forbid a man to re-marry his divorced wife after she has been married to another man in the interim. (*G)**

There is no conceivable way to begin to include a reflection of all that is written on Deuteronomy 24:1-4, nor am I theologically skilled to do so. My "longer than desired" foray into this matter is primarily motivated by the question of how applicable the four verses of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 are for us today. Again, the rule Moses recorded in Deuteronomy 24 appears to be in direct contradiction to the practice of the Lord which is found in Jeremiah 3:1-14. And, to the degree that the verses of Deuteronomy 24 are there to restrict a renewed sexual relationship with the first (and legitimate) husband, we need only to read of the mandate of the Lord given to Hosea in Hosea 1, 2, 3, in order to see our need of further research into this reasoning.

The answer to the meaning of these verses and their application for us today, seem to be found in the very passages we are currently reviewing; Matthew 19:3-8. (Issue 5.2)

Now, before I can address the matter in greater detail, I need to state that, Biblically speaking, in order for a marriage to be properly established, four key steps are built one upon the other and must successively prevail over each other. Failure to follow this sequence or ignoring any of the steps (except for perhaps step two) will result in the failure to properly establish the marriage and one flesh union. The four steps are:

- 1) the mutual consent and agreement of the parties **and God**;
- 2) contractual conditions, terms, and understandings (which includes parental approval);
- 3) fulfillment of public/civil licensing requirements and customs/ceremonies;
- 4) consummation by sexual intercourse.

As we study the various attributes involved in divorce, we come to realize Jesus is not talking about the indissoluble aspects of the marriage contract. Legal contracts can be dissolved by the mutual agreement of all the parties involved and the actual marriage contract is no different. Jesus is not objecting to the husband exercising the privileges afforded to him in the marriage contract provided he fulfills his obligations as well. As such, it is not the legal aspect of marriage, (i.e. the marriage contract) which Jesus is referring to when he declares once again that marriage is indissoluble. What Jesus does is point back to Genesis 2:24 where God pronounced the establishment of the "one flesh" union and does so as a divine commandment. The primary definition of "one flesh" is the sexual union and, as such, once the marriage is consummated the union cannot be "un-consummated." Therefore, once a marriage is consummated by sexual intercourse it becomes a "one flesh" union, which will permanently (until death supersedes it) exist. The "one flesh" union will exist even after the legal contract and other prerequisites which helped pave the way for the marriage union have been annulled. Furthermore, **Jesus' justification of the doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage clearly assumes it to be self-evident that marriage is monogamous. On the basis of a polygamous conception of marriage it cannot be maintained that a man commits adultery by divorcing one or two of his wives and taking a third or a fourth. (*H)**

What is clear from Matthew 19:3-8 is that the Pharisees understood and accepted, with but one objection, what Jesus was saying. The objection the Pharisees express only seems to involve their interpretation that Deuteronomy 24:1-4 was a binding command (entello). Jesus says “No-no;” this is not a command (entello), but only a permission (epitrepo). However, as Jesus makes this extremely important distinction/clarification, he does so by saying this permission was only granted by Moses and is not now, nor from the very beginning, ever has been approved of by God. **Only he who knows he has an authority surpassing that of Moses and who knows that he is in a situation in which there is no longer any need for permissions because of the hardness of men’s hearts can annul a command in the law. (*I) It was necessary for Jesus himself to explicitly abolish this rule, once he had asserted in the presence of any other Jew that marriage was quite indissoluble. (*J)** As Jesus absolutely eliminates the protasis (Deuteronomy 24:1-3) the apodosis (Deuteronomy 24:4) no longer has any foundation upon which to rest. Remember, in Hebrew, Deuteronomy 24:1-4 is but one complete sentence and Jesus has just “taken to task” every issue put forward in that sentence.

My personal understanding of the applicability of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 is that the grace, forgiveness, and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ are to overrule (and in fact do overrule) the “hardness of heart” and thus the rule pronounced by Moses in Deuteronomy 24:1-4. As I study Matthew 19:3-8, I find Jesus does at least three things with Deuteronomy 24:1-4:

- 1) He has declared this is not a command (entello) in the law, but is merely a permission (epitrepo).
- 2) Declared the permission is from Moses only and is not now, nor ever has been, within the will of God.
- 3) Eliminated, the catchall excuse of “hard heartedness” as justification for divorce.

I believe Jesus has invalidated the rule Moses pronounced in Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Furthermore, and on the other hand, I find no teaching of the Lord Jesus that would invalidate the reconciliation as suggested by Jeremiah 3:1-14 nor prohibit the reestablishment of sexual relationships after either or both parties have sinned against God (and each other) by involvement outside their legitimate union.

The entire premise of the New Testament is the grace and forgiveness established in Jesus Christ, not as a license to sin but as a foundation of healing and reconciliation under the umbrella of righteousness. I would make the suggestion that a remarriage between legitimate partners is not only permitted by God but is pleasing to him. Sincere repentance prevailing, Jesus Christ, (as husband) demonstrates unconditional forgiveness and perpetual reconciliation with His bride, the church, which is you and me. That unconditional forgiveness and reconciliation is given as our example of how we are to live with our partner, the wife (or husband) of our marriage covenant.

The Apostle Paul summarizes the instructions/command he has received from the Lord in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11. If, however, a divorce should take place you “must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to” the former (meaning legitimate) spouse. We find no restrictions or encumbrances to the liberty granted for reconciliation either here or in any other text of the New Testament.

END NOTES

(*A) “Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple” by Abel Isaksson. Translated by Neil Tomkinson with the assistance of Jean Gray. Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis. Vol. 24; page 23 Lund: Gleerup; Copenhagen Munsgaard, 1965.

(*B) “Commentary on the Holy Scriptures – Critical, Doctrinal and Homiletical” by John Peter Lange, D.D. (Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; 1960) page 175 (ISBN: 0-310-27198-3)

(*C) “The Bible Commentary” F.C. Cook, Editor (Baker Book House; Grand Rapids 6, MI; 1957) page 316 (Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 55-11630)

(*D) “Commentary on the Old Testament” by C.F. Keil & F. Delitzsch (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Grand Rapids, MI; undated) page 418

(*E) “Commentary on the Holy Scriptures – Critical, Doctrinal and Homiletical” by John Peter Lange, D.D. (Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; 1960) page 176 (ISBN: 0-310-27198-3)

(*F) “The bible Commentary” F.C. Cook, Editor (Baker Book House; Grand Rapids 6, MI; 1957) page 316 (Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 55-11630)

(*G) “Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple” by Abel Isaksson. Translated by Neil Tomkinson with the assistance of Jean Gray. Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis. Vol. 24, page 22 Lund: Gleerup; Copenhopen: Munsgaard, 1965

(*H) “Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple” by Abel Isaksson. Translated by Neil Tomkinson with the assistance of Jean Gray. Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis. Vol. 24, page 126 Lund: Gleerup; Copenhopen: Munsgaard, 1965

(*I) “Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple” by Abel Isaksson. Translated by Neil Tomkinson with the assistance of Jean Gray. Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis. Vol. 24, page 127 Lund: Gleerup; Copenhopen: Munsgaard, 1965

(*J) “Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple” by Abel Isaksson. Translated by Neil Tomkinson with the assistance of Jean Gray. Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis. Vol. 24, page 127 Lund: Gleerup; Copenhopen: Munsgaard, 1965

5.3. A most important issue is the permanence of the “one flesh.” The Greek definition is rendered to mean to make whole and complete, to restore to the original. When you stop to realize that Eve was molded from a part of Adam’s side you realize neither male nor female is truly complete or whole (apart from God’s special gift) without the full melding of both person’s spirits and bodies. You simply cannot take what is “one” then divide it in any particular fashion and now have even so much as one complete “one,” let alone two.

6. Matthew 19:10-12 — Reflects the gravity of God’s opposition to divorce as interpreted by the disciples as well as God’s profound grace provided to His children in singleness.

- ¹⁰The disciples said to him, “If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.” ¹¹Jesus replied, “Not everyone can accept this teaching, but only those to whom it has been given. ¹²For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others renounced marriage (have made themselves eunuchs) because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.” (*Matthew 19:10-12*)

6.1. In issue #4 and #5 we dealt with Matthew 19:1-9. Now we need to touch upon the concluding response the disciples had to not only the teachings but also the redirection Jesus spoke of as he confronted the ill-intended Pharisees.

6.2. To me, the disciples in verse ten make a most striking comment. The disciples, fully knowing who Jesus was, seemed absolutely amazed and bewildered at the gravity of God’s intention as Jesus “hammered home” the permanence of the “one flesh” union. Even the disciples themselves seemed to gasp as they realized that no matter how troubled a marriage happens to be, there is not to be a divorce. They pronounced their realization that if a union is not to end, “it is better not to marry” (*Matthew 19:10b*) in the first place. In that culture and with the social practices of the day, this would have most likely been quite shocking, even to the disciples. Jesus had pointblank ended any possibility of divorce, not to mention, remarriage, thus to make the risk of marriage so great that the commitment of marriage was finally being properly evaluated and respected.

6.3. Once again Jesus continues to teach in a way that probably made the disciples feel pressed even further, and I’m sure, continued to take issue with the Pharisees. By Christ’s comment that not everyone can accept this teaching (*Matthew 19:11a*) we see Jesus acknowledge the profound difficulty of singleness and celibacy as he responded to the disciples. He went on to say that the ability to accept this teaching is something that is given. Verse 12 tells us that we can receive and participate in what was given by our decision to set ourselves aside as we renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven (*Matthew 19:12b*). We are able to conclude from this that the Christian, in acknowledging the gift given, is able to “renounce marriage.” All this being said to assure the Christian that God has provided a special grace in singleness to his followers.

7. 1 Corinthians 7:27-28, 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, 1 Corinthians 7:15, 1 Corinthians 7:8-9, 1 Corinthians 7:39 -- Are the Apostle Paul's different responses to the people of Corinth who had found themselves in various stages of marriage, divorce, and singleness.

- ²⁷Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife. ²⁸But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this. (1 Corinthians 7:27-28)
- ¹⁰To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. ¹¹But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. (1 Corinthians 7:10-11)
- But if the unbeliever leaves let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. (1 Corinthians 7:15)
- ⁸Now to the unmarried and widows I say; It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am. ⁹But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. (1 Corinthians 7:8-9)
- A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 7:39)

7.1. The Apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 7:27-28, is pronouncing the scriptural encouragement that you are to remain in the marital status you are currently in. If you are unmarried, you do not sin if you become married. You will, however, experience troubles in life associated with marriage.

7.2. Many people who have experienced divorce will use the first part of verse 28, but if you do marry, you have not sinned (1 Corinthians 7:28a) as justification for remarriage after the divorce. In support of this they will cite the contrast between the first part and second part of verse 28, stating that the virgin mentioned in the second half has never been married so the first part is obviously intended for those previously married. This is wrong for several reasons:

- If you go back to verses 8 and 9 you will see Paul is addressing unmarried and widowed people at that time. In verses 10 and 11 Paul is addressing two married Christians. In verses 12 through 16 Paul is addressing the marriage between one Christian and one non-Christian. In verses 25 through 38 Paul is addressing virgins--those never betrothed or betrothed but divorced before consummation--and finally in verse 39, Paul elaborates on those who have been widowed.

- A deeper understanding of verse 27 shows the interchangeable use of the Greek word that was translated wife. The word is generic to the point that in Greek it simply means “woman” and by context equally refers to a betrothed woman as much as a married woman.
- Also in verse 27 when Paul asked “Are you unmarried?” it is literally rendered, “Are you loose?” (lyo) and Paul did not use the words for “divorce,” “separate,” or “leaves” in verse 27, as he has in verses 10, 11, and 15 (chorizo) and verses 11, 12 13 (aphiemi). By using the word “lyo” as opposed to either “chorizo” or “aphiemi,” Paul is showing the contrast between those who were never married and those who have been divorced. Thus, “are you unmarried?” does not mean, “are you divorced?”.
- Any implication by verse 28 that remarriage to another would be allowed is in direct contradiction to verse 11 where somebody divorced “must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to” their former spouse.

7.3. Verses 10 and 11 are addressed to two married Christians and again highlight the permanence of the “one flesh” union as Paul records they “must not separate.” Paul then acknowledges that in some cases divorces are inevitable and if such a divorce does happen, the only two choices are to “remain unmarried or else be reconciled to” their former spouse.

7.4. 1 Corinthians 7:12-16

- ¹²To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. ¹³And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. ¹⁴For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. ¹⁵But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. ¹⁶How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? (1 Corinthians 7:12-16)

I’ve added these somewhat unrelated verses as an encouragement to those who may find themselves in what the Bible calls an unequally yoked union. This type of relationship will undoubtedly cause struggles. What is the believer to do or not to do? For sure, the believer is not to compromise any moral standard to appease the unbeliever in order to maintain that union. The believer must always be obedient to God. If the unbeliever is willing to live with the believer, the unbeliever will receive the household blessing God pours out to the believer (is not saved mind you, but is sanctified) and the believer is to live with the unbeliever and must not divorce. If, however, the unbeliever has in mind to leave the marriage union, the believing spouse is not obligated to preserve the marriage union, but has the liberty of God to allow the unbeliever to go. The believing Christian is called to live in peace (see verse 15) and is called upon to hold open the option of reconciliation (see verse 11).

7.5. 1 Corinthians 7:8-9

- ⁸Now to the unmarried and widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am. ⁹But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. (1 Corinthians 7:8-9)

Once again I have digressed, this time to cover the other verses, which are commonly used by someone who is divorced and seeks to justify a marriage to someone other than their legitimate spouse. Verses 8 and 9 are quoted.

Paul is addressing his comment to the unmarried, but we cannot determine exactly who “the unmarried” are. This Greek word, also translated “unmarried,” is slightly different than the word in verse 27, which we examined in issue 7.2. This word has less clarity and simply means, “not married.” People are “unmarried” for three reasons; virgins (never married), widowed, or divorced. Because in this sentence Paul says unmarried *and* widows, we now know “unmarried” refers to either virgins or divorced people. If you were to presume divorced people, and presume they can marry anybody, you establish a suggestion that is contrary to all other verses of God’s Holy Word. Furthermore, two verses later (verse 11) tells us exactly who the divorced person is permitted to remarry – that being their former and legitimate spouse. Both because we are responsible to keep individual verses of Scripture in harmony with Scripture as a whole and because of verse 11, I do not believe the divorced are the ones being addressed and, as such, I do not believe the divorced are being arbitrarily allowed to marry anyone they want. I fear any individual who isolates and uses the two verses of 1 Corinthians 7:8-9 as “carte blanche” to establish the practice of serial monogamy has failed to properly balance Scripture.

Only when the presumption that virgins and widows are being addressed are we able to reconcile these two verses with all other relevant passages. I further find this most likely the case simply because Paul repeats what verses 8 and 9 say as he elaborates on them here in 1 Corinthians 7:36-40.

- 7.6. Again, in 1 Corinthians 7:39, we see the permanence of the “one flesh” union. Notice that Scripture does not say a woman is bound to her husband as long as they are married. She is bound “as long as he lives.” Only death will break the “one flesh” union. When death occurs, the law of marriage ends. The surviving spouse is then free, if they must, to remarry. They are permitted to only marry another Christian (see Romans 7:1-3).

8. 2 Samuel 12:15, Malachi 2:14-15, Matthew 14:3-4, Mark 6:17, Luke 3:19, 1 Corinthians 7:11 – Shows that God continues to call your legitimate spouse your husband or wife even after divorce or remarriage because of the indissoluble “one flesh” union.

- After Nathan had gone home, the Lord struck the child that Uriah’s wife had borne to David, and he become ill. (2 Samuel 12:15)

- ¹⁴You ask, “Why?” It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. ¹⁵Has not the Lord made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. (*Malachi 2:14-15*)
 - ³Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, ⁴for John had been saying to him: “It is not lawful for you to have her.” (*Matthew 14:3-4*)
 - For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, whom he had married. (*Mark 6:17*)
 - But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and all the other evil things he had done. (*Luke 3:19*)
 - But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. (*1 Corinthians 7:11*)
- 8.1. In the eight verses recorded above we get a taste of God’s association between a man and woman who were once married. In every case, the term husband or wife is used. They are not generic renderings that convey the sense of former or “ex” spouses. They are exactly the same words used to describe the spouse both before and after a divorce.
- 8.2. In the case of 2 Samuel 12:15, David had Uriah killed, and even after death, Bathsheba was called Uriah’s wife, (though now married to King David), because of the illegitimacy of David’s adulterous relationship and marriage to Bathsheba.
- 8.3. In the three parallel passages of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Herodias was now married to King Herod, but she is referred to as her legitimate husband’s wife (Philip’s wife) and not the wife of the man she was married to. Why? Neither divorce, or adultery, nor remarriage itself can end the “one flesh” union that has been legitimately established. Death, and only death, will terminate the “one flesh” union. According to God, the couple will remain husband and wife, no matter what, until the death of at least one of the two.
- 8.4. *In 2 Samuel, what King David had done was called evil. (*2 Samuel 12:09*)
- *In Malachi the divorce was referred to as a breaking of faith, and God calls the divorced wife “your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.” Then God immediately says, “I hate divorce.” (*Malachi 2:14-16*)
- *In Matthew, Mark, and Luke the remarriage of Herodias to King Herod is called unlawful, and God’s spokesman in that pronouncement, John the Baptist, was arrested, imprisoned, and ultimately executed because he (John) had repeatedly been telling the king of his unlawful marriage to Philip’s wife.

“CONCLUSIONS, OBSERVATIONS, APPLICATIONS”

Conclusions:

- God only allows continued singleness or reconciliation after divorce (1 Corinthians 7:11) while your legitimate spouse is still living.
 - ❖ Reconciliation appears to be the preference because of children (Malachi 2:15), mercy (Jeremiah 3:1-14), and the natural result of forgiveness (Matthew 6:14-15), which God asks of us.
 - ❖ Also see Jeremiah 31:31-32 wherein God (the husband) renews his covenant with Israel (the unfaithful wife).
 - ❖ (As you read Jeremiah 3:1-14, please keep the Old Testament pronouncements of Moses, as recorded in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 in mind. If you have not read issue 5.2.1, I speak to the passages of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 in that section.)

- The liberty to remarry after divorce is not granted:
 - ❖ This makes no difference whether you are guilty or innocent in promoting the divorce.
 - ❖ This makes no difference whether you or your partner has been involved in the unfaithfulness of an “extra marital” relationship.
 - ❖ This makes no difference whether you have accepted Jesus’ finished work on the cross (salvation) or not – nor whether your spouse is saved, and;
 - ❖ This makes no difference how difficult living a single and/or celibate life happens to be for you.

- The liberty to remarry another after divorce is not granted because;
 - ❖ God still considers the “one flesh” union binding and in force after divorce and only God can end the “one flesh” union. He will end the “one flesh” union by the death of either the husband or wife.
 - ❖ God forbids adultery by commandment and any marriage to another after divorce, while your legitimate spouse is living, is adultery.

Observation:

- Divorce can be granted for:
 - ❖ God hates divorce, but does not forbid it.
 - a. A divorce may be granted for porneia (unfaithfulness or sexual immorality between the time of betrothal and consummation) (Matthew 1:19).
 - b. In Ezra 10:3-5, the Israelites were in illegitimate marriages based upon unfaithfulness. Realizing there was still hope for Israel and out of fear for God’s Commandments, Scripture tells us the Israelites became obedient to God and ended the marriages.

- ❖ God further commands the termination of:
 - a. Homosexual “unions” or marriages (Romans 1:24-28)
 - b. Incestuous “unions” or marriages (1 Corinthians 5:1-5)
 - c. Adulterous “unions” or marriages (Exodus 20:14) which is what remarriage to another happens to be after a divorce (Matthew 5:31-32, Matthew 19:09, Mark 10:11-12, Luke 16:18)

Observation:

- In John 8:1-11 we see a frequently quoted account of a woman caught in adultery. (*John 8:03*) In this account, the woman was not charged with unfaithfulness (porneia), prostitution (porne), or any other kind of sexual sin such as fornication. The woman was charged with passive adultery (moicheuo), being in the state or condition of adultery, which is to say being married to a man who is not her legitimate husband. In this account, the Pharisees were attempting to trap Jesus in order to have a basis for accusing him. (*John 8:06b*) The Pharisees said to Jesus, “In the Law Moses commanded us to stone (to death) such women. Now what do you say?” (*John 8:05*) Jesus bent down and began to write something on the ground. As the Pharisees kept questioning him, Jesus said to them, “If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her. (*John 8:07b*) With that, everyone except the accused woman and Jesus left. ¹⁰Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” ¹¹“No one sir” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.” (*John 8:10-11*)

As Jesus expressed forgiveness to the woman, He clearly told her to “go now and leave your life of sin”*. I know of no other way to obey what Jesus had told her to do other than to end her relationship with/divorce her illegitimate partner.

*This phrase, “leave your life of sin”, is a combination of two Greek words/phrases; the root of which is to do something contrary to God’s Law (Ten Commandments) and the second part means to forever stop doing something. The “sin” Jesus has forbidden the woman from continuing to live in is not specifically identified any more clearly. We know Jesus would ask the woman to stop breaking and begin to honor all of the Ten Commandments. This, of course, would include the Seventh Commandment, which prohibits adultery, the very thing the woman was charged with.

Observation:

- God forbids divorce in Old Testament law for any reason whatsoever if a man violates a woman prior to marriage (see Deuteronomy 22:28-29)

Observation:

- I find no place in Scripture where God adds his “blessing” to any illegitimately established “marriage.” Our emotions somehow tell us that if we make a second, third, fourth...marriage vow to a second, third, fourth...spouse, that God will somehow bless that union simply because of the sanctity of the words spoken. I believe we so easily deceive ourselves (see Proverbs 14:12) and twist Scripture to make excuses for our selfishness and disobedience. We made a vow before God to our first spouse and God will hold us accountable to fulfill that first vow (see Numbers 30:2 and Ecclesiastes 5:4-5), even when it hurts. (*Psalms 15:04*)

We presume that because we place some measure of significance on a second, third, fourth...marriage vow that God does as well. We are only half correct. You can rest assured God does take note of the new “marriage,” but it is not with the joy we might otherwise hope. The “marriage” is in disobedience to God’s Holy Word and the parties involved will face accountability for breaking God’s Seventh Commandment. What feels good and seems appropriate as well as expedient to us, God declares it sinful and forbids it by Commandment.

In further support of this observation, it is worthy of notice that Matthew 19:18, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20, Romans 13:09, and James 2:11 repeat at least the Seventh Commandment. In each of these verses the Greek word for “adultery” is the passive verb *moicheuo*. This is the same word we examined in issue 3.3 above and in the previous observation where Jesus commanded the woman to “leave your life of sin” (*John 8:11b*). I note all of this to say; I doubt seriously that with the social practices of our day, any individual who has experienced divorce would think to themselves “tomorrow I’m going to commit adultery” when in fact tomorrow they are actually planning to marry someone other than their legitimate spouse. But, none-the-less and although they do not have in mind to disobey God, when they remarry, while their legitimate spouse is living, the natural and automatic consequence of the new “marriage” is the sin of adultery. There can be no question about it. This is the EXACT same sin God forbids by the Seventh Commandment. Any remarriage to another after divorce, while your legitimate spouse is living, is forbidden because it is adultery.

And one final point in this observation. The passage of time does not make an adulterous second, third, fourth...marriage somehow become legitimate. We may grow accustomed to new marriages with the passage of time and think it best to leave the matter alone, however, God’s Holy Scripture makes no such provision. God’s Word is perfect; what was sin two thousand years ago will still be exactly the same sin two million years from now. What God says is sin when it happens, will be sin forever. Adultery is sin. Period. To realize adultery is sin or to feel remorse and ask God’s forgiveness for an adulterous remarriage is one thing, but without the cessation of that sin (or any sin for that matter), true repentance and obedience to God simply has not taken place. As sorry as one may feel about a prohibition on remarriage after divorce (and I am not offering an apology for God’s Holy Word), there is simply nothing in Scripture that permits the sin of unforsaken adultery from ever being overlooked, let alone blessed by God (see the precepts of Ezra 10:1-44, Proverbs 28:13, Jeremiah 7:9-10 and Matthew 3:7-8).

Observation:

- Why marriage at all?
 - ❖ Although this is an extensive study in and of itself, a few observations:
 - a. Procreation (Genesis 1:22)
 - b. Provision (Genesis 2:18)
 - c. Pleasure (Song of Songs)
 - d. Purity (1 Corinthians 7:2-5)
 - e. Partnership (Malachi 2:14)
 - f. It is to be a picture of Christ’s love for his bride, the church (Ephesians 5:31-32)

Historical Observation:

- A brief history of how divorce has come to be “accepted” today.

When Martin Luther (1483-1546) nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of All Saint’s Church in Wittenburg Germany around 1517 his action was credited with beginning the Protestant Reformation. Obviously, a number of different events lead to Luther’s views and had underlying influence on his interpretation of Scripture.

About 68 years before Luther was born, in 1415, a Bohemian reformer named John Huss was martyred by being burnt at the stake for preaching and teaching the gospel of Christ. The death of John Huss eventually caught the attention of Desiderius Erasmus (1466?-1536).

When Erasmus was around twelve years of age his parents died. The guardians of Erasmus felt it best he become a monk and, as such, sent him to monastery. Although Erasmus did well in his studies, the strict lifestyle of the monastery was difficult for Erasmus to bear. By the age of twenty, a twist of rebellion had settled in and Erasmus began to delve into the humanistic teachings of Hippocrates, Plato, and Pliny while doing university studies. It is also presumed this is when Erasmus learned of the martyrdom as well as studied the teachings of John Huss, all of which left a pronounced influence on Erasmus and most likely brought Erasmus to saving faith in Christ.

About this same time the printing press had been invented and Erasmus began to publish widely. In his monastery studies Erasmus had edited and published the Greek New Testament. But in his exasperation with the monastery he began to publish critical and satirical books about the Roman Catholic Church.

In this mix of Scripture and humanism, Erasmus came to understand that the emotions of love were superior to everything else, both biblically and humanistically.

One other view of Erasmus that is significant to this “Perspective Paper” was his notion of who Jesus was addressing his teachings to in Matthew 5, 6, and 7. Erasmus believed the first seven verses Jesus spoke in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-10) were addressed to the multitudes, and as Jesus turned to his disciples in Matthew 5:11, Erasmus presumed the balance of the Sermon on the Mount was addressed to and only applied to a select group of Christ’s purest followers. This included Matthew 5:31-32. As such, Erasmus had concluded that divorce was not prohibited by Scripture (at least for the “common man”), and with his view that the feelings of love must be allowed to prevail, he reasoned that “unhappy” partnerships should end and “happy” ones should be allowed to be established. These views made him especially popular to the point he was courted by such rulers as Charles V and Frances I of France and Henry VIII of England.

Erasmus and Martin Luther had become closely associated over time. Both men stood in fervent opposition to the abuses and hypocrisies of the Roman Catholic Church. For example, one such view held by the church was that salvation was earned by keeping seven different sacraments, one of which was marriage. The churches view that marriage was a sacrament was based upon Ephesians 5:31-32. The Council of Trent (1545-1563)

promoted this view and made it official church doctrine. The hypocrisy came into play because, while the church stood in strict opposition to divorce, the church had begun “selling” annulments (ending a fraudulently established marriage) to anybody who would remit money or who would perform some work of piety, charity, or mercy. The proceeds of the funds or work were put towards building Saint Peter’s Church of Rome.

Both Erasmus and Luther had determined that salvation was by unmerited grace and could not be earned by any sacrament, including marriage. As both men exposed various degrees of distortions, abuses, and hypocrisies of the church, the view by Erasmus that divorce and remarriage was permitted had prevailed in the younger Luther’s mind. Luther accepted the idea of divorce and remarriage easily because of Luther’s own opinion concerning the Old Testament law requiring adulterers to be stoned to death. In such cases, the faithful partner was permitted to remarry after such death. Luther had reasoned that if mercy prevailed and the adulterer was not put to death, the faithful partner should no longer be “punished” by being forced to remain single.

While Desiderius Erasmus’ vigorous and scholarly work seems to have “opened the door” by preparing the way for the reformation movement attributed to Martin Luther, the inaccurate views of Erasmus had flavored the views of Luther in his ninety-five theses and the seeds of the disintegration of the family had been planted.

Furthermore, the state began to also take note of the abuses/hypocrisy of the church. As the church granted annulments with favoritism, the government decided to get involved in an attempt to provide more control. Prior to the time of the reformation, divorce was strictly a matter dealt with by the church. As the abuse by the church grew, the civil government wanted to get more involved.

Observation:

- Some current civil views.

In the approximately 500 years from when Martin Luther posted his theses, the church has acquiesced on its responsibility to hold forth God’s word on marriage and divorce. Prior to the reformation, divorce and certainly, remarriage was absolutely forbidden in keeping with God’s Holy Word. Now, however, we live in a society where the church has yielded fully to the state on the issue of divorce and remarriage. The state in turn has failed to maintain the standards God has declared for the institute of marriage.

As time has marched forward, and in our America today, the state began to allow divorces for any number of progressively minor offenses, all of which lead to the current status of “no fault” divorce where “irreconcilable” is reason enough. The proponents of “no fault” divorce also had concluded that if either party deemed the union as irreconcilable and that the longer it took for the divorce to be granted, the more harm, damage, and unhappiness the partners would face. This time delay was considered a hindrance to justice, therefore speedy divorces were also considered best. Additionally, any divorce that was contested soon became expensive with attorney fees and all. Finally, the proponents of divorce were wanting to mitigate the social stigma of guilt associated with a divorce. This “no fault” legislation was designed to have made divorce

easier, faster, less expensive, and guilt-free, and perhaps has accomplished some of those superficial goals. In doing so, however, a whole host of problems have not only been conceived, but flourish across our nation.

The foundation of any society is the family unit. When the family unit can so quickly be dissolved the foundation will soon falter. Volumes and volumes of books can be and are being written about the consequences of the family breakdown. In addition, thousands upon thousands of lawyers, judges, and couples testify that “no fault” divorce has caused bitterness to run as deep as ever. The root of bitterness grows from the fact that the faithful party in a marriage is actually penalized, without recourse, by the “no fault” legislation. This is especially true where children are involved. “No fault” laws essentially provide that material assets be divided in half. Children are often placed in the custody of the selfish or irresponsible partner, all the while the faithful partner becomes burdened with the cost of “entitlements” in providing for the maintenance of the children.

In “no fault” divorce, the institute of marriage itself is attacked and destroyed rather than the evaluation of the personal faults of the partners or the issues that contributed to the problems. Society’s duty to hold irresponsible people accountable for destructive action is circumvented by “no fault” legislation. After the consequences of the selfish and irresponsible actions come to fruition, society then finds itself needing to establish all sorts of “fixes”—programs, policies, rules, etc., etc., in a failing effort to nullify the carnage.

I believe it was in the mid to late 1980’s I heard a statistic that our nation had at that time some 40 million laws, statutes, rules, ordinances, regulations, etc., in man’s feeble attempt to impose that which would be the natural results if man would simply follow the Ten Commandments. Worse yet, the laws of today’s society are attempting to write out or nullify the Ten Commandments. While civil laws take issue with nearly all of the Ten Commandments, two of the ten deal with marriage itself —You shall not commit adultery (Exodus 20:14), You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife...(Exodus 20:17a). The laws that once had prohibited adultery and the laws that provided compensation for the alienation of affection, criminal conversation, and seduction have either been negated or are no longer enforced. Things God calls sin are now defended or even promoted by civil law.

A few more obvious contradictions between God’s standards and man’s standards:

- God establishes a “one flesh” union via a legitimate marriage that makes a man and woman a husband and wife until the death of either the husband or wife. Civil law, and unfortunately too many Christians, incorrectly presumes that the ending of a marriage ends the husband/wife relationship.
- God designed marriage; the state did not. As the author of marriage, God’s pronouncements on marriage must prevail over the states.
- God also established the institute of government; therefore government is to honor and uphold God’s authority. Government is only allowed to regulate the issues

established by God. God even warns the government to be mindful not to bring forth misery by its decrees (make trouble by law) in *Psalm 94:20*.

- God established the “one flesh” union by a covenant. At best, the state views marriage as no more than a contract. Keep in mind covenants are based on trust, whereas contracts are based upon distrust; i.e., if we do not trust one another, we publish a contract. If we do trust one another, we make a promise, vow, or covenant. No disrespect is intended to the government, but they simply have no authority over a human covenant that has been duly established. (*Galatians 3:15*).
- God looks at marriage problems as opportunities. The state looks at marriage problems as hindrances to personal happiness. God is the God of impossibilities and God delights in allowing his children the opportunity to convey his hand of healing and reconciliation. The Christian who denies God’s power in this matter is in fact showing his own lack of faith and obedience (see Hebrews 11:06) as well as denying God’s nature (see Matthew 19:26). The state on the other hand is promoting selfishness.
- Not only are state laws on “no fault” divorce contrary to God’s Holy Word, they are contrary to the United States Constitution. Many who understand such issues point to at least two reasons why “no fault” laws are unconstitutional.
 - a. The first contention comes from the fact that in “no fault” divorce, one party is denied due process of law that is guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment. The outcome of the divorce has already been determined by legislative action and, as such, nothing the dissenting party could say would alter the outcome – the divorce will be granted. The mere fact that a dissenting person is granted the option to speak of their opposition to a divorce is not due process because whatever they say will not alter the outcome.
 - b. A second issue considered unconstitutional about “no fault” divorce laws stems from the states contention that marriage is a contract. Article 1, Section 10, of The United States Constitution forbids the passage of any bill of attainder, ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts,...To the degree that the state considers marriage a contract, the state violates the United States Constitution because “no fault” laws impair the dissenting party’s ability to fulfill their contractual obligation, something the United States Constitution says state governments are forbidden from doing.

Application:

- ...Love is the response.

God has the most unbelievable response to any husband or wife who finds that they think divorce will solve the problems they may be facing. God’s answer: Love. As you look into Scripture, you will begin to see an inadequacy in our English vocabulary on what love is. We have only the one word love, which can mean many different things. I have no vested interest in the sources, but a book and/or cassette series titled Love Life

for Every Married Couple by Ed Wheat, M.D., is an excellent resource to use in rekindling your love and marriage, even if you are working without the cooperation of your partner.

However, to understand a bit better what the Bible says about love we need to understand that there are different kinds of love. We need to understand our English language does not portray what the Bible indicates in the original Hebrew and Greek. I will give you a very brief review as I've come to understand the different words of love.

- The first word is found in the Old Testament and is the Hebrew word "**Ahab**." The Greek counterpart is not found in the New Testament, but if it were it would be the word "**Eros**," where we get our word "erotic." This is simply physical, sexual love.
- The second is the Greek word "**Epitithemi**" which means to impose upon, lay upon, put upon of one's heart. It is a strong fixation of the heart. If the fixation is selfish, ill intended, or otherwise unbecoming, we would translate the word to "covet," to "lust," or perhaps to be "obsessed." If the fixation were wholesome, edifying, kind and caring, we would translate the word into "desire" or "longing." The word "epitithemi" is rarely translated "love," but it is a kind of love, none-the-less.
- A third kind of love is denoted by the Greek word "**Homeiromai**" and is in reference to a love of familiarity. It is a deep, rich affection for someone or something and conveys a sense of belonging to or participating in.

"Homeiromai" love is that wink across the room. When we think of the warm fuzzies or snuggling, or words such as cozy and fond, they might well be used to describe a "homeiromai" love.

- A fourth love is "**Phileo**"/"**Philadelphia**" which means to be a friend, and denotes a personal attachment, sentiment, or feelings. This Greek word means a love of mankind. It is brotherly love, kindness, benevolence or to be philanthropic. Love for a dear friend is a "Phileo" love.

Now before I define a fifth type of love, I would like to point out some attributes of the four previously mentioned. Ahab/Eros, Epitithemi, Homeiromai, Phileo are all associated with our feelings and emotions. They are loves that are reciprocal, conditional, and selfishly want more and more.

The feelings and emotions associated with these four loves change with our moods, circumstances, and the pressures by which we may or may not find ourselves momentarily influenced. They are loves that to one degree or another are fickle. Don't get me wrong, unless something monumental happens, the feelings and emotions usually do not swing a great deal from day to day, but the point is, the four types of love are influenced by external factors. That is their nature, and because of the influence of factors beyond our control, they cannot be depended upon to sustain us or our emotions of well-being.

- That is where the fifth type of love fits in. The Greek word is “**Agape**” and the word is defined as a feast of charity. When we think of a feast, we think of things very lavish, to perform to the maximum, to go on in an unending fashion. When we think of charity, we think of giving and giving and giving. That is exactly what “agape” love is all about. The exciting thing about agape love is that we control it. You and I control our agape love. It is not fickle or wavering nor subject to external factors. Pure agape love is not influenced even by our own emotions. You see, agape love, and the desire to practice it, comes from within us. Agape love is an intentional, deliberate, conscientious choice of our will. We resolve in our mind and purpose in our heart to do what God says is best. This love is based upon our actions, not our emotions. It makes no difference what our feelings are, it makes no difference how long something will take, or what the costs are. Agape love is giving to another without receiving or even expecting to receive a response. It is conditioned based upon obedience to God; it is pure, edifying, patient, kind, and consistent. It forgives, it hopes, it always seeks the truth, and because it is unending, it ultimately prevails. Agape love has no self-centeredness, no self-righteousness, no greed, no rudeness, and is not unbecoming in anyway. It wants and provides what God says is best for another, **NO MATTER WHAT**.

Our model for Agape love is, of course, Jesus Christ. His sacrificial giving, his forgiveness, his patience, all coupled with his holiness and the insistence we live holy lives are the pattern we are to emulate as we express agape love to our partners and others. To determine in your mind and resolve in your heart that you will love with an agape love is within your grasp at this moment. You, and you only, can make that choice and, as you leave the consequences of your choice and the positive actions that will follow in God’s hands, presuming you are His child, He will fill you with a peace, a joy, a promise, a hope, a light, a contentment, a strength, a warmth, a gentleness, and a quietness that goes beyond any measure of your imagination. Jesus Christ loves you with an agape love and He asks you to reflect that love to all others.

APPENDIX ONE AND APPENDIX TWO

APPENDIX ONE:

This appendix is in response to the tremendous encouragement I have received from those friends and members of my family who have read the initial portion of this Perspective Paper. Many words of affirmation were offered to me as folk found areas of enlightenment and clarification on what has become a most central issue within the "Bride of Christ". To God be the glory if what He has seen fit to reveal to me is of intimate use to other Christians.

There is, however, one issue that has generated more questions and concern than what has been answered by the initial comments and observations. Quite frankly I have stirred a hornet's nest. The issue that has become most troubling to many folks deals with the notion of ending illegitimate marriages. In the initial Perspective Paper, specifically the observations found on page 24 and continued on page 25, I have dealt with the need to end adulterous, illegitimate marriages and have apparently done so with less than convincing support from Scripture. This appendix, in concert with appendix two, is an attempt to expound upon the foundation for the observations as understood from the teachings of our Lord Jesus, and located in John's Gospel, Chapter 8, verses one through eleven.

In studying the Greek word MOICHOS and its four cognates, I not only used my Bible, but have made use of my Greek/English Concordance, English/Greek Interlinear and my Exhaustive Concordance. With these simple "tools", it becomes very, very easy to locate and study each pertinent word used in Scripture, which is exactly what I have attempted to do in my personal studies. You will find, in appendix two, a series of tables listing the two commonly confused Greek words that are translated into our English word "adultery". I am convinced that it is this confusion that has allowed the "loophole" so many people use to support the notion that God ultimately tolerates remarriage after divorce while your legitimate spouse is still living. My attempt is to make you pause just long enough in your preconceived belief so-as-to allow God to speak to you through **His** use of the Greek words Moichos and Porne (and their seven cognates).

By studying the tables for the five Greek words MOICHOS (n), MOICHEUO (v), MOICHEIA (n), MOICHAO (v), and MOICHALIS (n), you will see the words are used a total of thirty-two (32) times in the whole of the New Testament. Of those 32 occasions, the three nouns are used thirteen (13) times, but most importantly, the two verbs, Moicheuo and Moichao, are used nineteen (19) times. Of the 19 times the verbs are used, eight (8) of the passages are descriptive enough to tell us **exactly** what action is committed that constitutes Moicheuo or Moichao (adultery). We can learn even more when we study the noun Moichalis as it is used twice, in contrast, in Romans 7:03. On every occasion, and I must emphasize EVERY occasion where God spells out what action constitutes Moicheuo and Moichao, God is dealing with the establishment of an illegitimate marriage or is dealing with the actions which lead to an

illegitimate marriage¹. EVERY TIME! Furthermore, God does not spell out any other action, other than the establishment of an illegitimate marriage (or that which leads to a illegitimate marriage) to define these five Greek words. From this, we know with absolute certainty what God means by the Greek word Moichos, (and its four cognates). God has left no room for any other conclusions. NONE!

In John 8:1-11, God uses the verb Moicheuo in verse 4 and the noun Moicheia in verse 3. By studying how God has consistently used these words in Scripture, we know their precise meaning and, as such, we know without question that the passages of John 8:1-11 are dealing with a woman who was illegitimately married.

Now, the most common current teaching on the passages of John 8:1-11 is that the woman was involved in sexual immorality by participating in a series of sexual relationships with a host of men, none of whom she was married to. This conclusion is presumed because sexual immorality is, indeed, one of our English definitions for the word "adultery". As stated in issue 3.5 on page 7 of this Perspective Paper, an improper sexual relationship is NOT how God defines Moichos or its cognates. God only defines Moichos as an illegitimate marriage. If God wanted the woman of John 8:1-11 charged with sexual immorality, God would have used the available Greek word which denotes sexual immorality. God used the word He consistently has used for an illegitimate marriage, and did not use the Greek word for sexual immorality, as you will now see.

In Scripture we also find the Greek word PORNE. In the second half of appendix two you will find a detailed list that contains each usage of the word Porne (n) and its three Biblical cognates, PORNEIA (n), PORNEUO (v), and PORNOS (n). As you carefully study these four words, you will notice that God never, and I mean NEVER, spells out any action to define what Porne (or its cognates) mean. The word Porne and its cognates are generic, referring to immorality as a whole. As you scrutinize the list(s) found in appendix two for the word Porne, you will indeed notice that the Greek word Porne is occasionally translated exactly like the Greek word Moichos. Moichos is always translated and Porne is occasionally translated into our English word "adultery". The problem I wish to bring to your attention is that we do not have one specific English word to differentiate between an "illegitimate marriage" and "immorality" in general; we simply call them both "adultery". As we have already reviewed, we know exactly

¹ In Matthew 5:32, we learn that the mere divorcing of your spouse will cause the innocently divorced spouse to commit adultery if they should remarry (see issue 4.1 thru 4.1.3 on pages 8 and 9 of the Perspective Paper). I believe that lusting (Matthew 5:28) is of the same caliber as divorcing in that the selfishness of lusting would manifest itself in discontent towards your legitimate spouse, a divorce of your legitimate spouse, and ultimately an illegitimate remarriage.

Furthermore, while studying the eight descriptive passages of what constitutes Moicheuo and Moichao (adultery), I trust you will notice that in the two passages leading up to an illegitimate marriage, (Matthew 5:28 & 5:32), "adultery" is presented in the **Aorist** tense. In contrast, the six instances* where an illegitimate remarriage has already taken place, the "adultery" verb is in **Present** tense.

In response to those folk who believe that at some point in time, or after some particular event, an illegitimate marriage suddenly becomes legitimate, I offer the six instances* which are in **Present** tense. With these six instances* EVERY Biblical illustration given will teach us that those in an illegitimate marriage are currently/presently living in adultery. Once again we see with absolute certainty that the sin of adultery is perpetual for so long as the illegitimate marriage is maintained.

* The six instances are in five verses; Matt 5:32, Matt 19:9, Mark 10:11, Mark 10:12, and twice in Luke 16:18.

what God means by Moichos, (His application is only in reference to an illegitimate marriage) and at the same time, we learn that God does not necessarily define what Porne refers to, preferring to use “Porne” as His indication of immorality in general. In this instance, when you start with the Greek words and study how God applies them, it becomes easy to determine the meaning of a word, if in fact a meaning can be established. For the Greek word Moichos, God clearly defines exactly what the word means by consistently stating what action causes Moichos. In the case of the Greek word Porne, God has not defined what action constitutes Porne. In this type of situation, the context will be the primary factor for establishing the definition.

The problem with all of this is that we are allowing the different contextual definitions for our English word “adultery” to influence what God teaches in His Holy Word. Only when people take the ambiguous and generic English word "adultery" and work backwards do people seem to get into trouble. We have our idea of what “adultery” means in our English language, but we cannot justifiably apply our meaning back to the Greek word(s) that happen to be translated into “adultery”. **As such, when we conclude that “Moichos” and “Porne” have the same (and interchangeable) use simply because they are both translated into our English word “adultery”, we are making an extremely fatal error about what God teaches. The Bible will become absolutely meaningless if sinful man gets to decide what God’s Holy Word actually means. When our definitions allow for conclusions (and lifestyles) that cannot otherwise be supported from Scripture alone, then the inclusion of those definitions into the interpretation of Scripture would amount to a perversion of Scripture.** God has taught us EXACTLY what Moichos (and its cognates) mean by how He uses the word(s) and God also teaches us, by virtue of John 8:1-11, that when an illegitimate marriage is established, (such as the woman of John 8:1-11), the illegitimate marriage must be ended in obedience to Scripture.

I strongly urge you study the tables presented in appendix two. I believe that if you study the tables patiently and carefully, the truth of how God uses these two Greek words (Moichos and Porne) will become obvious. Once you see and verify for yourself the validity of the tables in appendix two, the factual conclusions of what God teaches will become extra ordinarily clear, and quite frankly, very simple to understand.

In summation and beyond the common sense realization that God does not grant any extenuating permission for anybody to continue a lifestyle that violates any of His Ten Commandments, John 8:1-11 offers a specific illustration that even the innocently² re-married woman of John 8:1-11 must end her illegitimate marriage. God has established an extremely specific meaning for the Greek words found in John 8:3 & 4. The Greek word Moicheia (v3) and Moicheuo (v4) make reference to the illegitimate marriage of the woman, and in verse eleven, Jesus instructs the woman to leave that improper marriage or “life of sin”.

² I believe the woman of John 8:1-11 was ignorant of her sin until Jesus pointed it out to her. In verse four (4), the woman was charged with the verb (specifically a participle) Moicheuo. As you study this specific passage, you will notice that the parsing for this participle is both **present** and **passive**. This teaches us that the woman was, at the time of the charges, in a **present** (current) illegitimate marriage. Furthermore, because the voice of the charge is **passive**, we learn that the woman did not realize nor did she intend to be living in sin (vis-à-vis an **active** voice which tells us the woman knew remarriage was sin, but she intentionally—“actively”—remarried anyway). But anyway, and regardless of her innocence, Jesus commanded her to leave your life of sin (*John 8:11*) or in other words, divorce your illegitimate husband.

APPENDIX TWO:

ΜΟΙΧΟΛ

MOICHOS noun *adulterer*

Greek Root Word

Luke 18:11	The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers —or even like this tax collector.	Noun Nominative Plural Masculine
1Corinthians 06:09	Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders	Noun Nominative Plural Masculine
Hebrews 13:04	Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.	Noun Accusative Plural Masculine

ΜΟΙΧΕΥΘΕΙΣ

MOICHEUO verb (active) *to commit adultery*; (passive) *to become an adulterer*

Matthew 5:27	You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery .’	Verb Future Active Indicative 2 nd Person Singular
Matthew 5:28 (DEFINES MOICHEUO)	But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.	Verb Aorist Active Indicative 3 rd person Singular
Matthew 5:32 (DEFINES MOICHEUO)	But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress , and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.	Infinitive Aorist Passive
Matthew 19:18	“Which ones?” the man inquired. Jesus replied, “Do not murder, do not commit adultery , do not steal, do not give false testimony,	Verb Future Active Indicative 2 nd person Singular

Mark 10:19	You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery , do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’	Verb Aorist Active Subjective 2 nd Person Singular
Luke 16:18 (2)	Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery , and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery .	Verb Present Active Indicative 3 rd Person Singular Verb Present Active Indicative 3 rd Person Singular
(DEFINES MOICHEUO)		
Luke 18:20	You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery , do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.’	Verb Aorist Active Subjective 2 nd Person Singular
John 8:04	...and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery .”	Participle Present Passive Nominative Singular Feminine
Romans 2:22 (2)	You who say that people should not commit adultery , do you commit adultery ? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?	Infinitive Present Active Verb Present Active Indicative 2 nd Person Singular
Romans 13:09	The commandments, “Do not commit adultery ,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”	Verb Future Active Indicative 2 nd Person Singular
James 2:11 (2)	For he who said, “Do not commit adultery ,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.	Verb Aorist Active Subjective 2 nd Person Singular Verb Present Active Indicative 2 nd Person Singular
Revelation 2:22	So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways.	Participle Present Active Accusative Plural Masculine

μοιχεία

MOICHEIA noun *the state or condition of adultery*

Matthew 15:19	For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery , sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.	Noun Nominative Plural Feminine
Mark 7:21	For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery ,	Noun Nominative Plural Feminine
John 8:03	The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery . They made her stand before the group	Noun Dative Singular Feminine

μοιχασθαι

MOICHAO verb *to commit adultery*

Matthew 5:32 (DEFINES MOICHAO)	But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery .	Verb Present Passive Indicative 3 rd Person Singular
Matthew 19:09 (DEFINES MOICHAO)	I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery .	Verb Present Passive Indicative 3 rd Person Singular
Mark 10:11 (DEFINES MOICHAO)	He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her.	Verb Present Passive Indicative 3 rd Person Singular
Mark 10:12 (DEFINES MOICHAO)	And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery ."	Verb Present Passive Indicative 3 rd Person Singular

μοιχάλις

MOICHALIS noun *adulteress; (a) adulterous*

Matthew 12:39	He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.	Adjective Nominative Singular Feminine
Matthew 16:04	A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.	Adjective Nominative Singular Feminine

Mark 8:38	If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.	Adjective Dative Singular Feminine
Romans 7:03 (2) (DEFINES MOICHALIS)	So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress . But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress , even though she marries another man.	Noun Nominative Singular Feminine Noun Accusative Singular Feminine
James 4:04	You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.	Noun Vocative Plural Feminine
2Peter 2:14	With eyes full of adultery , they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed—an accursed brood!	Noun Genitive Singular Feminine

ΠΟΡΝΑ

PORNE noun *prostitute, a woman who practices sexual immorality for payment; this can refer to religious unfaithfulness*

Greek Root Word

Matthew 21:31	“Which of the two did what his father wanted?” “The first,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.	Noun Nominative Plural Feminine
Matthew 21:32	For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.	Noun Nominative Plural Feminine
Luke 15:30	But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!	Noun Genitive Plural Feminine
1Corinthians 6:15	Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute ? Never!	Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
1Corinthians 6:16	Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.”	Definite Article Dative Singular Feminine Noun Dative Singular Feminine
Hebrews 11:31	By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.	Noun Nominative Singular Feminine

James 2:25	In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?	Noun Nominative Singular Feminine
Revelation 17:01	One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute , who sits on many waters.	Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Revelation 17:05	This title was written on her forehead: MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.	Definite Article Genitive Plural Feminine Noun Genitive Plural Feminine
Revelation 17:15	Then the angel said to me, “The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.	Noun Nominative Singular Feminine
Revelation 17:16	The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute . They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire.	Noun Accusative Singular Feminine
Revelation 19:02	... for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants.	Noun Accusative Singular Feminine

ΠΟΡΝΕΙΑΣ

PORNEIA noun *sexual immorality, fornication, marital unfaithfulness, prostitution, adultery, a generic term for sexual sin of any kind*

Matthew 5:32	But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness , causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.	Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Matthew 15:19	For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality , theft, false testimony, slander.	Noun Nominative Plural Feminine
Matthew 19:09	I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness , and marries another woman commits adultery.	Noun Dative Singular Feminine
Mark 7:21	For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality , theft, murder, adultery,	Noun Nominative Plural Feminine

John 8:41 (Porneia is combined with two other Greek words to establish the phrase 'illegitimate children')	You are doing the things your own father does. “We are not illegitimate children ,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.”	Preposition of the Genitive Noun Genitive Singular Feminine Verb Perfect Passive Indicative 1 st Person Plural
Acts 15:20	Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality , from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.	Definite Article Genitive Singular Feminine Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Acts 15:29	You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality . You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.	Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Acts 21:25	As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality .	Noun Accusative Singular Feminine
1Corinthians 5:01	It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father’s wife.	Noun Nominative Singular Feminine
1Corinthians 6:13	“Food for the stomach and the stomach for food”—but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality , but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.	Definite Article Dative Singular Feminine Noun Dative Singular Feminine
1Corinthians 6:18	Flee from sexual immorality . All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.	Definite Article Accusative Singular Feminine Noun Accusative Singular Feminine
1Corinthians 7:02	But since there is so much immorality , each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.	Definite Article Accusative Plural Feminine Noun Accusative Plural Feminine
2Corinthians 12:21	I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.	Conjunction Noun Dative Singular Feminine

Galatians 5:19	The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality , impurity and debauchery;	Noun Nominative Singular Feminine
Ephesians 5:03	But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality , or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people.	Noun Nominative Singular Feminine
Colossians 3:05	Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality , impurity, lust, evil desires and greed which is idolatry.	Noun Accusative Singular Feminine
1Thesologians 4:03	It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality ;	Definite Article Genitive Singular Feminine Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Revelation 2:21	I have given her time to repent of her immorality , but she is unwilling.	Definite Article Genitive Singular Feminine Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Revelation 9:21	Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.	Definite Article Genitive Singular Feminine Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Revelation 14:08	A second angel followed and said, “Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries .”	Definite Article Genitive Singular Feminine Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Revelation 17:02	With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries .	Definite Article Genitive Singular Feminine Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Revelation 17:04	The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries .	Definite Article Genitive Singular Feminine Noun Genitive Singular Feminine
Revelation 18:03	For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries . The kings of the earth committed adultery with her and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.	Definite Article Genitive Singular Feminine Noun Genitive Singular Feminine

Revelation 19:02	... for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries . He has avenged on her the blood of his servants.	Definite Article Dative Singular Feminine Noun Dative Singular Feminine
<i>Un-translated</i>	<i>Porneia was <u>not</u> translated into English in one usage found in Greek.</i>	

ΠΟΡΝΕΥΩ

PORNEUO verb *to commit sexual immorality of any kind, adultery*

1Corinthians 6:18	Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.	Participle Present Active Nominative Singular Masculine
1Corinthians 10:08 (2)	We should not commit sexual immorality , as some of them did —and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died.	Verb Present Active Subjective 1 st Person Plural Verb Aorist Active Indicative 3 rd Person Plural
Revelation 2:14	Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality .	Infinitive Aorist Active
Revelation 2:20	Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.	Infinitive Aorist Active
Revelation 17:02	With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries.	Verb Aorist Active Indicative 3 rd Person Plural
Revelation 18:03	For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.	Verb Aorist Active Indicative 3 rd Person Plural
Revelation 18:09	When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her luxury see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her.	Participle Aorist Active Nominative Plural Masculine

ΠΟΡΝΟΣ

PORNOS noun *one who is sexually immoral (male or female), in some contexts distinguished from an adulterer* (1Cor 6:09)

1Corinthians 5:09	I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people--	Noun Dative Plural Masculine
1Corinthians 5:10	--not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral , or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world.	Noun Dative Plural Masculine
1Corinthians 5:11	But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. With such a man do not even eat.	Noun Nominative Singular Masculine
1Corinthians 6:09	Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders	Noun Nominative Plural Masculine
Ephesians 5:05	For this you can be sure: No immoral , impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.	Noun Nominative Singular Masculine
1Timothy 1:10	...for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine	Noun Dative Plural Masculine
Hebrews 12:16	See that no one is sexually immoral , or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son.	Noun Nominative Singular Masculine
Hebrews 13:04	Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral .	Noun Accusative Plural Masculine
Revelation 21:08	But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murders, the sexually immoral , those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.	Noun Dative Plural Masculine
Revelation 22:15	Outside are dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral , the murders, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.	Noun Nominative Plural Masculine

PARSING CODES:

Parsing: To describe (a word) by stating its part of speech, form, and syntactical relationships in a sentence.

NOUN 1) A word used to denote or name a person, place, thing, quality, or act. 2a) The part of speech of a word that is the subject or object of a verb, object of a preposition, or an appositive. 2b) Any word, phrase, or clause used in this way.

VERB 1) In most languages, that part of speech that expresses existence, action, or occurrence. 2) Any of the words within this part of speech; *be, run* or *conceive*. 3) Any phrase of other construction used as a verb.

INFINITIVE A verb form that is not inflected to indicate person, number or tense, and is used in English: 1) To serve as a substantive while retaining some verbal aspects such as connection with an object and modification by verbs. Preceded by *to* 2) To participate in verb phrases

ADJECTIVE Any of a class of words used to modify a noun or other substantive by limiting, qualifying, or specifying

DEFINITE ARTICLE The article ‘*the*’, which restricts or particularizes the noun or noun phrase following it.

PARTICIPLE A nominal form of a verb that is used with an auxiliary verb to indicate certain tenses, and that can also function independently as an adjective.

Nouns,
Definite articles, &
Adjectives are parsed as CASE—NUMBER—GENDER

CASE	NUMBER	GENDER
<u>NOMINATIVE</u> of or designating the case of the subject of a finite verb	<u>SINGULAR</u> A word form denoting a single person or thing	<u>MASCULINE</u> Manish; unwomanly: a masculine or grammatical forms denoting or referring to males
<u>GENITIVE</u> 1) Of, pertaining to, or designating a case that expresses possession, measurement or source. 2) A genitive case or a genitive form or construction (middle English)	<u>PLURAL</u> A plural number or form	<u>FEMININE</u> Indicating the gender of words that are classified as female
<u>DATIVE</u> Designating the indirect object of a verb and the object of any of certain verbs and prepositions		
<u>ACCUSATIVE</u> Pertaining to the case of a noun, pronoun, adjective or participle that is the direct object of a verb or the object of certain prepositions		
<u>VOCATIVE</u> Pertaining to the grammatical case of a person or object being called or addressed		

Verbs are parsed TENSE—VOICE—MOOD—person—number

TENSE	VOICE	MOOD
<p><u>PRESENT</u> A verb tense or form that expresses current time</p> <p><u>FUTURE</u> A verb in the future tense</p> <p><u>AORIST</u> A verb used to denote past action or future action without indicating completion</p>	<p><u>ACTIVE</u> A verb inflection or voice indicating that the subject of the sentence is performing the action expressed by the verb</p> <p><u>PASSIVE</u> Denoting a verb form or voice used to indicate that the grammatical subject is the object of the action or the effect of the verb</p>	<p><u>INDICATIVE</u> Designating a verb mood used to indicate that the denoted act is an objective fact</p> <p><u>SUBJUNCTIVE</u> Designating a nominative case</p>
person		number
<p>FIRST PERSON A category of verbs or pronouns designating the speaker or writer of the sentence in which they appear</p> <p>SECOND PERSON The form of a pronoun or verb used in reference to the person addressed</p> <p>THIRD PERSON A set of grammatical forms used in referring to a person or thing other than the speaker or the one spoken to</p>		<p><u>SINGULAR</u> A word form denoting a single person or thing</p> <p><u>PLURAL</u> A plural number or form</p>

Infinitives are parsed TENSE—VOICE

TENSE	VOICE
<p><u>PRESENT</u> A verb tense or form that expresses current time</p> <p><u>FUTURE</u> A verb in the future tense</p> <p><u>AORIST</u> A verb used to denote past action or future action without indicating completion</p>	<p><u>ACTIVE</u> A verb inflection or voice indicating that the subject of the sentence is performing the action expressed by the verb</p> <p><u>PASSIVE</u> Denoting a verb form or voice used to indicate that the grammatical subject is the object of the action or the effect of the verb</p>

Participles are parsed TENSE—VOICE—case—number—gender

TENSE	VOICE	
<p><u>PRESENT</u> A verb tense or form that expresses current time</p> <p><u>FUTURE</u> A verb in the future tense</p> <p><u>AORIST</u> A verb used to denote past action or future action without indicating completion</p>	<p><u>ACTIVE</u> A verb inflection or voice indicating that the subject of the sentence is performing the action expressed by the verb</p> <p><u>PASSIVE</u> Denoting a verb form or voice used to indicate that the grammatical subject is the object of the action or the effect of the verb</p>	
case	number	gender
<p><u>NOMINATIVE</u> Of or designating the case of the subject of a finite verb</p> <p><u>GENITIVE</u> 1) Of, pertaining to, or designating a case that expresses possession, measurement, or source. 2) A genitive case or a genitive form or construction (middle English)</p> <p><u>DATIVE</u> Designating the indirect object of a verb and the object of any of certain verbs and prepositions</p> <p><u>ACCUSATIVE</u> Pertaining to the case of a noun, pronoun, adjective or participle that is the direct object of a verb or the object of certain prepositions</p> <p><u>VOCATIVE</u> Pertaining to the grammatical case of a person or object being called or addressed</p>	<p><u>SINGULAR</u> A word form denoting a single person or thing</p> <p><u>PLURAL</u> A plural number or form</p>	<p><u>MASCULINE</u> Manish; unwomanly: a masculine or grammatical forms denoting or referring to males</p> <p><u>FEMININE</u> Indicating the gender of words that are classified as female</p>

Preposition with the genitive and

Conjunction: are also found listed in the above table of Greek words. They are used by themselves in that the parsing tags are assigned to the other words listed.

APPENDIX THREE

Appendix three is yet another view of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 as well as additional Biblical support for the notion that remarriage between legitimate mates is permitted, even where an illegitimate marriage has taken place in the interim.

ANOTHER VIEW OF DEUTERONOMY 24:1-4

In continuing to study various works by a number of most gifted authors, I learned of an article written by Professor Raymond Westbrook. I find the commentary by Professor Westbrook so intriguing and practical, that I am compelled to acknowledge his insightful work with a brief overview of his article¹.

Professor Westbrook has taken special note of the reason found in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 for why the first marriage failed and why the second marriage ended for this particular woman. Professor Westbrook attributes great weight to the differences found for the end of the two relationships based upon a good deal of cultural and historical data, in addition to the Biblical meaning of the two different words.

In the first instance, the husband finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house (*Deuteronomy 24:1*). While in the second instance, the husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies, (*Deuteronomy 24:3*). The different reasons given for the two different divorces are that the first husband finds "something indecent" while the second husband "dislikes" her. Professor Westbrook points out that the foundation behind the difference is what prohibits the reconciliation and that difference quite likely boils down to one of financial integrity.

According to in-depth studies by Professor Westbrook, the meaning of the Hebrew words and the customs of that day were that if a wife was deemed to have failed in her marital duty, whether in the privacy of her home or by her conduct within the social marketplace, the husband could dismiss her without burden to himself. As a result, the husband was privileged to retain her dowry and the material assets she had acquired both before and during the marriage. We know nothing of the specific failure(s) the woman was dismissed for, only that her actions were considered "indecent" enough by her husband that, in his sole discretion, he determined it warranted the end of his marriage to her.

Westbrook goes on to explain that the woman's conduct is not questioned as having been the cause for the failure of the second marriage. In this text, the second husband dismisses her of his own volition; he simply does not like her anymore. Under this situation, or as a result of his death, the custom of that day was that the woman would be entitled to the return of her dowry,

¹ Westbrook, Raymond. 'The Prohibition on Restoration of Marriage in Deuteronomy 24:1-4.' In *Studies in the Bible 1986*, p. 387-405. Scripta Hierosolymitana, Vol. 31. Edited by Sara Japhet. Jerusalem, Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1986.

the retention of her material assets, and often she was additionally compensated with a financial token as a divorce settlement or, in the case of his death, a percentage of his estate.

With that information as a background, I will attempt to represent the significance of Professor Westbrook's observations. Before I begin the explanation, there is one other aside that is noteworthy and it involves the location of these four verses (Deuteronomy 24:1-4) in relationship to the overall layout of the book of Deuteronomy. We find by studying Deuteronomy that the Seventh Commandment, You shall not commit Adultery, (*Exodus 20:14*) is elaborated upon in Deuteronomy 22:9 thru Deuteronomy 23:18. The Eighth Commandment, You shall not steal, (*Exodus 20:15*) is explained within the larger subsection of Deuteronomy 23:19 thru Deuteronomy 24:7; and as you now realize, this prohibition for marital reconciliation is nested near the end of the text on the Eighth Commandment which prohibits stealing.

Professor Westbrook suggests that the reason the first husband is prohibited from reestablishing a relationship with the woman he once rejected is that in doing so, he would benefit from unjust financial gain, or in other words, from stealing. The first husband had asserted, (whether true or not) that his wife's conduct necessitated the termination of the marriage. The first husband then kept all of her material assets, and sent her away with nothing but the clothes on her back. If the woman then managed to reestablish herself financially by the retention of a second dowry (from the second marriage), or by a divorce or estate settlement, the first husband would be financially rewarded by a remarriage to the woman simply because, in that reestablished marriage he would again regain control over the assets the woman brought into the marriage. We call this sort of unjust profiteering² estoppel, but God calls it stealing, and, of course, God prohibits stealing. The practice of prohibiting this flagrant case of unjust financial gain, according to Professor Westbrook, is the exact reason for this curious and extremely specific regulation; Deuteronomy 24:1-4.

Professor Westbrook's article consists of 18 pages. Within those 18 pages, you will find 66 footnotes of references in support of his conclusions, not to mention a brief but informative Biblical and cultural background study. I applaud Professor Westbrook's work.

ADDITIONAL BIBLICAL SUPPORT FOR RECONCILIATION

One of the more frequent requests that I have been asked to do over the past couple of years is to present Biblical illustrations that would support the conclusion(s) that have been stated in this Perspective Paper. The issue of marital reconciliation between legitimate partners is a most popular issue, especially if there has been (or currently is) an intervening "marriage" by one or both partners. Even with the profound disregard for the sanctity of the marriage tie in our current social climate, the idea of breaking up a "second marriage" so-as-to reestablish the first marriage union is often deemed offensive and disrespectful.

² Asserting one set of facts where-by you benefit (my wife is "unclean" so I dismiss her but will retain her material assets), only to come along later and assert a contradictory set of facts (my wife was never "unclean" so I will remarry her) and benefit a second time by maintaining the first assertion (whether actually true or false) was really false. Because you benefited from the first assertion, you are bound by the first assertion, the truth notwithstanding.

Scripture gives at least two such illustrations that were not mentioned in the initial Perspective Paper. The first deals with Abraham who, on two separate occasions gave up Sarah to become the wife of other men. Abraham relinquished Sarah to Pharaoh, who takes Sarah as his wife (Genesis 12:14-19), and Abraham again gave up Sarah to Abimelech as recorded in Genesis chapter 20³. In both instances, when the two “new husbands” learned of the defect in their respective relationship with Abraham’s wife Sarah, they immediately ended their relationship with Sarah. Afterwards, Abraham and Sarah resumed their normal and legitimate marriage union and the sexual relationship of that union, all without consequence to Abraham and Sarah.

The second illustration not referred to in the initial Perspective Paper involves David and his wife Michal. When David was afraid for his life, he “took off” and left his wife Michal. Scripture implies it as perfectly natural, in David’s absence, that Michal’s father, Saul, would then give Michal to a second husband, Paltiel. What is especially interesting in this second illustration is that when David returned home, David sent messengers to Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, demanding, “Give me my wife Michal, ...” (2Samuel 3:14). That wish was granted as the proper thing to do and, without consequence, Michal was restored to David as his legitimate wife (see 1Samuel 18:20-30, 25:44, **2Samuel 3:12-16**, 6:16, 6:20-23).

A third example, only briefly referenced in the initial Perspective Paper, can be found in Jeremiah 3:1-14. As a matter of fact, Jeremiah 3:1 is virtually identical to the scenario of Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Perhaps the illustration in Jeremiah would be seen as even more pronounced in that Israel is portrayed as a prostitute, not having just one lover but having many lovers, yet the Lord declares his mercy and accepts his “wife” back, just as before her adulterous lifestyle began. In addition to Jeremiah 3:1-14, see Jeremiah 31:31-32.

And finally, there is the example of Hosea as recorded in Hosea 1, 2, and 3. God actually instructed Hosea to marry a woman who was to be unfaithful to her husband, Hosea. Hosea’s wife, Gomer, bore many children that were not sired by Hosea. Gomer was a prostitute, and both God and Hosea knew it ahead of time. After Gomer was pretty well “spent” on her life of unfaithfulness and immorality, she was not considered worth much physically and ended up being placed on the auction block to be sold as a slave—prostitute. God told Hosea to go to the public auction, in the middle of town, and purchase his wife back from the slave block. Hosea did as God instructed, and Scripture tells us that afterwards Hosea and Gomer lived many days together.

We see by these illustrations that the resumption of the legitimate marriage is common. For those folk who believe that Deuteronomy 24:1-4 legislates a prohibition of reconciliation, **all** of the examples of Scripture teach otherwise⁴. Abraham, David, Hosea, and the Lord Himself all reconciled with their respective wife after the wife was involved in an intervening relationship. Reconciliation is what God permits and even requires of husband and wife, in both the Old and New Testaments alike.

³ God warned Abimelech in a dream not to take Sarah as his wife, and she was restored to Abraham before the union with Abimelech was “fully established”. However, in Abraham’s heart it was a de facto divorce with Sarah, thus providing a parallel analogy to the Deuteronomic text we are looking at.

⁴ (See the expanded text at the end of Appendix three [3], on page 50.)

I would concede that in the illustrations cited above there is no “formal” divorce certificate published by Abraham, David or Hosea. But a careful examination of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 proves that the publication of a divorce certificate does absolutely nothing to terminate the legitimate relationship. The argument goes as follows: In Deuteronomy 24:1 we are told that a “certificate of divorce” was issued. For many people, it is then presumed that this certificate has completely annihilated the husband/wife bond, which in turn, freed the woman to marry “anybody on earth”. As noted in Deuteronomy, the woman does, in fact, remarry. That second “marriage” also ends by divorce or the death of her second husband. For those who propose that Deuteronomy 24 is legislative in nature (permitting divorce and remarriage) and that divorce has again annihilated the husband/wife bond, (as death truly does) it should again be seen that the woman was once again free to marry “anybody on earth”. We find by reading the Deuteronomy 24 passages that that presumption is proven to be false. Deuteronomy 24 tells us that the woman is prohibited from remarriage to her first husband. It is that specific limit that proves that something unique exists between the wife and legitimate husband, something no other man on the face of earth has in relationship with this woman. Neither her divorce, subsequent remarriage, presumed sexual relationships in her second “marriage”, nor anything else (except death) can destroy. This text acknowledges some sort of indissoluble tie in the relationship between the legitimate partners. I submit that the indissoluble tie just happens to be the “one flesh union” established by God as God considers them husband and wife **until one dies**. If the one flesh union survives between the first husband and the woman, even when she was married elsewhere, it seems only logical that the second “marriage” has got to be illegitimate because it can’t also be a one-flesh union.

(Footnote from page 49)

4. Regarding Abraham, Sarah, Pharaoh, and Abimelech, both the Pharaoh and Abimelech immediately acceded in their respective relationship to Sarah by promptly granting her reconciliation to Abraham. However, 2Samuel 3:12-16 indicates Paltiel was much less willing to acquiesce to David’s demand that Michal be restored to him. As we know from our Biblical text, Paltiel was ultimately unable to resist David’s demand and Michal was restored to David, her legitimate husband. What are we to make of this particular situation?

It is certainly understandable that reconciliation was permissible when there were no clear objections among those involved; i.e., Abraham, Sarah, Pharaoh and Abimelech. However, in the case of David, Michal and Paltiel, the reconciliation between the legitimate partners did not proceed without first overcoming the obvious objections of Paltiel, Michal’s second, but current “husband”.

One additional consideration we are also able to benefit from is a thorough understanding of the civil practices of Mesopotamian law. The primary civil laws, Codex Eshnunna, Codex Hammurabi, and the Middle Assyrian Laws each contain provisions in support of reconciliation between legitimate partners when the legitimate husband lost his wife to another “husband” through no action of his own, and this reconciliation was in spite of the fact that children were often born of the illegitimate marriage. When the legitimate husband sought reconciliation with his wife, both long-standing civil law as well as Biblical precepts were employed to aid in that demand.

This expanded knowledge being noted, we have again been reminded that both civil law and most importantly the Biblical narrative all hasten to support the original husband who seeks reconciliation with his wife. Both socially and Biblically, the second husband must always bear the consequences of the first husband’s demand to have his wife back. The original legitimate union remains indissoluble and always prevails, even taking precedence over an existing second, but illegitimate “marriage”.

The point in all of this is that the notion of marital reconciliation and resumed sexual relationships after an intervening “marriage” was not forbidden or even considered repulsive/offensive, as many would want us to believe. Not only was reconciliation once supported by civil law, they were then, as we are now, bound by the even more important Biblical mandate of God. The Biblical mandate supporting marital reconciliation is well formulated in the Old Testament by consistent practice(s). In addition, reconciliation is specifically endorsed in the New Testament--most notably, 1Corinthians 7:10-11.

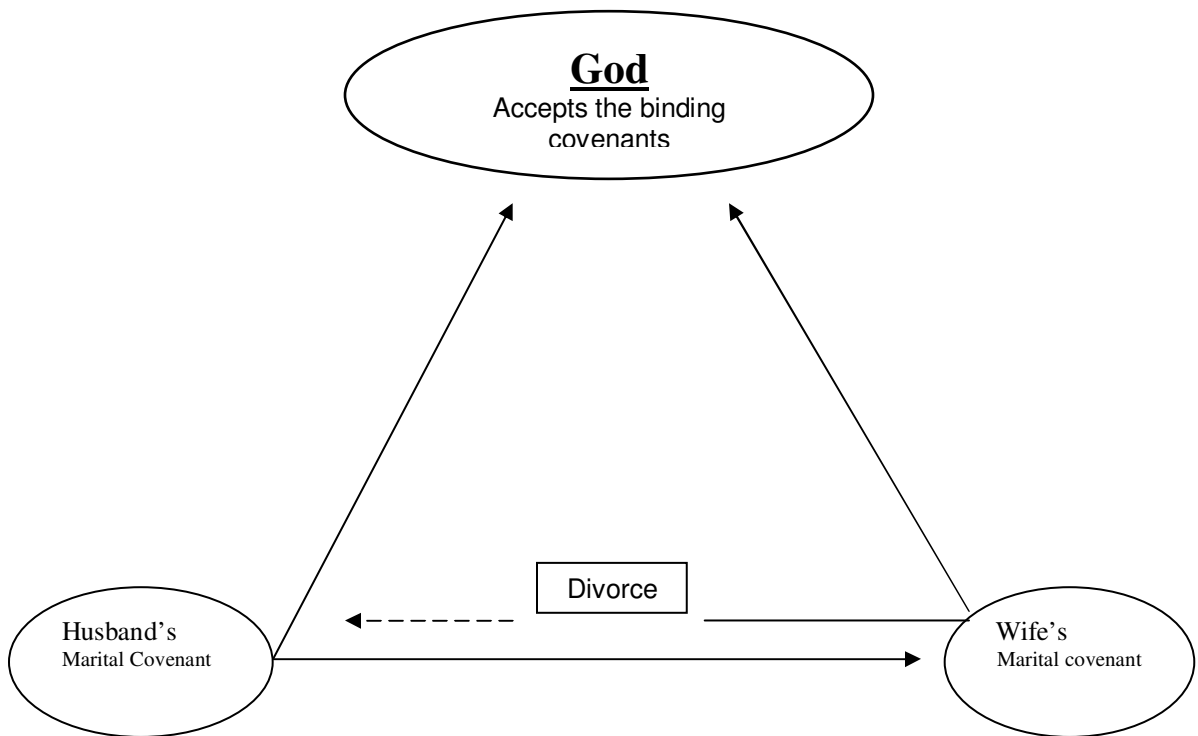
APPENDIX FOUR

There is one additional observation I would like to make. As people have commented on this Perspective Paper and in verbal dialog with many people, I have come to understand there is one additional belief that so many folk embrace that simply cannot be supported by Scripture. The matter deals with the “structure” of the legitimate marriage covenant itself. I have come to understand that many people see the marriage covenant as one “single” covenant.

We have all been to weddings and hear the vows recited. The husband will utter his pledge to his wife, and conversely, the wife will utter her pledge to her husband. That tells us that *two* covenants are made. Furthermore, the two covenants are not conditioned upon the fulfillment of the covenant by the reciprocal spouse, (apart from the fact that they have mutually agreed to marry in the first place). The husband will pledge his unconditional commitment, love, faithfulness and support to his wife followed by the wife making a similar vow to her husband. This is not one single vow, but two separate vows made unconditionally by each spouse to one another. In addition, the belief that the vows are single in nature is also wrong. Each one of the two vows is plural in nature. Yes, they make their vows to one another, but beyond that, they each individually make their vows to God who is witness to the vows (Malachi 2:14) and guarantor of each covenant. From a factual standpoint, it makes no difference if one, both or neither of the partners are Christian. It makes no difference if the individual who officiates over the union acknowledges that: “*We are gathered here today before God and these witnesses to unite this man and this woman in Holy Matrimony...*” It is of no consequence whatsoever if the wedding is preformed inside or outside of a Church building, Court House, back yard, city park, ship at sea, airplane, or during a parachute drop from the airplane. God is everywhere, sees everything, hears everything and knows all. **When two people decide to marry they have chosen to participate in an institution established and designed by God. As such, God automatically participates in that marriage when it is established, and does so on HIS own terms (it’s His institution), whether the partners intended for God to participate in their marriage or not. Finally, and because God is the only true author of the marriage union, the couple that has chosen marriage are then bound by God’s principles for that union. Of course God’s principles for marriage are perfect so it goes without saying that there are absolutely NO exceptions to what God has taught us in His Holy Bible regarding marriage.**

So, if it turns out that one of the partners in a legitimate marriage (or both for that matter) thinks it best to end the husband/wife relationship, their attempts will fail because neither the husband or wife have authority to dissolve the bonds that have been legitimately established. God’s participation has made them one flesh (*Genesis 2:24*) until death (see *Romans 7:2*). They can separate from their spouse or even divorce the other individual, (and may need to separate or divorce for their safety and well-being), but the separation or divorce will not obliterate the covenants, only death can end the covenant(s). An individual can become so obstinate or hard-hearted that they selfishly choose not to honor the legitimate vow they have made and they remarry, but that does not make the legitimate vow “go away”. Because, as we have seen, even remarriage by one or both legitimate partners does not dissolve, vacate, void, obliterate, annihilate or just plain make the vow “go away”. Period. The man and woman become husband and wife and are, until one dies, one flesh because that is how God created marriage to be.

But, **and this is the point of this observation**, the actions of one partner have no bearing upon the covenant made by the other partner. They are two separate covenants and the covenants are **not** conditioned upon the actions of their legitimate spouse or that spouse's covenant. If there was but one covenant and it was singular, like a steel chain, then pulling on each end of the covenant (chain) will eventually cause the covenant (chain) to fail. The union will be broken—maybe to the left, maybe to the right, maybe in the middle—no matter, it will be broken. However, the marriage covenant is not a single covenant wherein if one section fails, the whole thing is broken. The marriage is established by the pronouncement of **two** covenants and each of the **two** covenants is **plural**. The husband will stand accountable before God for his actions without regards to the actions of his wife and according to his own covenant, and of course, the wife will stand accountable before God for her actions regardless of her husband's actions and in conformity with her covenant. God will see to it because each covenant was also made before Him.



In this illustration, the wife secures a divorce. The idea that the husband is no longer bound to his obligation(s) is false. His covenant is not broken by the actions of his wife. The husband will be held accountable for maintaining his vow to his wife because it is not affected by any actions his wife may make. And even if they mutually part company or if they both remarry another, the covenant they made **and God witnessed**, simply cannot be dissolved. They will each give an accounting for their own actions towards the other because God still considers them husband and wife until one dies, (See Romans 7:1-3). They have each made their vow, intended or not, as much before God as to each other.

I will end these appendixes with a repeat of the text that ended the initial Perspective Paper. Agape love is the answer to broken relationships. If you are not living obediently before God, the blood of Jesus Christ can restore all brokenness. Humble yourself before a forgiving Heavenly Father, and obey His precepts.

- That is where agape love fits in. The word is defined as a feast of charity. When we think of a feast, we think of things very lavish, to perform to the maximum, to go on in an unending fashion. When we think of charity, we think of giving and giving and giving. That is exactly what “agape” love is all about. The exciting thing about agape love is that we control it. You and I control our agape love. It is not fickle or wavering nor subject to external factors. Pure agape love is not influenced even by our own emotions. You see, agape love, and the desire to practice it, comes from within us. Agape love is an intentional, deliberate, conscientious choice of our will. We resolve in our mind and purpose in our heart to do what God says is best. This love is based upon our actions, not our emotions. It makes no difference what our feelings are, it makes no difference how long something will take, or what the costs are. Agape love is giving to another without receiving or even expecting to receive a response. It is conditioned based upon obedience to God; it is pure, edifying, patient, kind, and consistent. It forgives, it hopes, it always seeks the truth, and because it is unending, it ultimately prevails. Agape love has no self-centeredness, no self-righteousness, no greed, no rudeness, and is not unbecoming in anyway. It wants and provides what God says is best for another, NO MATTER WHAT.

Our model for agape love is, of course, Jesus Christ. His sacrificial giving, his forgiveness, his patience, all coupled with his holiness and the insistence we live holy lives are the pattern we are to emulate as we express agape love to our partners and others. To determine in your mind and resolve in your heart that you will love with an agape love is within your grasp at this moment. You, and you only, can make that choice and, as you leave the consequences of your choice and the positive actions that will follow in God’s hands, presuming you are His child, He will fill you with a peace, a joy, a promise, a hope, a light, a contentment, a strength, a warmth, a gentleness, and a quietness that goes beyond any measure of your imagination. Jesus Christ loves you with an agape love and He asks you to reflect that love to all others.

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