Apoluo*

Deuteronomy 24:1-4 (1) When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.
(2) And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.
(3) And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife;
(4) Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.
Consider this ordinance of the law about marriage, about which the Pharisees came to Jesus tempting Him with a very artful and in-snaring question. Let's turn to;
Matthew 19:3-9 (3) The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to **put away** his wife for every cause?
(4) And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,
(5) And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?
(6) Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.
(7) They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to **put her** away?
(8) He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.
(9) And I say unto you, Whosoever shall **put away** his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is **put away** doth commit adultery.
The assumption has been that divorce is meant here, however, "put away", translated from the Greek word "apoluo," is the word used.

Apoluo does not mean divorce, but a separation. Obviously some men were forgoing the legal written requirement thereby causing themselves and others to commit adultery in a remarriage. Separation is not to be tolerated if the responsibility of the man is not met. If the marriage is not to be held together, a bill of divorcement must be given to be legal and binding. Therefore, separation forgoing divorce, and remarrying is adultery. A legal divorce and separation allows remarrying which is not adultery and both Deuteronomy 24 and I Corinthians 7 agree to this fact. Fornication is the exception apart from a legal and binding divorce to end a marriage, but that exception meant death for the guilty party. (Strong's Concordance gives 19th century meanings to Greek and Hebrew words found in the KJV. It describes "pornea," as having a somewhat broader usage in Biblical times, as compared to today. When used literally, it includes three activities: prostitution, adultery and incest. Figuratively it means idolatry, or adult entertainment between unmarried persons). Fornication is an exception to end a marriage without divorce, but would have required stoning by the old Testament ordinance; If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so shalt thou put away evil from Israel (Deuteronomy 22:22), *thereby ending the marriage by death. Therefore, if a woman was "put away" without a written bill of divorcement, then she was abandoned but still married, and if she were to marry another man it would be adultery for both the man and the woman. Deut 22:22 shows that divorce was not permitted on the grounds of adultery. No, adultery was punishable by death, and Jesus was simply stating a fact concerning a marriage ordinance under the law, let's turn to;* **Mark 10:1-12** (1) And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.
(2) And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.
(3) And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?
(4) And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

(5) And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.
(6) But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.
(7) For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;
(8) And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.
(9) What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.
(10) And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.
(11) And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.
(12) And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.
Did you notice what they asked, is it lawful to "put away" a wife, which was not allowed without divorce papers. God did not like "putting away" (Hebrew shalach), the very thing the Pharisees asked Jesus about, let's turn to;
Malachi 2:14-16 (14) Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.
(15) And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.
(16) For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth **putting away**: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.
The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance coded with Strong's Concordance numbers, #7971 "Shalach", translated as: putting away in Malachi 2:16 is the same as the Greek equivalent of the word "Apoluo" which means 'put away, separate, send away or release,' not divorce. Shalach, used 878 times in the old testament, 13 times related to a separation in marriage or intimate relationship, not

divorce, 865 times used in other ways. The Jews diversion of the required "bill of divorcement" and sending her away without it, was an unjust age old problem that both Malachi, and later, Jesus dealt with (Divorce,the law, and Jesus). The pharisees, caught in the act of tempting Jesus then state the law, write a "bill of divorcement" and to "put her away." *That is the legal requirement for divorce and to "put her away." When asked again by His disciples, Jesus answered;* Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery. *The word translated "put away", Mark 10:11-12, is apoluo. Apostasion means divorce. The conclusion is, a man cannot legally "put away" his wife without a bill of divorcement. This makes one to consider;*

John 8:1-11 (1)Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.
(2) And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.
(3) And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,
(4) They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.
(5) Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?
(6) This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, [as though he heard them not].
(7) So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.
(8) And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.
(9) And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.
(10) When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?
(11) She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

We do not know the circumstance of her committing adultery, but

it would have to be, either she was playing the prostitute or incest or she had been "put away" without a writing of divorcement and caught in the act of consummating a marriage with another man. How else could she have been caught in the very act so easily? Women were treated badly at that time in history, they were "put away" without a writing of divorcement, "sent out" without any means of support, "dismissed" in favor of another. The judgment of Jesus may simply have been to correct a wrongful act committed toward her. She may have been "put away" without a bill of divorcement; where was the man, it takes two to commit adultery, however he may not have known she was 'put away' without a bill of divorcement? So when Jesus said, whosoever shall "put away" his wife, except it be for fornication, He was simply acknowledging the law, that first a writing of divorcement had to given to the wife before he could "send" her out of his house legally, and with her legal means of support.

*The Greek word Apoluo is properly translated "put away, send away, dismissed, set at liberty ect." Apoluo Does **NOT** Mean Divorce, it means a separation. Apostation is the Greek word for divorce, it means to sever, to cut off, and is recorded 3 times in the new testament (Matt 5.31, Matt 19;7 and Mark 10:4). The english word divorce is also recorded in Matt 5:32 in the KJV, but is translated from the Greek word apoluo, which means put away. The American Standard Version, Matt 5:32, reads "put away" which is more accurately translated. It should be noted Strong's is coded to the KJV, not the ASV. When it comes to matters of marriage and divorce how can we just sit by idly while many preachers continue to teach the Greek word "apoluo" means divorce and claim that Jesus taught the divorced could never remarry. 'Put away', **is the latter part** of the divorce process which is proper procedure after the bill of divorcement is given to her, according to Deuteronomy 24:1.*

(1) Write a bill of divorcement;
(2) Give it to his wife; and
(3) Send her out of his house.

If a man "sent his wife out of his house without a written bill of divorcement" then they were still legally married. Apparently it had became a common practice in Israel, tho unlawful, to put away

a wife without a written divorce put in her hand. Malachi 2:16 affirms this unlawful practice and that God hated "putting away", (i.e. sending away a wife without a bill of divorcement). Paul addressed this problem in Romans 7:2, which we will address later. With these facts in mind, Matt. 5:32 (American Standard Version); and 19:9 are not hard to understand nor to accept. Moses also wrote the reason WHY a man was to follow these procedures: It was because the woman WOULD BE FREE TO MARRY ANOTHER MAN: Notice carefully; Deuteronomy 24:2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. *The traditionalists would have us believe that Jesus CHANGED the Law of Moses, when He did not. It is also quite telling that the traditionalists tell us that a man and woman who are divorced and remarried to a different spouse must divorce the latter and remarry each other! This, however, flies defiantly in the face of the word of God. God said He found such a practice is an abomination, (Deut 24:3-4).*

Traditionalists claim that one who divorces his spouse and marries someone else is guilty of the sin of continual adultery…." Is this statement in agreement with what Deuteronomy reveals? Not at all! Would Jesus have been rightly referred to as keeping the ordinances of the Law perfectly IF He had taught CONTRARY to the ordinance? What Matt 19:9 was addressing was "putting away" (sending her away without a written divorce put in her hand), not divorce! Had divorce been the subject of Jesus' speech, His words would have been contrary to Deut. 24:2. However, their question was about a command of Moses, not the gospel. Let's continue in;

Romans 7:1-3 (1) Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

(2) For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

(3) So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

Notice; the woman which "hath an husband" is bound by the law.

Deut 24:1-4 may sever the marriage contract, if so, she no longer "hath an husband" if this law is scriptural. She is "cut off, severed," from him when he places the bill of divorcement in her hand and sends her out of his house, then she is no longer married to him, but bound by his law of divorcement from her. When he lawfully sends her out of his house, that is, "put her away" with a writing of divorcement, then she is free to marry another man and not be called an adulteress. This is the ordinance. Contrary wise, if a man sends his wife out of his house without a bill of divorcement, then she is still bound as a wife to her husband and cannot remarry. Paul was explaining the law! If a man fails to give his wife a bill of divorcement, then neither can remarry. But a bill of divorcement severs the marriage, like an operation that severs an arm or leg, the severed is no longer a part of the body. Therefore in a legal divorce both are "severed" from each other, the marriage contract is null and both are free to remarry if Deut 24:2 is scriptural and true.

Having said this, neither Jesus or Paul or anyone else recommend divorce, cutting off causes many heartaches and tribulations. If at all possible work it out. I recommend Paul's advise, are you married?, do not seek divorce. Are you legally divorced?, seek not a wife, but and if you marry thou hast not sinned, but shall have trouble in the flesh (1 Cor 7:28). This is new testament law! Christ, who once wept over Jerusalem must look down from heaven and mourn over us. He called Simon the Zealot, a radical anti-Roman, and Matthew, a hated lackey of Rome, a pair as incompatible as any you could find in America today; but He put them to work, together, in His kingdom. Then He went to Samaria, revealed himself to a woman with a background of multiple marriages, and sent her out to share the revelation of God in Christ as if she were as good as anyone else. He must mourn when He sees us wasting our time trying to figure out if we can disbar a divorced Christian man from serving in His church. If a divorced man is barred from serving in the church, does God meet your expectation to serve? God divorced Israel and put her away because of her adulterous ways (Jer 3:8). Some may say, what about Herodias who divorced her husband Philip and married Herod?, John the baptist condemned that marriage. First of all,

*Deut. 24:1-4 gives the husband authority to give his wife a bill of divorcement and send her away, Philip had not given Herodias a bill of divorcement and put her away. He was still her husband (see Matt 14:3), therefore her marriage to Herod was adulterous. Now since some seem to be so concerned to only use "proper" people who have never divorced and remarried, to set the example, I wonder how you feel about using ex-murderers, ex-homosexuals, ex-liars, and ex-thieves? If you ask me I would just as soon be taught and trust a person who was divorced and remarried. I also wonder why they are not concerned about using "proper" material. Why is it that you don't rip up the biggest part of the New Testament written by Paul who was the chiefest of sinners (1Tim 1:15). We certainly would not want to follow anything he would have to say, would we? However, he was the Apostle to the gentiles, founder of many congregations and a great leader? How about the Psalms written in large part by King David, an adulterer and murderer, but a "man after God's own heart?" I could go on and on but I am sure you get the point. It is with wonder that I find once again that the Churches of Christ preach forgiveness, righteousness and restoration in Christ but not all members practice it. I find it inconceivable that Jesus Christ would hang on the cross with nails in His hands and feet, to cleanse the world of sin, EXCEPT ONE. If that were true how could He be saviour of the whole world? Now let's examine other ways the word apoluo is translated in the Bible. Such as **Release**, turn to;*

Luke 23:13-18 (13) And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,
(14) Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:
(15) No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.
(16) I will therefore chastise him, and **release** (apoluo) him.
(17) (For of necessity he must **release** (apoluo) one unto them at the feast.)
(18) And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and **release** *(apoluo)* unto us Barabbas:

Had apoluo been translated divorce, not release, would this reading make any sence? Not at all! According to Englishman's Concordance; the Greek word apoluo is the same as the Hebrew word shalach, which means "to send", "separate", "send away", or "leave", not divorce. Apoluo is used 94 times in the new testament, 18 times to a separation of married people, 76 times used in other ways. Next let's review, ***send*****;**

Luke 9:12-13 (12) And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, **Send** (apoluo) the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place. (13) But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

The Greek word apoluo translated "send" in Luke 9:12 is the same meaning as the Hebrew word shalach in Deut. 24:1, neither is translated divorce. Both are translated "send away," but for different reasons. Luke 9:12, send away to get food, Deut 24:1, send away because divorce papers were served.

To listen to much modern teaching, one could easily come away with the sense that there IS only one legitimate position, the traditional view, no remarriage after divorce. That view was codified by the Catholic Council of Trent in 1563, propelled by carefully selected scriptures and distorted without regard to the established whole. Primarily, though, my objective is to help us not demonize Christians who hold differing interpretations, knowing that they are not alone in their views. That we can all unite in worship to God teaching the simple gospel of salvation established by Jesus while He was on earth. For we quote the words of Jesus and the teaching of His Apostles that the water of baptism is to wash away sin, but through Faith in the blood of Christ. So faith is the effect of belief, and repentance, confession and baptism is the effect of faith. The effects of the blood of Christ are experienced by baptized believers only, this is the gospel. Other requests can be achieved by prayer. In either case come while we persuade with song.

This message approved by
Jack Warford
a minister for Christ

***Something to think about*;**
I Corinthians 7:15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.
The false doctrine of "no exception", (ie, no remarriage after divorce) is a doctrine of bondage. It puts the innocent person under unnecessary temptations, gives place for the devil to work, and brings people under bondage all their lives thinking they are doing God's service. The law of Moses, Deut 24:1-4, grants divorce for reasons other than adultery, not for adultery because the penality under the law for adultery is death, not remarriage (Deuteronomy 22:22). Therefore, provided the law is upheld, there were no adulterous marriages because adulters were to be stoned to death, thereby preventing adulterious remarriage. Divorce and remarriage was allowed by the law of Moses.
What you are questioning is the ability of the blood of Jesus to wash away sin. Therefore you have put the blood of Jesus on trial. So, does it wash away sin or not? If the blood of Jesus does not cleanse the other person completely, then it cannot cleanse us completely. If that is the case, then we are all in a lot of trouble.

In 1950 there was a move to make divorce and remarriage a test of fellowship. M.J. Buffington and others agreed to have no fellowship with any preacher who preached at a congregation where divorced and remarried were allowed to worship.
In time, isolated congregations emerged that refused to call on any preacher who accepted the Matt.19:9 exception clause for divorce and remarriage.
(Reverence--The Sun will Shine Again—Ronny F Wade)

Divorce, The Law, and Jesus

Posted on May 23, 2013 by pattimorton under Repent America and Return to your First Love!

Walter L. Callison

Divorce and remarriage are topics of much debate.

The purpose of the following article is to invite the reader to reassess the church's attitude toward remarriage. We welcome your comments and opinions on the content of this article.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17). Grace. Did grace come by Jesus Christ to those suffering marital tragedy, even as much grace as was provided by Old Testament law? Surely, we affirm, grace and truth did come by Jesus Christ. Then how does grace abound to those who have suffered the tragedy of a marriage failure and divorce?

Christ did more than teach with words. He also taught with His life. Christ brought new ideas to his followers, rejecting their ancient "eye for an eye" and "tooth for a tooth" doctrines, encouraging love for those not their own, lifting up women from the status of "things" to recognition as people. Yet he also taught respect for the old Jewish law.

When we study what he said about divorce, we must also study the life he lived among those of broken marriages, as well as what he taught about Jewish law, especially their divorce law.

But what about His words? If a divorced person is remarried, what about the words, "Whosoever putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery" (Luke 16:18? We could emulate the compassionate and forgiving nature of Christ, as he sent the woman at the well into Samaria to be his witness. But do His words deny His actions? Are people who are divorced and married to another living in adultery? Are they forbidden service to Christ?

We also must hear the words of the Apostle Paul, "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife" (I Tim. 3:2). Does he speak of a person who has been divorced and remarried? Luke records only one comment, and a very concise one, on this subject:

"And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery" (Luke 16:17-18).

Concise. But Jesus did make it clear that the Old Testament had something significant to say.

There is a law! When asked by the Pharisees, in the Gospel of Mark, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" (Mark 10:2), Jesus answered, "What did Moses command you?" (Mark 10:3) "Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement" (Mark 10:4). There is a law.

The law is found in Deuteronomy 24:1-4, and at the time Christ lived, Favius Josephus, who also lived then, paraphrased it and referred to it as the "law of

the Jews":
"He that desires to be divorced from his wife for any cause whatsoever, (and many such causes happen among men), let him in writing give assurance that he will never use her as his wife any more; for by this means she may be at liberty to marry another husband, although before this bill of divorce be given, she is not to be permitted so to do…" (Antiquities of the Jews (The Life and Work of Flavius Josephus), Book IV. Ch. VIII, Sec. 23, p. 134; (tr. Wm. Whiston; Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, NY).
Here is the law from Deuteronomy:
"When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house, and when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife." (Deut.24: 1-2).
Are people who are divorced and married to another living in adultery?
The law was still around in the time of Christ. We must, therefore, deal with the "tittles" of the law.
The Bible only records one divorce. God said he did it. In Jeremiah 3, God reminded Judah that she was heading for trouble. Israel had already been taken captive. God told Jeremiah to warn Judah that she had witnessed her sister Israel's infidelity and had seen God give her a bill of divorce and send her away; and yet she did not fear (Jer.3: 6-8).
There were other things men did with their wives. Many men of old married more than one wife, and without bothering about divorce. Some of these were God's revelation, but also products of their culture.
If he did not divorce her, what did a man of those days do with a wife when he took another? He put her away. There is a word for that in the Old Testament, the Hebrew word shalach. It is different than the Hebrew word for divorce, which is keriythuwth. Heriythuwth (Jer.3: 8 above) literally means excision, a cutting of the marital bonds; legal divorce was written, as commanded in Deuteronomy 24, and permitted subsequent marriage. Shalach is usually translated "to put away." Women were "put away" when their men married others, put away to become mere property, as slaves, or put away in total dismissal; it was a cruel day for women. They were "put away" in favor of another, but not given a divorce and the right to marry again. This word described a cruel tradition, common, but contrary to Jewish law.
Some of the hardships and terror experienced by women who were "put away" can be seen as this Hebrew word shalach is described in the Langenscheid Pocket Hebrew Dictionary (McGraw Hill, 1969) – "to let loose, roaming at large, to be scared, abandoned, forsaken."
"The Christian faith took root and flourished in an atmosphere almost entirely pagan, where cruelty and sexual immorality were taken for granted, where slavery and the inferiority of women were almost universal, while superstition and rival religions, with all kinds of bogus claims, existed on every hand."

God hated this “putting away.” Malachi the prophet broken-heartedly pleaded with God’s people to stop the practice. Hear Malachi plead with them. The word translated “putting away” in Malachi 2:16 is not the Hebrew word for divorce but it is shalach, put away. Hear Malachi respond to leaders who asked how they had dealt treacherously, and committed abomination in Israel, and profaned the holiness of the Lord.

“Yet ye say, wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of the covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away?” (italics mine) (Mal. 2: 14-16).

And Jesus came. And His words do not deny His actions! He spoke of this when He said, “Whosoever putteth away His wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery” (Luke 16: 18). Whosoever does this, commits adultery! This practice was cruel and was adulterous, but it was not divorce.

The New Testament word, translated “put away” in the King James Version, is a form of the Greek word apoluo. It is the word in Greek, the language of the New Testament, which parallels the Hebrew word shalach (put away).

There is an Old Testament Hebrew word for divorce, keriythuwth, and a New Testament Greek word, apostasion. The Arnait-Gingrich Lexicon of the New Testament cites usage of the word apostasion as the technical term for a bill or writing of divorce as far back as 258 B.C.

Apoluo, the Greek word for putting away, was not technically divorce, though often used synonomously. In that age of total male domination, men often took additional wives, and did not provide written release when they forsook wives and married others. The Jewish law demanding written divorce (Deut. 24: 1-2) was largely ignored. If a man married another woman, so what? If a man “put away”(apoluo) his wife without bothering with a written divorce who was going to object? The woman?

Jesus had some objections. Jesus even loved mistreated women! He told them that this earth would go up in smoke before the law requiring a written bill of divorce would fail (Lk. 16:17). And he said, when you put away a wife (without written divorce), and marry another (while still married), you are guilty of adultery (Lk.16:18). Moreover, she who is put away is in real trouble. She has no divorce paper. She is abandoned, but still married. She would commit adultery if she married again (Lk.16:18). The distinction between “put away” and “divorce,” between the Greek apoluo andapostasion is critical. Apoluo indicated that women were enslaved, put away, with no rights, no recourse; deprived of the basic right to monogamous marriage. Apostasion

ended marriage and permitted a legal subsequent marriage. The paper makes a difference. "Let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife" (Deut. 24:2). That was the law.

How did we ever begin to read "whosoever divorces his wife" into those places where Jesus literally said "whosoever puts away, or abandons, his wife"?

There are passages, other than Luke 16:17-18 (above) where Jesus spoke on this matter. They include Matt. 19:9, Mark 10:10-12 (where Mark records that Jesus laid down the same law for women as for men), and Matt. 5:32. Jesus used a form of the word apoluo eleven times in these passages. In every passage he forbade apoluo, putting away. He never forbade giving apostasion, written divorce, required by Jewish law.

Should the Greek word apoluo be translated divorce? Kenneth S. Wuest in the New Testament, an Expanded Translation always translated it "dismissed" or "put away," never "divorced." The old, and very literal American Standard Version always translated it "put away." The King James Version translated it "put away" ten out of the eleven times Jesus used it. That eleventh instance seems to be the source of the problem. In 1611, in ONE place the King James translators wrote "divorced" instead of "put away." In Matt. 5:32, they wrote, "and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced (italics mine) committeth adultery." The word is not the Greek word apostasion (divorce), but is a form of that same Greek word apoluo which did not include a writing of divorce for the woman. She, technically, would still be married.

Matt. 19:3-10 records the Pharisees taunting Jesus about this matter, asking him, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" He responded that marriage is a permanent relationship, and said, "Whatsoever God has joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

They then asked, "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement (apostasion), and to put her away?" (Matt. 19:7) Jesus answered, "because of the hardness of your hearts!" (Matt.19:8). The first basic human right God gave us was the right to be married. No other companionship was adequate. Hard-hearted men unilaterally put away women and married others, considering themselves divorced, but leaving the women without recourse and deprived of that first basic human right. Human rights were for men only in those days. Jesus changed that! He demanded obedience to the law; he demanded equal marriage rights for women. Grace does abound in Jesus Christ!

Jesus told those men that to put away a wife and to marry another was adultery! Adultery! The law (Deut. 22:22) called for the death penalty for adultery, for both the woman and the man! That was bitter medicine for men who did as they pleased with women. Matt. 19:10 records their shock: "If the case of a man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry." They did not live in a culture wherein a man was expected to live with only one woman for

life, much less, give her equal rights if marriage failed.
How did we ever begin to read, “whosoever divorces his wife” into those places where Jesus literally said, “whosoever puts away, or abandons, his wife”?
It may be that the one place where apoluo was mis-translated “divorced” in 1611 started the whole process. The American Standard Version corrected the error in 1901. It never became popular enough to make much difference. Wuest was careful to avoid such misstates, as noted earlier. But almost everything that has ever come off a printing press has been influenced by the King James Version of the Bible, even Greek-English lexicons, and most modern translators seem to be influenced by that one occurrence in it and translate apoluo “divorce,” even though the meaning of the word does not include a writing of divorce (apostasion). Now, tradition has taught us to record “divorced” in our minds though our eyes actually read “put away” in the King James Version.
Is written divorce, as commanded in Deuteronomy, the solution to the cruel practice of “putting away”? The twenty-fourth chapter of Deuteronomy is evidence that, even as God heard the groaning of his people in Egypt and provided deliverance from slavery, he also heard the groans of enslaved women and provided deliverance from abuse by means of that tragic necessity, divorce; tragic because it ends that which should never end, marriage; necessary to protect the victims of those who do not obey the rules of our Creator, all-mighty God. Necessary, originally, because men “put away” women, trapping them in illegal and adulterous multiple marriages.
Divorce is a privilege, provided as a corrective for an intolerable situation. It is a privilege, which can be, and often is, abused. Divorce is not a pretty picture in most cases. Loneliness, rejection, a deep sense of failure, loss of self-esteem, critical relatives, child care problems, property settlements – these concerns and more confront the divorced.

Divorce is Tragedy

Divorce can be more traumatic than the death of a mate. Grief following the death of a spouse is hard to bear, as is the grief of divorce. But a dead spouse does not keep coming back. The divorced one often does, thus prolonging the often-renewing grief. Divorce is still only what it was in Jesus’ day, a partial solution to a serious and cruel situation and maybe the only reasonable solution. It may be necessary, but it is always a tragedy!

It is easy to preach against divorce, but difficult for a church to be constructive in providing preparation for marriage.

We might be able to prevent some divorces by tightening our divorce laws or by religious prohibitions against divorce, but such actions would not prevent broken marriages. When couples stay together only because of fear of the notoriety required by divorce laws, or because of church prohibitions, or “for the sake of the children,” tragedy can result. Disastrous marital triangles, domestic cruelty, child abuse, murder, and suicide are some of the documented consequences of marriage, which had failed but was not terminated. What is

a fearful choice! A broken home is a tragedy, but I will never forget a young man who put a gun barrel in his mouth and ended his marriage, his alternative to divorce. His church had forbidden divorce.

Our high divorce rate is not the real problem. Marriage failure comes first, and then divorce. The divorce rate is only an indicator of our high bad marriage rate. To correct this, we must more than preach against divorce! It will be more difficult. It is easy to preach against divorce, but difficult for a church to be constructive in providing preparation for marriage and strengthening of marriages. Our challenge lies here!

Can a divorced person be ordained as a deacon or a preacher? The Apostle Paul, and educated man, knew the Greek word for divorce (apostasion) and knew his culture. He also knew Christ would accept anyone, even him, the "chiefest of sinners" (I Tim. 1:15). Unquestionable some early converts had multiple wives, slave wives, and concubines. Each of these relationships, though given the nicer title, polygamy, was adultery. Paul rejected the heads of such households as leaders in the church. The command to give a writing of divorcement in Deuteronomy 24 limited a man to only one wife and thus prohibited polygamy and the adultery inherent in it. Paul seemed to concur fully when he said, "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife" (I Tim. 3:2). He rejected polygamy, not divorce.

Despite serious abuse, the divorce law (Deuteronomy 24) still has validity. Divorce is a radical solution to insurmountable marriage problems. It ends all hope that the marriage might be saved, and declares publicly that the marriage has failed. This moment of truth can be shattering. Sin, related to this failure, must be confessed if there is to be any forgiveness, any peace with God. "If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). This includes forgiveness for marital failure.

As opposed to putting away, written divorce, commanded by the law, provided a degree of human dignity for women subjected to cruel abuse, adulterous polygamy, and the whims of hard-hearted men. Nothing so flimsy as an oral "I divorce you" would do. Divorce declared the legal end of a marriage, thereby precluding any charge of adultery or bigamy should either party ever marry again. Divorce severed all marital ties and all control by the former spouse. Divorce demanded strict monogamy. Divorce prevented unilateral dismissal and preserved the basic right to be married. Divorce does the same today. Abandonment, desertion, putting away, or whatever one calls that hard-hearted forsaking of a wife for another, without divorce was and is forbidden by the Lord Jesus himself (Mt. 19:9, Mt. 5:32, Mk. 10:11-13, Lk. 16:18).

For centuries much of the Christian community has interpreted these teachings of Jesus to say: 1) Divorce is absolutely not permitted, or at best, is permitted only in the case of admitted or proven adultery. 2) A divorced person is not allowed to marry

again. 3) A divorced person who does marry again lives in adultery. 4) A person who is divorced cannot be ordained as a deacon or a minister. Every one of these beliefs could be wrong. The first three are contrary to Mosaic Law and are based on scripture in which Jesus did not even use the Greek word for divorce (apostasion); the fourth is based on scripture in which Paul did not use it. The word Jesus used was apoluo, to put away. This was the problem with which he dealt, not divorce.

A divorced person must have great grace and determination to serve in a church, which holds to the four positions listed above. How can this be, when the church is the body of Christ on earth, to function and to serve as he did, in person?

Christ, who once wept over Jerusalem must look down from heaven and weep over us. He came and called Simon the Zealot, a radical anti-Roman, and Matthew, a hated lackey of Rome, a pair as incompatible as any you could find in America today; but he put them to work, together, in his kingdom. The he went to Samaria, revealed himself to a woman with a shameful background of marital failures, and sent her out to share the revelation of God in Christ as if she were as good as anyone else. He must weep when he sees us wasting our time trying to figure out whom we can disbar from serving him in his church. Jesus openly ministered to all who came to him. Yet many of our divorced friends are afraid of our churches. They know what we say the Bible teaches about divorce. Can we be right and so unlike Christ? Do our traditional interpretations separate us from people whom Christ would have received? If so, we must be wrong. He came to save sinners. The only people he ever rejected were the self-righteously religious. Is our understanding of His words correct if it does not square with His life? Divorced people are real people! For centuries churches have excluded these people from fellowship and usefulness, from joy and equality, even from salvation; people for whom Christ died. Whether or not divorce is sin, this certainly is! May God Grant us the grace to mediate that grace which did come in Jesus Christ to the divorced.

Apoluo Does NOT Mean Divorce

by David R. Ferguson

I recently saw the following posted on the Internet by a gospel preacher: "In last week's feature lesson, we focused upon Matthew 19:1-9, where Jesus was asked by the Pharisees if a man could divorce his wife for just any reason." This man posted this even after he was shown that Jesus did not use either of the Greek words for divorce, apostasion or lusis. What word Jesus used was the word for put away, or separation, which is apoluo. A careful study of the context (applying good hermeneuitics) will reveal that apoluo, as used by Jesus, did not mean the divorce itself, as defined by Moses (Deut. 24:1-3) and as we understand it today.

We would not accept this "lazy" or "loose" translating of the Greek by some in denominations to justify certain unscriptural positions, would we? Of course not! So why do so many allow and accept the same behavior when it comes to matters regarding marriage and divorce?

Just because a person says that sprinkling or pouring means the same thing as baptism (immersion) does not make it true. One who has been sprinkled or poured has only been sprinkled or poured. They have not submitted to biblical baptism (immersion) - they have only gotten wet! Their sins have not been washed away (Acts 22:16) because they have failed to follow the commands of the Lord. Just because the dictionary defines the word church as a building does NOT mean that the church (ekklesia) that Jesus built is a building! The ekklesia is the community of believers that comprises the body of Christ!

When it comes to matters of marriage and divorce how can we just sit by idly while many preachers continue to teach that apoluo means divorce, and claim that Jesus taught that the divorced could never marry anyone other than their spouse "unless for fornication"? Apoluo does not mean divorce! It means to put away, repudiate, or send away from the house. (Denominationally influenced scholars say apoluo means divorce in some contexts, but that is for you and I to determine.) Apoluo (send away) is a part of the divorce process set up by Moses in Deuteronomy 24:1-3 - "When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house."

Notice that in order for a man to obtain a legal divorce he had to do three things: 1) Write a bill of divorcement; 2) Give it to his wife; and 3) Send her out of his house. If all a man did was apoluo his wife (put away, or send her out of his house) then he was still legally married to that woman. [With these facts in mind Jesus' teaching in Matt. 5:32; 19:9 is not hard to understand nor to accept and practice.]

Moses also wrote the reason WHY a man was to follow these procedures: It was so that the woman WOULD BE FREE TO MARRY ANOTHER MAN: "And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife." (Deuteronomy 24:2) The traditionalists would have us believe that Jesus

CHANGED the Law of Moses, when He did not.
If apoluo means divorce, as we understand the term, then its Hebrew equivalent must also mean divorce. The Hebrew equivalent of the Greek apoluo is shalach. Therefore, Deuteronomy 24:1 would have to be translated thusly: "When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and divorce her." This sloppy translation has the man divorcing his wife twice! Now how ridiculous is that? Unfortunately for those wishing to perpetuate the man-made doctrine that forbids those who are legally divorced from getting married, there will be s day of reckconing when it will be understood that their doctrine was NOT what Moses wrote, nor what Jesus said! Apostasion in the Greek (the writing of the bill of divorcement) is the same as kriythuwth in the Hebrew. One was not considered divorced simply by separating (sending from the house [shalach] in the Hebrew, anymore than one was considered divorced simply by separating (putting away, or sending from the house [apolou] in the Greek. Even today we would not consider one divorced simply because one has separated! We, too, demand that the couple go through the legal process and obtain the divorce documents and have them served.
It is also quite telling that the traditionalists tell us that a man and woman who are divorced and married to another spouse must divorce in order to please God! Then and only then can they marry each other again! This, however, flies completely against the word of God. God said He found such practices an abomination, i.e., a man taking back a woman that had been married to another: "And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, who took her to be his wife; her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before Jehovah: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance." (Deuteronomy 24:3-4) This preacher I had reference at the beginning of this article also wrote the following: "Jesus went on to declare that one who divorces his spouse and remarries is guilty of the sin of continual adultery…." Is this statement in agreement with what the Law of Moses said? Would Jesus have been rightly referred to as keeping the Law of Moses perfectly IF He had taught CONTRARY to the Law?

Posted 09/30/12 #1
JESUS SPEAKS TO THE SEPARATED, THE DIVORCED
lesson 9
Sermon on the Mount
Relationships 4c
Matthew 5:31-32 (KJV)
31 It hath been said,
Whosoever shall put away his wife,
let him give her a writing of divorcement:
32 But I say unto you,
That whosoever shall put away his wife,
saving for the cause of fornication,
causeth her to commit adultery:
and whosoever shall marry her
that is divorced committeth adultery.
This passage has been horribly misunderstood.
If understood as many do, it would horribly disagree with the other passages on divorce in the Bible. The Bible is harmonious. Let's look at the original words in Greek, and see what Jesus truly said.
He speaks of a man who would 'put away' his wife. The assumption has been he spoke of 'divorce' here, but that is only one part of the divorce. The sending the wife away, is a part that followed the 'writing of divorcement'. The writing of divorce was the legal part, the part in conjunction with Moses' law, that gave the double dowry, and was signed and made official and legal. The Romans, and other nations, had made their 'divorce' to be far easier. The Romans allowed a man to take the wife to the door of the home, say the words 'I divorce you' three times, and then 'put away', i.e. separate her from the home.
Jesus speaks to that mind set that many of the Jewish men were preferring to do. He says, that if one wants to 'put away' one's wife, he should give the bill of divorcement.
The word 'put away' is the Greek word 'apolyo, from the word 'apolusa' meaning to depart, dismiss, let go, send away. It is referring to the part that is not to come until Moses' law on divorce was completed. The paperwork, the legal requirement of a double dowry, was to have been already done. Yet, Jesus has to say here, that the 'writing of divorcement' needs first given
The word 'apostasion' is the Greek word translated 'divorcement' here. It means a 'writing allowing a divorce of marriage.
Jesus wanted the hearers of the semon on the mount to understand that if the men skipped the part of giving the double dowry, except for the reason of fornication, the marriage was not terminated. Both the innocent and the guilty party were committing adultery in those cases.
The laws of our land usually require that a judge make sure the wife is fairly treated in the divorce in our days. Property settlements, child support, etc. are

settled in our court system. In the days of the New Testament, the courts did not provide security for the woman. Jesus dealt very firmly with the Pharisees who wanted Jesus to support their unfair dealings with the wives, and allow them to save money and trouble in divorces.

People have tried to take the words of Jesus and attach them all to divorce, as we know it. Yet, Jesus was speaking of the problem of that day when the Jewish men were trying to avoid paying the required double dowry to the wife they wanted to send away. They were breaking the idea of God's plan, and were causing themselves and others to commit adultery.

The men were skipping to the separation part of divorce, without giving the written, legal part, skipping the financial obligation. Separation is not to be tolerated if the responsibility of the man is not met. If the marriage is not to be held together, a bill of divorcement must be given. Separation and remarriage is adultery. Divorce and remarriage is not adultery and Deuteronomy 24 and I Corinthians 7 agree with the teachings of Jesus.

"Fornication" is the only exception given to the need of the proper divorce. Since the fornication would have already have broken the marriage in God's eyes (and required stoning in the Old Testament, it does not require stoning in this covenant), Jesus does not require the financial arrangements that the divorce would have required. In that case, Jesus did not condemn the Roman style divorce that many Jewish men were using.

Look at the words:

Luke 16:18

"Whosoever putteth away (apolusa = separates from, not divorces) his wife, and marries another, commits adultery; and whosoever marries her that is put away (apolusa = separated from) her husband, committeth adultery."

Matthew 5:31

"It hath been said, 'Whosoever shall put away (apolusa = separate from) his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement (apostasion =divorce). But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away (apolusa = separate from) his wife, save for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced (apolusa = separated from) committeth adultery.'"

Fornication made a fair financial settlement to be unnecessary. The fornication had broken the marriage in God's eyes. Any other cause for divorce requires for a man to make sure that the wife is not going to be sent out without financial ability to survive.

The fact that remarriage of a divorced person is not sinful, should not encourage divorce. Divorce should be recognized as being usually sinful. Yet, it is not an unpardonable sin. Any who have been divorced and remarried, should be encouraged to look back at the failed marriage and repent of any sins the Holy Spirit reveals. Once this is done, the remarried person has no reason or Scripture to prevent them from serving on the board, or from pastoring a church.

Matthew 19:6
"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder (this is another word, 'choridzo')."
This word - choridzo - means "to separate, to divide." Therefore in a marriage, even a mere separation is to be discouraged. God does not even want separation between married ones, let alone divorce. But after divorce does occur, God can and will forgive the repentant. To remarry is not sinful, and Christendom must forgive as God forgives, and not stigmatize those who have remarried.

GREAT DISAGREEMENT ON DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE

There is a great disagreement in our day about the subject of divorce and remarriage. Some mistranslate the passages, and say it is all wrong. Some will claim that remarriage is acceptable, while others say it is adultery. Why is there so much misunderstanding? Each group will quote scriptures. Yet, the Bible cannot contradict itself. There is harmony of Scripture, and there are prejudices which have caused many false teachings, and many have been blinded to the truth because of a few poorly translated Greek words. The prejudices on this subject are manifold, and many will not accept this teaching, not because there is not adequate scripture to prove it, but because they do not want it proven. It is time that the Christian faith unravel the Scripture, and see what it truly teaches.

THE VOWS OF MARRIAGE

When people marry, they make a promise to each other and to God. This is a pledge and a vow. Since it is a vow to honor this union, any breaking of this union purposely is a sin.
Ecclesiastes 5:4
"When thou vowest a vow unto god, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed."
Whenever the vows to God in a marriage are not kept, the results are very tragic. The discord and heartaches that result affect many innocent lives. Marriage is a God-given institution. Divorce destroys that which God instituted. Either divorce itself is sin, or the divorce is a result of a sin.
God does not desire divorce. The sickest person can be healed by God; and likewise the most troubled marriage can be healed by God.
James 1:13
"Let no man say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted of God:' for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempted He any man."
So, when divorce is wrong, God cannot and will not instigate that desire. When divorce comes in those situations, it is a result of the sin of a person (perhaps rebellion, lust, greed, selfishness, etc.).
God's desire is reconciliation in marriages that are contemplating divorce. God told Hosea to return to his wife who had done great whoredoms (Hosea 1:2), and buy her back in the auction. God wanted reconciliation then and now. God desires to work a miracle of healing in hurting marriages. He will not force

people to forgive, and allow restoration and healing in the marriage. The hardness of people's hearts often brings a divorce.
The fact that divorce was permitted, does not mean it was justified or right. God never encouraged it (except once). He only allowed it, because the hardness of sinful persons can so undermine, destroy, and harm a marriage that God will allow a divorce. A restoration from the sins will demand a repentance. With repentance and forgiveness, many a divorce can be averted.
Some are so hardened by sin, that they will not repent, and some will not forgive. In some cases (though they are few) there are innocent parties. They may divorce, and not have sin to repent. In most divorces, both parties have sins to repent.
The only time God encouraged divorce (that we know of), was in the time of Ezra. He told Ezra to bring all the Israelites who had intermarried with the foreigners in the land after the restoration and divorce them. This divorce was done "according to the counsel of the Lord" (Ezra 10:3), and they were commanded to "separate and do His pleasure." One hundred and thirteen people had intermarried (Ezra 10:18-34), and caused the possibility of spoiling the blood lines from which Jesus the Messiah was to soon be born.
So, to keep the blood lines pure, God not only allowed, but commanded, divorce. This was a limited one time encouragement. We seldom hear this passage taught or preached. But when a correct understanding of the subject of divorce is understood, it will not continue to have such a shocking effect.
Deuteronomy 22:22
"If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so shalt thou put away evil from Israel."
This verse shows that divorce was not permitted on the grounds of adultery or fornication as is often taught today. Adultery or fornication did not bring a divorce in the Old Testament. No! Rather, it brought a stoning. The adulterers were stoned to death in that day. Some teach today that in the Old Testament, the only grounds for divorce was adultery. This is a misconception brought on by a misunderstanding of the meaning of several words in the New Testament. Today, under grace, we know that even adulterers can find forgiveness. The innocent party in the marriage can forgive the guilty party and allow restoration of the marriage. This is the desired result.
If the innocent part does not choose to restore the marriage, then God allows the divorce. The adultery had already broken the marriage in God's eyes. That is why God had the guilty parties stoned in the Old Testament. He did not have a bill of divorcement given. The bill of divorcement required the man to pay the wife twice the amount of the dowry to her. In all other cases of divorce, Moses's law required that the wife be not simply sent away from the house, but that a bill of divorcement also be given to her.
In the case of adultery of one partner, Jesus was saying that in that case, the bill of divorcement and the double dowry need not be given, since the Old

Testament law did not require a bill of divorcement or double dowry be given in that case. In those cases, the old law required a stoning of the guilty parties. All sides of the argument on divorce use Scriptures to support their view. The subject has been greatly misunderstood. Some Scriptures have been wrongly translated. The hurt and destruction caused by the false teaching on the subject of divorce is too great to imagine.

A murderer can be forgiven and become a pastor, board member, or respected member. A divorced and remarried person, in many congregations, will never be allowed to sit on a board, be a minister or pastor, and sometimes will not be allowed to be a member of the church. This additional unpardonable sin, that many congregations have added to the Word of God, has done great harm to the gospel. It is simply a misconception of the truth of Scripture.

The Word of God has only one truth to teach. The Bible does not contradict itself. When the true understanding of the Word of God is known, all the Scriptures will agree.

If all three of the words translated "divorce" truly mean "divorce", as we know it, then Jesus did teach that both the divorcer, and the innocent party, commit adultery when they remarry (Matthew 19:3-9).

However both the law given by Moses (Deuteronomy 24:1-4), and the instructions of Paul (I Corinthians 7:27-28), teach that remarriage is not sinful. The true understanding of Scripture will teach one truth, and not contradict itself.

Some new converts come to God with a divorce and remarriage already in their pasts. It is essential that they know the truth before any so-called "Christian" convinces them that they are committing the sin of adultery and therefore are heading for hell-fire.

Many have so generated doctrine. They have not gotten into the study of the Bible sufficiently to correctly understand its teaching. Many have so harmed souls, that many converts have given up trying to serve the Lord, and are heading, or already in, hell-fire.

The Lord has given us a charge:

1 Thessalonians 5:21 (KJV) Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

The disobeying of this command has caused countless heartache and untold loss of souls. It has done so much harm, that a great repentance is required for the perpetrators and participants of this false doctrine. Let's examine the Word of God. Let's correctly interpret the words of God. Let's form our doctrine by the Word of God alone, and not by denominational dogma, or by fallacious acceptance of a false teaching that is plaguing the Christian faith of today.

GOD'S MESSAGE IN THE CORINTHIAN EPISTLE

1 Corinthians 7:27-28 (KJV)

27 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

Several words already discussed have been translated and understood to mean "divorce." But only two of these two words truly refers to "divorce" as we know it. The other word referred to what we would call- "separation."
The word used by Paul in Corinthians that means "divorce" is lusin, meaning "unbound, released." It is used by Paul in I Corinthians 7. It comes from the Greek word -"luo".
When the document used to show the person had gone through the Scriptural method of validating the reason for the divorce and the giving of the wife a double dowry, it was called a "bill of divorcement." This is the word - "apostasion". It means literally, "having been departed or dismissed."
It is possible to be "sent away" (apolusa), without a divorce (lusin). Just as many couples today may separate and not divorce. For one of the two separated partners to remarry would be adulterous. A divorce is necessary to truly allow the former partners to remarry.
If we translate all these words as "divorce", we will find two teachings in Scripture that are unharmonious. This will allow the debate to go on, with each side choosing which verses they want to quote. We should be able to quote any verse, and no verse should contradict the correct teaching. We must never accept any interpretation of a Scripture that does not fit in perfect harmony with the rest of the Word of God.
The proper understanding of the meaning of lusin, apostasion, and apolusa will bring harmony to the subjects of divorce and remarriage.
The proper understanding of the words is best illustrated with this order:
First, in the process of the divorce, a man had to decide to release his wife-- lusin.
Secondly, he must get a bill of divorcement - apostasion - proving that he had presented the reason for divorce, and given the double dowry.
Thirdly, he could separate from her, and send her out of the home - apolusa.
This order, with all three steps was considered by God to be the real "divorce."
Lusin, initiated the process, apostasion presented the reason and gave the dowry so the woman was not destitute and unable to survive, and apolusa sent the partner from the home completing the process.
This order needed to be followed. God did not want the men to skip the first two steps and simply send the woman out of the home destitute. Since women were usually untrained in the professions of life, she could not simply get a job and support herself. She was forced by necessity to find another man to marry and support her. Jesus was disturbed by the easy, male-favoring way of divorce that the Greeks and the Romans had. The woman was forced to commit adultery (though she was the innocent party), simply because the proper way of divorce had not been followed.
With the importance of finding a harmonious and correct view on the subject, let's look at the Scriptures and examine the usage of these two words.
Notice the Greek words:
I Corinthians 7:27-28

"Art thou bound (married) unto a wife? seek not to be loosed (lusin=divorced). Art thou loosed (lusin -divorced) from a wife, seek not a wife. But if thou marry, thou hast not sinned..."
This verse shows that divorce and remarriage are discouraged, but if one is divorced and remarries, there is not sin. This then brings agreement with the verses in Deuteronomy 24:1-2, which says that when a woman is given a bill of divorcement, she "may go and be another man's wife." The purpose of Deuteronomy 24:1-2, was to show that the bill of divorcement made one free to remarry. If she were made to separate from her husband without a bill of divorcement, she would have then been committing adultery if she married another man.
Deuteronomy 24:1-2 (KJV)
1 When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.
2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.
Now the passage in Matthew 19 can harmonize with all other passages discussed.
Matthew 19:3,7-9
"Is it lawful for a man to put away (apolusa =separate from, not divorce) his wife, for every cause?... They say unto Him, 'Why did Moses command to give a writing of divorcement (apostasion = divorce) and to put her away (apolusa = separate from)? He saith unto them, 'Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts suffered (permitted) you to put away (apolusa = separate from) your wives, but from the beginning, it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away (apolusa = separate from) his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery, and whoso marries her that is put away (apolusa =separated from, not divorced) doth commit adultery."
The proper translation shows that this teaching does not disagree with I Corinthians 7 or Deuteronomy 24. Paul had taught that remarriage is not sinful after divorce and Jesus is not contradicting that. Jesus is saying that separation and marriage to another before divorce is adultery. A divorce needs to be granted and be fair to the one sent away.
Jesus, in Matthew 19, is answering a trick question of the Pharisees. They wanted to get Jesus on record on the practice of many Jewish men of skirting the law on divorce and simply sending their wives from the home. In this way, they avoided the requirement of the bill of divorcement of paying double dowry back to the wife. Jesus is not fooled by their question. He gives a direct answer to them. He says that if one separates himself from his spouse without a bill of divorcement, he is committing adultery when he remarries (for he is not divorced in God's eyes). The wife is being forced to remarry and thereby also committing adultery. Her real husband has neglected to give her the bill of

divorcement and the double dowry so she can provide for her needs.
God is divorced!
This is startling to many. Yet in Jeremiah 3:8, we read:
"I (this is God speaking) have put away, and gave a divorce."
God divorced Israel, who was called 'God's wife'. Her sinfulness caused God to divorce her. So, when converts to the Lord, find that some Christians stigmatize them for a divorce and/or remarriage, don't be discouraged. There are many today that have misunderstood the teaching of the Word. They may try to put the divorced/remarried in the same corner as those who have sinned an unpardonable sin, but the Lord God Himself is understanding. He too knows what a failed marriage is like. God did not sin when he turned away from Israel. Israel sinned and caused the divorce. God therefore can understand and empathize with the divorced and/or remarried of today. There is no lack of harmony of Scripture on the subject. There is a lack of harmony of doctrinal dogmas in the congregations of today.
Some have held their views so long, and are so adamant about their false doctrines, that it is hard to even get them to look at the true meaning of the original words. They have erred in the fact that they have not studied this doctrine before condoning it. Pray for them, and pray for the injury they do to hurting and bleeding saints who are damaged by the false dogmas on this subject.
murjahel
John D. Ladd

DOWRY (Aramaic, Nedunya):
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The portion or property which a wife brings to her husband in marriage. In patriarchal times the dowry was not known. As among all other nations of antiquity, in Israel the bridegroom named a price or ransom ("mohar") to the father of the bride (Gen. xxiv. 12; Ex. xxii. 17; compare Hos. iii. 2). It is, however, doubtful whether this mohar was given in the form of a ransom to the father or of a gift to the bride. Both cases are mentioned in the Bible; e.g., Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, brought costly gifts to Rebekah when he betrothed her for his master's son; while Jacob served Laban for fourteen years for his two daughters (see Marriage; compare Saalschütz, "Das Mosaische Recht," cii., § 3).

Gifts to Daughters.

Besides this custom of the bridegroom making gifts to the bride or paying a ransom to her father the Bible also makes frequent mention of property which the woman brought to her husband at marriage. Rebekah brought to her new home female slaves from her father's household (Gen. xxiv. 59, 61). Laban made similar gifts to Leah and to Rachel (Gen. xxix. 24, 29). Othniel at marriage received from his father-in-law, Caleb, a field of springs (Judges i. 15). Solomon received from Pharaoh, his father-in-law, a city as the portion ("shilluḥim") of the princess (I Kings ix. 16). Later, the practise of giving a dowry to a daughter, as it is now understood, entirely superseded the gift or ransom given by the groom; so that in Talmudic times it ("nedunya") is spoken of as a long-established custom.

The Rabbis ordained that a man must give some of his property to his daughter when about to be married. The minimum amount was fifty zuzim (Ket. 67a); but every parent was obliged to give in proportion to his means. The minimum amount was paid to a poor girl out of the charity funds of the community, even when they were not in a flourishing condition. Although the court could compel a father to give his daughter in marriage, it could not compel him to pay a set dowry as long as he secured a husband for his daughter without it, or by paying a smaller sum (Shulḥan 'Aruk, Eben ha-'Ezer, 71, 1, Isserles' gloss). If the groom agreed not to ask for the dowry, he was obliged—even while the bride was still in her father's house, in the period between betrothal and marriage—to provide her with all necessary garments (Ket. 67a). The dowry might be withheld by the bride's father if the groom maltreated his bride during the period of berothal. In such a case the money was deposited with a trustee until peace was established in the family (Shulḥan 'Aruk Ḥoshen Mishpaṭ, 73, 8, Isserles' gloss, and "Sifte Kohen," ad loc.).

Paid from Estate.
If, after the father's death, the heirs gave their minor sister in marriage and paid her a dowry amounting to the minimum sum fixed by the Rabbis, she might, on attaining her majority, collect from the estate the balance due to her. The court usually estimated how much the father would have given to his daughter if he had been living, according to his position in society, or his generosity, or his action with regard to previous marriages of his daughters; and this sum was taken out of the estate (Ket. 68a). If there was nothing to guide the court in its estimate, the Rabbis ordained that a tenth of the estate be given to each daughter at her marriage, to be paid by the heirs in money or in valuables. If a number of daughters were about to be married at the same time, a sum made up of a tenth of the estate for the oldest, a tenth of the remainder for the second, and so on, was divided equally among them (Maimonides, "Yad," Ishut, xx. 4; Shulḥan 'Aruk, Eben ha-'Ezer, 113, 4).
If the father was unable to pay the sum he had promised as a dowry to his daughter, the groom could not on that account postpone the marriage, but had either to marry or to divorce his bride. But if the promise was made by the bride herself and she was unable to fulfil it, the groom might let her "sit until her hair became gray"; that is, until she could pay the sum which she had promised (Ket. 109a). Insistence upon the payment of a dowry, however, was much decried by later authorities (Eben ha'Ezer, 2, 1).
There is also frequent mention of the custom of the groom's father contributing to the dowry (Ket. 102b); and at present the custom prevails, in all cases where a dowry is agreed upon, that the groom's father subscribes a proportional sum to the dowry, usually much less than that given by the bride's father. If the bridegroom died after betrothal, and, according to the Mosaic law, the bride became betrothed to his brother (see Levirate), her father need not pay to the latter the dowry promised to his brother (Ket. 66a).
In Marriage Contract.
The dowry that the woman brought to her husband, whether real estate, slaves, or movable property, was recorded in the marriage contract (Ketubah). Custom decided whether the sum mentioned in the marriage contract should be exactly the same as the dowry was really worth, or more or less. In some places the custom prevailed of recording an amount one-third or one-fifth more than the value of the actual dowry; in others, less than the value of the dowry (ib.; Ishut, xxiii. 11; Eben ha-'Ezer, 66, 11). This sum then became a claim upon the husband's property equally with the ketubah itself; so that when he died or divorced her, the woman could collect from his estate both the sum stipulated in the marriage contract and the value of her dowry. During the husband's life, however, the dowry belonged to him, and hemight derive all benefits from it. He might even sell it for the period of his lifetime. The laws governing the relation of the husband to the dowry vary with the manner in which the woman has acquired that property.
Kinds of Property.

"Nikse ẓon barzel" (the property of iron sheep) is the name applied to the dowry given to the woman at marriage by her father or his heirs, and detailed in the marriage contract. All rents, fruits, and increments of this property belonged to the husband; and he became responsible for the principal in case of loss or damage. At his death, or in the case of divorce, the woman received the value of that property as estimated on her wedding-day. Like iron, it could not be destroyed or damaged, and like sheep, the husband might derive all profit (wool) from it.

"Nikse melug" (the property of plucking) is the term designating property which the woman obtained during her betrothal, by inheritance or by gift. The husband was entitled to all the fruits and profits thereof, although he was not held responsible for its loss or deterioration. He might "pluck" it (have the usufruct during his life), and need not answer for any damage that might occur to it.

The husband was made the usufructuary of the foregoing two classes of his wife's property by a decree of the Rabbis, in consideration of his being obliged to redeem his wife whenever she might be taken captive (Ket. 47b). The wife should not sell any part of her property while her husband was living, and if she did sell, he could collect from the buyer all the improvements or profits that the property bore during his life. If the husband became involved in a lawsuit regarding his wife's property, he needed a power of attorney from her to act in her name. When, however, the case also involved the profits of the property, he did not require a power of attorney; for, being entitled to the profit, he might also claim the property itself (Giṭ. 48b; "Yad," Sheluḥin, iii. 4; Eben ha-'Ezer, 81, 4).

Property which the husband gave to his wife after marriage, or which a third person gave to her with the express understanding that it be used exclusively by her, or which she obtained by selling her marriage contract, was considered entirely beyond the husband's control. She could not, however, sell or give away the property given to her by her husband; while with the other kinds she might do as she desired (Eben ha-'Ezer, 85, 7).

According to the rabbinic law, the husband became the sole heir of his wife's property of all these three classes (see Inheritance). In regard to the dowry that the woman brought from her father's household, this law was modified by a decree of R. Jacob Tam (1100-1171 C.E.), who enacted that if the wife died childless within the first year after marriage, the whole amount of the dowry should be returned to her father or to his heirs. Subsequently this was still further modified by a decree of the rabbinical synod of the communities of Speyer, Worms, and Mayence ("Taḳḳanat ShWM"), to the effect that if she died childless during the second year after marriage, one-half of the dowry should be returned to her father or to his heirs. This became the custom throughout Germany, and later was adopted by the Polish Jews also. In 1761, at a conference of rabbis held in Slutsk, Russia, this enactment was again modified to the disadvantage of the husband. As found in the records (§ 24) of the

Grodno Jewish community, it reads as follows:
"Concerning the enactment of Speyer, Worms, and Mayence ('ShWM') in the case when the daughter died, we have established the following decree in accordance with the requirements of the time and of the place. If the wife dies within three years after marriage, everything should be returned to her relatives, even her garments. If she dies within five years of marriage, half of her dowry should be returned to her relatives. After that period the husband becomes the sole heir."
Only the first half of this decree has been accepted by all later authorities of Russia and Poland (Eben ha'Ezer, 53, 4; Eisenstadt, "Pitḥe Teshubah," ad loc.).
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