

## MARRIAGE & DIVORCE: WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURES SAY? (4)

By Keith Greer

Am I teaching that adultery, or any other work of the flesh, is an unforgivable sin? Of course not! In God's sight, one sin is not greater than another "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness." (1 John 3:4), but some **SINS HAVE GREATER EARTHLY CONSEQUENCES.**

When Paul stood before Festus, even though he was not guilty, he told him that "For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar." (Acts 25:11)

Hopefully, we all understand that the murderer who becomes a Christian will be forgiven by God. Does that mean that there will be no earthly consequences for him? **EVEN THOUGH HE HAS BEEN FORGIVEN BY GOD**, he still may have to face the death penalty or life imprisonment. Sin, the greater problem, has been resolved but the other consequences continue.

In the Old Testament, we can read more than one example (such as Nadab and Abihu- Leviticus 10:1-2 and Moses and Aaron- Numbers 20:11-12) of those who had to pay earthly consequences for their sins. Was God UNMERCIFUL?

When David and Bathsheba committed adultery, she conceived, and David eventually had her husband, Uriah, placed in the front of the battle so that he would die. The Lord sent Nathan to David and after David heard what Nathan had to say, "So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die." (2 Samuel 12:13-14) Did God forgive David? Absolutely. Did David and Bathsheba have to pay earthly consequences for their sin? Yes they did. Was God UNMERCIFUL?

Today, God is not going to allow our children to die or have someone stone us to death if we commit adultery, but neither do we have the God-given authority to remain in a sinful relationship!

Spiritually, the consequences are the same, and if we are to truly be the "light of the world," we had better be sure that we are living lives wholly in accordance with God's word. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

God does not allow us to be tempted above that which we are able to endure, and "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Finally, consider why men and women find themselves in these types of situations— rejecting the counsel and wisdom of God! Unfortunately, people run into problems in their marriages and before they consult God's book for the answer they use human wisdom getting a divorce. Sadly, they find out too late this created a bigger problem than the one they thought they had. Honestly, it comes down to choosing a temporary earthly relationship over where one will spend all eternity. The one who overcomes, we are promised a crown of life and an eternal home with God. Could there be anything- or anyone- worth missing our home in heaven for? \*\*\*