

MARRIAGE & DIVORCE—WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY? (1)

By Keith Greer

For the last two decades, another one of those "controversial" issues has continually raised its ugly head. Unfortunately, this subject is not "new." On the contrary, it has been a stumblingblock for many over the years.

When I was a young boy growing up in northern Indiana, I remember hearing men preaching on the subject of "**marriage, divorce, and remarriage**." During those years a strong position of unity was taught by the church then. We mainly spoke in "ONE VOICE", and; for the most part, we were in agreement. (By the way, the divorce rate in the church was also quite low!)

Today, the world has gone "divorce crazy", and one out of every two marriages will end in divorce. Is the Lord's church immune to this problem? Alas, I wish I could answer yes, but we cannot.

Divorce, and subsequent remarriage, is a very grave problem in the Lord's church today. What may have been little more than a "theological discussion" 30-40 years ago, has great ramifications today as more and more of God's people are seeking divorce.

Men who once stood for the truth on this issue, who were respected for their love of the truth and the vigorous way they defended it, now have "shifted in mid-stream". Others say "leave it alone- it brings too many heartaches". "Let's not be breaking up homes." "The matter is too upsetting to discuss and far too emotional." "Nobody has the answers for sure." Still others want to say that we can all hold "different positions", and as long as we do it "in faith", God will be well pleased.

Do we use that kind of reasoning on any other issue? If we do, then we are not being honest when we say that we "speak where the Bible speaks and we're silent where the Bible is silent." Can the Lord's church be able to have a "**THUS SAITH THE LORD**," like any other Bible subject?

Many in the world have no respect for the sacredness and purity of marriage. God has instructed His children, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2) Do you remember the words of our Lord? "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24) One man, one woman, until death do us part! The sad truth must be told, the positions many of my brethren are teaching now, gives them the same mind towards marriage as the world! Sadly, they are making a mockery of vows made to God!

Yet, today, marriage is something we "try" for a while, and when it doesn't work out, "practice makes perfect", we just get another mate. Man has forgotten God's thinking on the plan that He instituted! We marvel at the rest of God's creation, and then treat marriage as an old shoe to just be tossed aside.

"He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." (Matthew 19:8-9)

"But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery." (Matthew 5:32)

Many of our brethren have forgotten these simple words uttered by Jesus when asked by the Jews, "can a man divorce for any cause?" Most older Christians, having long and apparently happy marriages, and yet, the same cannot be said for their children. Do you ever wonder why? Maybe they are now bearing the fruits from all this "loose" teaching! (cont.) ***