



For Such A Time



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MARRIAGE, ADULTERY, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

“What God has joined together, let not man separate.” Jesus. Mat. 19:6. “I hate divorce,” says the Lord God of Israel, “and I hate a man’s covering himself with violence as well as with his garment,” says the Lord Almighty. Malachi 2:16.

Although Divorced, Still Married in God’s Sight—A woman may be legally divorced from her husband by the laws of the land and yet not divorced in the sight of God and according to the higher law. Although the laws of the land may grant a divorce, yet they are husband and wife according to the laws of God. Adventist Home, p. 344.

“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.” Hebrews 13:4. “For within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery. Mark 7:21. “For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the Lord, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence.” Malachi 2:16. “Judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy.” James 2:10-13.

Perpetual Differences in a Divided Home. How can the carnal mind

harmonize with the mind that is assimilated to the mind of God? One is sowing to the flesh, thinking and acting in accordance with the promptings of his own heart; the other is sowing to the Spirit, seeking to repress selfishness, to overcome inclination, and to live in obedience to God. Thus there is perpetual difference of taste, of inclination, and of purpose. Unless the believer wins the impenitent, he sells his principles for the poor companionship of one who has no connection with Heaven.” AH 84.

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"If anyone reaches out to overseership, he desires a good work. Then the overseer must be blameless, husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, modest, hospitable, apt at teaching; not a drinker, not a contentious one, not greedy of ill gain—but gentle, not quarrelsome, not loving money; ruling his own house well, having children in subjection with all reverence—but if anyone does not know to rule his own house, how will he care for a church of God?" 1 Tim. 3:1-16. (Overseer = Superintendent, Supervisor).

A marriage promise is made before God as a witness and is to last for a life time. Divorce is a sin and is hateful to God. It is the prayer of the publishers that with God's help, and as a result of this magazine, wisdom will prevail, and that marriages which are falling apart will be saved! Take a break from each other if you have to, but do not divorce and sin.

MARRIAGE

by Ellen Prasad Pilla

India's divorce rate has doubled in the last five years. [BBC News](#). 1 out of 100 or 11 out of 1,000 marriages in India end in divorce. However, India has one of the lowest divorce rates in the world. Indian divorce rate is 1 percent while American divorce rate is 54 percent. [Deccan Chronicle](#). Divorce rate in California is 75.54%. Divorce rate is high in love marriages. Arranged marriages have the lowest divorce rates. Divorce rate is high among

techies in Bangalore. Tamil Nadu has the highest percentage of divorcees in India. Kerala is India's divorce capital. Hindus have the lowest divorce rate in U.S.A. and in India. Top ten countries with lowest divorce rate are: Afghanistan, Colombia, Haiti, India, Malta, Nauru, Nepal, Paraguay, Sao Tome and Principe and Sri Lanka. Atheist divorce rates are lower than Christian divorce rates.

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Marriage is one of the first two institutions God ordained in Eden, the second being Sabbath. The first marriage was performed by the Creator who called the marriage good. Marriage protects the society and brings forth orderly children. A good advise for these last days, as Apostle Paul suggested, is to stay single so that one can serve the Lord fully. Paul encouraged the believers, "to remain with God in that state in which" they were called. He writes:

"But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion." 1 Cor. 7:8-9.

"Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh. 1 Cor. 7:27-28.

Going by the statistics, Indians seem to be doing right in arranging marriages and in shielding the newly marrieds during their lifetime. Albeit, here are some tips to those who are considering marriage. It is easier to make a mistake in entering than to correct it afterward. Great caution is needed before entering marriage because it is a step taken for life, and because marriage affects this life and after life.

On the Kind of Companion to Choose

- Do not marry an unbeliever as there will be radical differences. "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 2 Cor. 6:14.
- Do not marry promise-breakers who are led by passions. True love is not their motive and they will not be faithful to their marriage vow. It is better to break friendship with such a person than to marry. Success of marriage depends on the moral character of the parties to it. Thousands of people are mated but not matched.
- Do not enter into hasty, childhood relationships.
- Do not marry persons whose ages widely differ because the offspring of such persons have not well-balanced minds.
- Do not marry an intemperate person with vile habits, who does not fear God.
- Do not marry a tobacco user or an alcoholic as the offspring will inherit a weak disposition to the same narcotics.
- Do not marry close relatives, as the offspring will inherit genetic defects.
- Do not marry one who does not know how to fix things in the house or is an idler, for an idle mind is devil's workshop. Men should know some cooking and mending. Women should know to fix things and should have virtuous qualities mentioned in Proverbs 31.
- Meet and get to know the person before marriage to find his life's

goals, priorities, temperaments and spirituality. If he is not spiritual and his goals do not match yours, it is better to stop it here than to marry and ruin the rest of your life. Calm and careful reasoning is needed.

- Do not marry dominating and controlling person. Individuality of one person must not be destroyed or merged into that of the other.
- Marry a self-less person. A selfish person, led by Satan, will bankrupt you physically, morally, spiritually and financially.
- Find divine guidance. Pray. Seek counsel from older and more experienced persons. It will also be good to go for marriage counselling to a spiritual leader. For more advice on the kind of companion to choose, read the book: Messages to Young People, available on the internet.

Marriage Vows

If you have decided to marry. Here are the marriage vows you will promise before God. God is your Witness. One thing to consider is, being sure that you will keep them forever is not good enough. You need to be sure that your spouse really means what he/she promises; because I know of persons who repeated these words, never meaning to keep them. Breaking the 7th and 10th commandments: **“Thou shalt not commit adultery”** and **“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife”** are a light thing for some.

Christian Marriage Vows—The Three Vows

Male: I _____, take you _____, to be my wedded wife. To have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness or in health, to love and to cherish ‘till death do us part. And hereto I pledge you my faithfulness.

Female: I, _____, take you _____, to be my wedded husband. To have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, ‘till death do us part. And hereto I pledge you my faithfulness.

Hindu Marriage Vows—The Seven Vows

Male. These are repeated in Sanscrit.

1. In the first vow, the groom makes a vow to his bride that he will, for his part, provide the money and means to run a happy household and family. He also promises to avoid any of the things that would likely harm his wife and family.
2. The second vow that the groom makes to his bride is to remain committed to her forever. He promises he will love her forever and provide courage and strength.
3. In the third vow, the groom prays to God and asks that he be blessed with prosperity, wealth and the ability and means to take care of their children, educate them and look after all their needs.
4. The fourth vow has the groom thanking his bride. He thanks her for bringing love, happiness, auspiciousness and sacredness in his life. He thanks her for all the good things she brings to his life.

5. The couple then prays together in the fifth vow. They pray to grant them with prosperity and blessings for the rest of their lives.
6. The groom makes the sixth vow to his wife, and promises that he will keep her happy forever. He also tells her that he promises to make her joyful and provide her with peace time and time again.
7. Finally, in the seventh vow the groom tells the wife that with this last vow and walk around the fire, our relationship is firm and we’re inseparable. He also tells his wife that now you are mine forever and I am yours and may we live happily together.

Female

In return, the bride also makes the seven vows to her husband.

I did not find the Muslim marriage vows on the internet. It said the groom does not repeat them but the Mullah.

It is interesting that Christian marriage vows are short. With less to promise before God, and less to fear, no wonder Christian marriages are breaking that much faster. Christian nations have the highest divorce rate in the world, in spite of the Bible saying: “no divorce” or “let not man separate.”

Marriage between two individuals represents God’s forgiveness and never failing love for His people: God, the groom, and church, his bride. As God forgives His people more than 70 times 7, and woos the sinners back; the husband who represents Christ, should forgive his wife. Ω

ADULTERY

Fornication: Sinning Against Your Own Body Today’s Christian Marriage

“Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.” 1 Corinthians 6:18.

Sexual intimacies are the only actions committed by man with his body that produces an attachment within his created being to another. These connections before God are either proper (marriage) or improper (fornication). These connections will either be holy and sacred or they will be abominable and defiling. Once, at the beginning, a sexually intimate connection is made in a holy way (marriage), it will exist until either one of the spouses die or one of the spouses’ condition becomes defiled.

If ever an individual’s connection becomes unholy and fornication, then, the body of the person or persons, depending upon the situation, engaging in this unholy joining will be defiled and unclean until they die. To perpetrate fornication is to commit sexual debauchery. It is being sexually intimate in a way that God has not designed for the body of a man or woman and is deplorable to Him. Committing it is an act of impiety by rejecting the way of the Lord for your body, which is in violation of His marital law for His people. When fornication is committed, one makes his body unfit to ever

enter into a holy and sacred joining thereafter. The body has become polluted and unclean. Fornication's reward in Scripture is death.

Our bodies are the members of God. They are owned by God and are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and are not to be defiled. Paul said: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Corinthians 3:16,17.

Anyone who engages in the below four acts of fornication becomes unqualified and incapable of ever having a Biblical marriage:

1. Being sexually intimate with someone else's spouse – adultery.
2. Being sexually intimate with the same gender – homosexuality.
3. Being sexually intimate with an animal – bestiality.
4. Being sexually intimate with an immediate member of the family—incest.

Fornication is the undoing of a marriage and brings with it severe consequences and judgment. To commit it means to "put asunder" what God hath joined together. This "putting asunder" is not to be done by any man whatsoever. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Mark 10:9. Once God joins two people together in marriage He will never be the one to undo that joining. The defiled state that a man places himself into is the condition he will always be in, in the flesh, while alive on this earth. He has polluted his body making it unclean and therefore, unfit for a holy, sacred joining—biblical marriage. God cannot join that person to anyone in holiness. Every joining under that condition will be defiled and fornicating. If the person continues to be sexually intimate despite his uncleanness, he will be living a fornicated lifestyle. No one will enter the kingdom of God by doing so. 1 Cor. 6:9.

Confess your sin to God and put away your sin. When you are born again in Christ, the body is redeemed and made holy. It is not your body, but God's and it must stay holy. "Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of an harlot? God forbid. What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." 1 Cor. 6:13-17. "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife and let every woman have her own husband." 1 Cor. 7:2. Ω

DIVORCE - 1

by Jim Tonkowich

"I hate divorce," says the Lord God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the Lord Almighty. Malachi 2:16.

I have been going to church for years. I've heard thousands of sermons, and Bible studies. I have also preached hundreds of sermons. In all the time, I can never remember a sermon, a study, or a lesson on God's

harsh words in Malachi 2:16: "I hate divorce." Hate is strong language. Consider, for example, the rest of the verse: "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence." God makes divorce and blood-spattering violence moral equivalents.

In Proverbs 6:16-19 we read: "There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers." No one would argue that the Proverbs list is exhaustive, but in it we see the kind of company divorce keeps in God's reckoning. He considers it a detestable thing. It is also rampant in the American culture and in the American church. This may explain why Malachi 2:16 doesn't come up too often. After all, if 34% of all married evangelical Christians have experienced divorce after they have come to faith in Christ, it takes a combination of great bravery and extraordinary tact to preach on a text that may offend a third or more of any given congregation.

Why would God hate divorce so much? One answer might be the damage it does to the people divorcing. Economically divorce devastates most couples. There are increased living expenses and legal bills (often ongoing legal bills if children are involved). A 2002 study published in the Journal of "Marriage and Family" indicated that being divorced resulted in a 73% reduction in wealth relative to those who are married. This plays a part in emotional damage.

A friend and her husband who was a serial adulterer finally divorced. In spite of his philandering and her hard work to keep the marriage together, she said that more than anything else she felt like a complete failure—a feeling that stayed with her for years. And that's not a surprise. A US government report notes that studies have documented that increases in depressive symptoms after divorce are long-lasting and that the prevalence of these symptoms remains elevated years after the marital breakup.

The emotional damage is only exacerbated by so-called "no-fault" divorce. In "no-fault divorce", or "unilateral divorce," one person can unilaterally end the marriage. If the other person wants the marriage to continue, and is willing to work to keep it alive, that doesn't matter. The legal arrangement favors the person who wants to end the marriage, not the person who wants to work at keeping it together.

Then spiritually, Christians who divorce have a need to justify God's "leading" them to divorce the very person God "led" them to marry in the first place. Despite the emotional, physical, and financial sacrifices; you would think that the one who leaves unhappy marriage will be happier in the end. You would be wrong. A 2002 study by the Institute of American Values stated: "Divorce was never associated with an increase in the emotional well-being of unhappily married spouses. Divorce did not make unhappily married spouses personally happier, or reduce depression or increase personal mastery, or self-esteem. Divorce exacts a high price and returns

little in long-term well being. It damages the two spouses. But that is not the reason God hates divorce.

A second answer to why God hates divorce is the damage it does to children. Children of divorce are more likely to have behavioral problems and use illegal drugs. They are less likely to complete high school or attend college, obtain higher-status jobs, or report happiness as adults.

When compared to children whose parents remained married, children whose parents divorced or separated were more likely to engage in sexual intercourse before age seventeen. Girls whose parents divorced or separated early in childhood were more likely to get pregnant before age nineteen than girls whose parents remained together. Divorce causes deep and lasting struggles for children even when they manage to survive it and look fine. This is reflected in what becomes a negative feedback. Women who had experienced parental divorce in childhood were 59% more likely to divorce than women who had not experienced parental divorce. The likelihood of divorce in marriages where both spouses come from divorced homes was 189% higher than in marriages where neither spouse had experienced a parental divorce. These divorces, in turn, harm the next generation of children increasing the likelihood that they too will divorce. But damage to children is not the reason God hates divorce.

The reason God hates divorce has to do with God's character and glory. Divorce tells an enormous lie about God. While marriage is important because it provides companionship, an outlet for sexuality, and procreation, marriage is preeminently a picture of God and His people. Throughout the Bible, God refers to his people as His bride.

Hosea was called to enact God's relationship with his people by marrying. His wife, Gomer, is described as "a woman of adultery" who left Hosea for another man who apparently enslaved her. God told Hosea to buy her back, or redeem her the way God redeems us. In the same way, God says of Israel, his unfaithful, idolatrous people: "I will punish her for the days she burned incense to the Baals; she decked herself with rings and jewellery, and went after her lovers, but me she forgot," declares the Lord. "Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her.

"In that day," declares the Lord, "you will call me 'my husband'; You will no longer call me 'my master.' I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion, I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the Lord." Hosea 2:13,16,19,20. The relationship between God and Israel is described as a marriage and we find the same marriage imagery in the New Testament to describe Christ and his church.

In Ephesians 5, Paul says: "Wives are to be as the church is to Christ and husbands as Christ is to the church. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one

flesh.' The text intermingles words about Christ and the church with words about marriage. It is difficult to pull the two topics apart. Finally at the end of all things, when God's people are gathered in heaven, the book of Revelation describes the celebration as a marriage supper.

Marriage between a man and a woman tells a truth about God and his people. In older Christian weddings, the ceremony began by reminding the couple and the congregation with the words: "Marriage signifies to us the union between Christ and his church," but now the weddings are only between the couple.

Just as each human is made in the image of God, every marriage is made in the image of God's faithfulness to his people. Marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, and in accordance with the purpose for which it was instituted by God. Faithfulness of husbands and wives, their fidelity and love, inconsistent and imperfect as they may be—are a mirror of God's love for his people. Divorce smashes the mirror and in doing so, portrays God's fidelity and love as fickle. Spiritual leaders and elders must work diligently to reduce the number of divorces. Insist on careful and thorough preparation for marriage, by helping couples understand the theological significance of marriage as a witness to God's love for his people, and by reminding the people that God hates divorce for a very good reason.

Divorce is a Sin

"Let not the wife depart from her husband and let not the husband put away his wife." 1 Corinthians 7:10,11. Jesus plainly taught that divorce only happens "because of the hardness of your hearts." Matthew 19:8. "For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that He hateth putting away." Malachi 2:16. If you feel that you need to separate for a time due to problems in your marriage, then do so; but never consider a divorce. Divorce is quitting.

God's Power can Save Your Marriage

Most people who file for divorce attempt to claim that God allows for divorce in situations of adultery; but that is not what Jesus taught. What about all the other sins that one's spouse may commit? Does that provide a grounds for divorce? No. Jesus taught in Matthew 18:22 to forgive 70 times 7. Divorce is the sin of hate, unforgiveness and hypocrisy.

No Scriptural Grounds for Divorce

In Mark 10:9 Jesus states, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." No one is to ever break apart a marriage. Just by saying, "he/she is not sexually satisfying me," one can get a divorce in the court these days. This is sickening. Immorality is at its height today. It is the good and the pious who are being divorced by adulterous and sexually immoral spouses. I wouldn't want to be a judge who grants divorces. I wouldn't want to be the lawmaker who allows for all sorts of unscriptural

grounds for divorce. In Matthew 5:32 Jesus said, "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."

In Matthew 19:8 Jesus plainly stated that God never permits divorce, and that divorce is only caused by a hard heart, "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." Jesus clearly taught forgiveness in Matthew 18:22, not 7-times, but 70 times 7. Divorce is rooted in self-righteousness and in unwillingness to forgive. Notice carefully that Jesus addresses whether remarriage is adultery or not; but He never addresses the issue of divorce itself, because divorce is a sin, period.

If committing adultery is grounds for divorce, then Matthew 5:28 gives every wife Biblical grounds to divorce, because every man has lusted. Jesus said that lust is equivalent to adultery. If Jesus was willing to be despised and rejected of men, beaten, mistreated, scorned, assaulted, spit upon, and crucified to death for us, then we should follow Christ's example. A husband who loves his wife will not quit. You made a promise to God and your spouse on your wedding day. I don't recall any disclaimer in the marriage vows that gives a spouse the right to divorce under any circumstances. Whatever happened to "Till death do us part?" "Irreconcilable differences" is not found in the Bible as grounds for a divorce. There is no biblical grounds for divorce.

God Hates Divorce

"For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence," says the Lord of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously." Malachi 2:16. God hates divorce. It is treachery to divorce one's spouse.

"Surely, as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel," says the Lord. Jeremiah 3:20. God calls it treachery and violence. It rips apart flesh.

"But from the beginning of Creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh." Mark 10:6-8. When divorce hits, it violently rips this union apart, a union that is designed to die only when one of the partners dies. Romans 7:2-3.

Finally, divorce typically leads to adultery, as Christ said, "Whoever puts away his wife, apart from a matter of fornication, makes her commit adultery. And whoever shall marry the one put away commits adultery." Matthew 5:32. If divorce is so bad, then why did God allow for it under the law of Moses?

"Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." The Israelites were so down-right wicked and hard-hearted that the Lord made room for their evil, but He in no way liked it. Malachi 2:14-16.

The Lord's Divorce

When did the Almighty divorce Israel, if He Himself hates divorce?

"Thus says the Lord: "Where is the certificate of your mother's divorce, whom I have put away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? For your iniquities you have sold yourselves, and for your transgressions your mother has been put away." Isaiah 50:1. The Lord divorced Israel because of their extreme harlotry (idolatry) and unfaithfulness against Him. "Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also. Jeremiah 3:8.

Was this divorce permanent? For those God killed, it was. Deut. 28:63. But in the very passage in which the Lord says he had "given her a certificate of divorce," He also says, "Return, O backsliding children," says the Lord; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion." Jeremiah 3:14.

In the midst of saying He has divorced them, He also says He is married to them. The Lord speaks of having "put her away," but then in verse 14 of the same chapter He says, "I am married to you. God did utterly destroy the sinful kingdom, Israel (Amos 9:8), yet, at the same time, He did not completely forsake His people (Ps.94:14); and He will again bring them into their land (Amos 9:14-15). He will again be married to Israel.

God's marriage and divorce is an illustration of both God's wrath and His mercy to the children of Israel. If someone was to use this as an excuse for their own divorce, they would not be justified. Besides the clear declaration of Malachi 2:14-16 and 1 Cor. 7:10-13, the book of Hosea, parallels God's dealings with Israel, and in this is found a man, Hosea, who stays faithful to his wife through and through and does not forsake her, even though she commits radical sexual immorality. The Lord never instructs Hosea to divorce his "wife of harlotry." Or even intimates that it is OK if he does. The Lord commanded him to marry a woman who was already exceedingly sexually immoral, a woman who already had children as a result of her prostitution (Hosea 1:2), and then, after Hosea has been married for some time, she continues in her immoral ways as she lives in adultery (Hosea 3:1). Yet, in the midst of this, without any repentance indicated on her part, Hosea is instructed to love her. Hosea tells her she is going to stay put and not play the harlot (Hosea 3:1-3). He displays some serious command with his adulterous wife. If you are looking for an example to follow, here it is. Follow Hosea, for love is greater than hatred. Ungodly

divorce is disgusting. “I see the treacherous, and am disgusted, because they do not keep Your word.” Psalm 119:158.

Divorce is a Sin for Numerous Reasons

1. Because you are breaking your marriage vows “till death do us part!”
2. Because God said not to divorce. “Let not man put asunder.”
3. Because divorce is quitting. 1 Cor. 7:10-11.
4. Because divorce is unwillingness to forgive.

God hates divorce! It is only because of sinful pride and selfishness that people end up divorced in the first place. The Bible teaches mutual submission between husband and wife: “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.” Eph. 5:21. One to another! A husband and wife should willingly submit one to another in the fear of the Lord, sharing in the gift of life. We are not to give up as God never gives up on us. In conclusion:

1. Jesus did not permit divorce.
2. Moses did not want to permit divorce either, but the people gave him no choice.
3. Divorce only happens because of people’s rebellion against God.

Don’t divorce, please!

God is willing to forgive us an infinite number of times. Surely we can learn to forgive each other. Whoever files for divorce is the guilty party. If a spouse was abusive, leading to a divorce; then God will judge that person for his abusive words and actions; You may separate, but that certainly does not justify a divorce. It is adultery for any married person to marry another. Divorce is a sin and should never be considered an option in any marriage because it is sinful pride. The same sinful pride fuels abortion, murder, homosexuality, witchcraft, gambling, pornography, and every other sin imaginable. (India, which is importing Western divorce, should watch lest it imports other vices that come with it. – EPP) Ω

DIVORCE - 2

by David J. Stewart

Divorce is the most visible sign of a culture in collapse. Nearly two-thirds of today’s marriages will end in divorce or separation. Forty-five percent of all first marriages end in divorce. Of these divorces, seventy-five percent of the divorced women remarry while eighty-three percent of the men do. The figures for second marriages are even more discouraging. Fifty-five percent of these end in divorce. Born-again Christians actually have a higher rate of divorce (27 percent), than nonbelievers (23 percent). Fundamentalists top them all (30 percent). Prior to the divorce reforms of the 1970s, most divorces were based upon the ground of “fault.”

More recently this has given way to “no-fault” divorces. Sadly, people can get divorced for anything these days.

Men are often forced into divorce court against their will, horribly bullied by a thug legal system that threatens to take away their children, drag the case on for years, and result in costly legal fees if they refuse to sign the divorce agreement papers. Lawyers and judges are thugs who take advantage of people during difficult times in life. It’s like a woman who gets hit by a car. Two men drag her to safety, but then rape her, claiming they did her a favor by bringing her to safety. That is what lawyers do. They rape people financially at perilous times in their life, claiming that they helped them.

I have more respect for a street pimp than I do for most lawyers and judges. Judges are nothing more than overpaid lawyers wearing robes. Even worse are the abundance of lesbian pedophile and homosexual judges who are infamous for abusing their power. How can wicked people make sound righteous decisions? They are sick-minded, evil, Godless, hypocritical, shameful people. I don’t hate anybody, but I detest anyone who preys upon others for a living. Hell will be filled with lawyers and judges. In America, Judges removed the Bible from schools, legalized abortion, and are legalizing same-sex marriage. Lawyers like Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton are behind the divorce racket! Woe unto you, Lawyers! The economic rape of America is made possible by lawyers!

Prior to no-fault, traditional legal marriage was grounded in the Christian conception of marriage, a holy union between a man and a woman. Marriage is the most solemn and important of human transactions. The parties cannot dissolve the contract, as they can others, by mutual consent. According to the experience of the most enlightened nations, the happiness of married life greatly depends on its indissolubility.

Divorce laws reinforced those responsibilities, rewarding spouses who fulfilled their marital obligations and punishing those who did not. If a man ran off with his secretary, his wife got the family home, child custody, child support, and alimony until she remarried or died. No-fault’s goal was to reduce the acrimony of divorce proceedings by eliminating arguments over who was most at fault. But in abolishing “the concept of fault, it also eliminated the framework of guilt, innocence and the law’s condemnation of marital misconduct.” These “convenience” divorces have both weakened the institution of marriage and undermined the lifelong commitment that God ordained for marriage. The result has been a soaring rise in divorce rates that is destroying the middle class.

What the Bible Says About Divorce

“Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord. Jeremiah 3:20. Divorce is treacherous. There is nothing more evil than to walk out and abandon a spouse who has sinned or is innocent. Such hypocrisy is rooted in self-righteousness and hatred.

Despite the plain language of the Word of God condemning the sin of divorce, people refuse to obey. Mankind always attempts to rationalize evil doing, justify sin and live by his own laws instead of God's. Rick Warren said "Forgiveness is the bridge to heaven. If you don't forgive, then you burn your own bridge to heaven. Refusing to forgive is a doctrine of devils." Jesus said: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. Whoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery." Luke 16:16. Jesus answered the Pharisees by correcting them and stating that the original intent was not to have divorce, but because of the sinfulness of man, divorce was a concession. Jesus focuses on God's intent for marriage rather than on divorce. God intended for the husband and wife to be spiritually one. Scripture intended marriage to be permanent. No man may divorce what God has joined together.

Marriage is a Lifetime Covenant

Marriage is not only a covenant between the man and woman, but a covenant with God. Once you made that commitment, that covenant, God recognizes it as a lifetime covenant no matter who you married. 1 Cor. 7:10-17. Sinful pride causes all divorce. Today's internet dating websites advertise on television, enticing people to open an account and find out who's interested in you. David Gates' hit song, "It's sad to belong," caused much divorce in America. Ω

REMARRIAGE

"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." Mark 10:11-12. "Whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery." Luke 16:18.

Jesus described divorce and remarriage as an act of adultery. Even though there may be official paper work involved (e.g., Deut. 24:1, "Certificate of Divorce"), when a man or woman divorces their spouse and remarries another, this is an immoral act. They have committed adultery, and this is radically serious; because: "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. Hebrews 13:4.

Even in cases where there is an "innocent party" involved (i.e. where the woman does not want the divorce), if this "innocent person" remarries, she has committed adultery. As Jesus said, "whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery" (Luke 16:18), and in Matthew 5:32 He says, "whoever divorces his wife for any reason except for sexual immorality (fornication) causes her to commit adultery." If the man divorced

his wife because she was sexually immoral, then the woman would have already committed adultery. But, if she was not sexually immoral, and the man divorced her, and then she remarried, she would then be committing adultery; and her husband who divorced her is the one who caused her to do so. Divorce and remarriage equals adultery. Mark 10:11-12. Divorce is breaking God's command: "Let not man put asunder."

Under Mosaic law, not all sexually immoral acts committed by a married person required the death penalty. These required death penalty: Adultery with a married woman (Lev. 20:10-11); homosexuality (Lev. 20:13), bestiality (Ex. 22:19), sex with a daughter-in-law (Lev.20:12), a wife's mother (Lev. 20:14), a sister (Lev. 20:17), any near of kin (Lev.18:6-29), and even sex during the menstrual cycle (Lev. 20:18). "Cut off" means death. Two remaining immoral acts did not call for death: If a married man (or single man) had sex with a betrothed concubine, he was to be scourged, but he was not to be put to death (Lev. 19:20). Also, a married man (or single man) who had intercourse with a virgin, who was not betrothed, was required to marry the girl and give her father the price of a bride (Ex. 22:16-17).

"For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. But in the earlier times, even death was to be no reason for the dissolution of the bond. Ω

HOW GOD'S LAW WAS TREATED THROUGH THE AGES

Those Who Hate God and His Law Love Immorality

by Ellen Prasad Pilla

"To disregard light is to reject it. Neglected light becomes darkness. It is God who causes light to shine into hearts. Only those living up to the light they have will receive greater light. According to how God's people treat light, the world will be enlightened, convicted, or condemned. The light long rejected and despised, will be finally withdrawn." Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 269. "Judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy." James 2:10-13.

Marriage represents God's everlasting love for His faithful children. When God's law is rejected, immorality reigns among His people. Here is the story of how people treated God's law throughout the ages and fell through immorality as a result of not keeping the Law.

When God made Adam, God wrote the Ten Commandments and the laws of life and health on every nerve, tissue and faculty of Adam. Albeit, since Marriage, Divorce, Adultery & Remarriage 15

the beginning of Creation 6,000 years ago, only a minority obeyed God and His law.

1. During the first 2,000 years after Creation, the majority forsook God. Only a few faithful patriarchs kept the law.
2. During the next 2,000 years, the tiny nation of Israelites who came from the faithful patriarchs, promised God: "All that the Lord says, we will do." Among these, only a few kept the law with their hearts. The rest of the sinners perished in the wilderness during the 40 years. The other nations forsook God.
3. When Jesus came in 4004 BC, toward the end of the world, He expanded the law to include more. He taught that the Ten Commandments are only the first stage in Christian perfection; and that those who wish to go to heaven should grow far above them to the ultimate stage in Christian perfection, to be like God Himself. This called for a heart change—for purity, holiness, and Godlikeness. Jesus taught that Christians should have the highest standard of character. In Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters 5-7:
 - ◆ Jesus expanded the 3rd Commandment: "Do not take the name of God in vain," to include that all our conversation should be only 'yes' or 'no.' And that anything in between is from the devil.
 - ◆ Jesus expanded the 6th Commandment: "Thou shalt not kill," to include calling names as equal to killing.
 - ◆ Jesus expanded the 7th Commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery," to include lusting in one's heart; and divorcing against God's command.
4. After Jesus returned to heaven, the Catholic church, led by Satan, took reign of the Christian church. During its 1,260 year persecution of the church from 538-1798 AD, the Catholic church changed God's law. As a result, today this church, which brought in celibacy against God's order, is filled with immorality, witchcraft, homosexuality, pedophile priests, polygamy, etc. This church has been in a fallen state for the past 2,000 years.
5. Some faithful protested against the evils in the Catholic church, and formed the Protestant churches. After their patriarchs died; the remaining carried on the evils brought in from the Catholic church. In the 1840s, the Protestant churches rejected the new light God was revealing to them through William Miller and his associates: about keeping the law, sanctuary in heaven, Sabbath, investigative judgment, etc. and adopted 'grace' theology. Today, the Protestant churches are filled with fornication and adultery. The sins of the nominal churches have reached unto heaven, and the honest in heart will be brought to the light and come out of them." 2T 449. These churches have been in a fallen state since the past 200 years.
6. From the Protestant churches, due to persecution there, rose the Seventh-day Adventist church in 1863. These rejoiced in the new truths

from William Miller such as: sanctuary, Sabbath, health message, etc., and like ancient Israel, promised God: "All that the Lord says, we will do." God gave them a prophet and additional truths for the world. To this group it was revealed that fornication will be a great sin in the last days; and were warned that God will judge them ten times more harshly, compared with the other Protestant churches which rejected the law.

The warning given to this church is: "Cleanse the camp of this moral corruption, if it takes the highest men in the highest positions. God will not be trifled with. Fornication is in our ranks. I know it, for it has been shown me to be strengthening and extending its pollutions. There is much we will never know, but that which is revealed makes the church responsible and guilty unless they show a determined effort to eradicate the evil. Cleanse the camp, for there is an accursed thing in it...We may leave them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, but in no case entrust to them the guardianship of souls. False shepherds! —TM, 426-428.

"Adulterous Ministers More Guilty than Belshazzar—It is a truth which should make every one of us weep that those living in these last days, upon whom the ends of the world are come, are far more guilty than was Belshazzar. When men have taken upon themselves the vows of consecration, to devote all their powers to the sacred service of God; when they occupy the position of expositors of Bible truth, and have received the solemn charge; when God and angels are summoned as witnesses to the solemn dedication of soul, body, and spirit to God's service—then shall these men who minister in a most holy office desecrate their God-given powers to unholy purposes? Shall the sacred vessel, whom God is to use for a high and holy work, be dragged from its lofty, controlling sphere to administer to debasing lust?

"Definition of a Harlot—Is not this idol worship of the most degrading kind?—the lips uttering praises and adoring a sinful human being, pouring forth expressions of ravishing tenderness and adulation which belong alone to God—the powers given to God in solemn consecration administering to a harlot, for any woman who will allow the addresses of another man than her husband, who will listen to his advances, and whose ears will be pleased with the outpouring of lavish words of affection, of adoration, of endearment, is an adulteress and a harlot. —TM, 434, 435.

But instead of cleansing the camp, and showing a determined effort to eradicate the evil, the SDA church is ignoring and playing down the sin. They steadily removed the former punishments such as: disfellowshipment or refusal of membership, rebaptism, lowly jobs in the church after readmitting, withholding ordination, etc. and are accepting the guilty as deacons and pastors. This church has reached a fallen state.

The SDA church, the last church on this earth, is a time-piece for the world. A look at its moral state reveals the last stage the world is in. When this last church falls, it will be time for the end of the world, and for the new class of 144,000 saints, chosen by God Himself, to prepare the earth for Christ's Second coming, during the last 3.5 years of this 6,000 year earth's history. One Achan is sufficient to bring God's wrath on the church.

With regret, we publish the below articles about the state of the SDA church, for the correction of the guilty and for the edification of the church and the saints in the world who God is preparing in this end time. Ω

IS MARRIAGE A CONTRACT FOR LIFE?

From the book *Divorce and Divorce Legislation*

Divorce and remarriage were practiced among the nations before the days of Moses. The patriarchs were subject to the influence of their environment. When the children of Israel left Egypt, they brought an Egyptian mentality with them. Divorce and polygamy were permitted among them. Although these practices were alien to God's original arrangement, Moses sanctioned them in his civil code. God did not stop Moses from granting such a law because the Jewish people, still under the influence of regional custom, were not prepared to make great strides toward the perfect will of God who rules the universe.

But as the purpose of God is "to seek and to save that which was lost" and as "every divine institution is to be restored," Christ could not be expected to approve those imperfections in the legislation of Moses. The original ideal of the marriage institution must be reinstated. Its original purity and beauty must be retrieved through Jesus.

In the days of Christ there were two schools of thought. One group granted divorce on the ground of adultery alone. The other group did not allow divorce on any pretext which the husband might have. The third group, Pharisees, who were always involved in the controversy between these schools, tempted Jesus by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"

Jesus answered: "Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh, what therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

Pharisees objected: "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement?"

"Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered (allowed) you to put away your wives, Jesus explained, "but from the beginning it was not so." Matt. 19:3.

Jesus made it clear that the bill of divorcement mentioned in the legislation of Moses (Deut. 24:1-5) was not a command, but only a consent based, not on the perfect will of God, but on the hardness of their hearts, which were influenced by social customs. Jesus appealed that in the plan of salvation, the perfect will of God must triumph over the hardness of man's heart.

The Christian religion, by putting the marriage institution into operation according to the original plan of God, has done more toward decency, justice, peace, happiness, and civilization than any other power in the world. The institution of marriage keeps the moral world in being, and secures it from an untimely dissolution.

God's law made it clear to them that the concession of Moses was not in harmony with the ideal of God. Considered in its pristine sense, when everything that God made was very good (Gen. 1:31), the marriage institution was to be considered indissoluble. "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. Therefore, whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

Here we have the case of an innocent woman that is divorced from a man who put her away, not with a view to remaining unmarried and chaste, but for the purpose of becoming legally attached to another woman. And, according to the verse, he has already taken this step first by committing adultery in his heart. His ex-wife, the innocent party, who has received a bill of divorcement from her adulterous husband, is she free now to remarry? No! Jesus said, in Luke 16:18, that if she follows the example of her ex-husband, she becomes guilty of the same sin into which he has become involved. Result: two cases of adultery involving four people. A divorced lady has no right to remarry so long as her husband lives.

Harmony Between Christ and Paul

Jesus taught that a wife should not leave her husband and a husband should not leave his wife (Mark 10:2-12). Paul taught: "Let not the wife depart from her husband. Let not the husband put away his wife." 1 Cor. 7:10-11. Jesus and Paul were talking about the problem of 'fornication.' Paul taught that connubial unions based on fornication must be dissolved (1 Cor. 6:15-18; 7:2). Jesus taught that an innocent wife put away by her adulterous husband is not permitted to become the wife of another man (Matt. 19:9). Paul taught that a wife, though put away by her husband, is still "bound by law as long as her husband liveth" (1 Cor. 7:10-15).

Paul in 1 Cor. 7:10-15, speaks of Christian wives separated from their unbelieving husbands, and sets the rule that: "so long as the husband lives, she has only two possibilities: either remain single or be reconciled to him."

In the days of the apostles, those holding offices in the church had to meet certain conditions, one of which was blamelessness. Thus, only "husbands of one wife" could serve as pastors (bishops) and deacons; and only a widow who had been the wife of one man" would qualify to be put on the list of those for whom the church has to provide. (1 Tim. 3:2). For this reason, the Samaritan woman (John 4:16-18), who had been the wife of more than one husband, and had therefore "broken God's commandments," would not meet the requirements. Story of Jesus, p. 55. This fact is addi-

THE LOWER AND HIGHER NATURES

The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Matt. 26:41. Paul declared: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." 1 Cor. 9:27, and speaks of the weapons of Christian warfare, "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. 2 Cor. 10:5. Different forces exist within man.

"The will is not the taste or the inclination, but it is the deciding power." There is need for the lower passions and propensities to be subject to the higher powers of the being.

The Bible is clear that to be tempted by our lower, fleshly desires is not sin: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. James 1:14-15. Only when the lust 'conceives,' when the will gives consent, does sin occur.

There are thoughts and feelings suggested and aroused by Satan that annoy even the best of men; but if they are not cherished, if they are repulsed as hateful, the soul is not contaminated with guilt and no other is defiled by their influence. The lower nature of itself cannot sin.

The lower passions have their seat in the body and work through it. The words 'flesh' or 'fleshly' or 'carnal lusts' embrace the lower, corrupt nature; the flesh of itself cannot act contrary to the will of God. We are commanded to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. Put to death the temptation to sin. The corrupt thought is to be expelled. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. All animal propensities are to be subjected to the higher powers of the soul.

The body is to be brought into subjection. The higher powers of the being are to rule. The passions are to be controlled by the will, which is itself to be under the control of God. Our natural propensities must be controlled, or we can never overcome as Christ overcame.

The only power that can create or perpetuate true peace is the grace of Christ. When this is implanted in the heart, it will cast out the evil passions that cause strife and dissension. The evil propensities must be separated from the worker, or he cannot be acceptable before God.

Nonsense and amusement-loving propensities should be discarded. Through belief in God, be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. We need not retain one sinful propensity. As we partake of the divine nature, hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character. The character is the higher nature, where choices are made.

So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained.

Appetite and passion must be brought under the control of the Holy Spirit. There is no end to the warfare this side of eternity. The indulgence of natural appetites and passions has a controlling influence upon the nerves of the brain. The animal organs are strengthened, while the moral and spiritual are depressed.

These statements are not saying that complete victory over sin is unattainable this side of eternity; but they are saying that war with the flesh will not cease this side of eternity, which means, fleshly urges will still be present in the lower natures of believers. Continuous warfare doesn't necessarily mean occasional defeat. Complete victory over the fleshly nature is promised to the Christian in this life. But while complete victory does mean the absence of failure, it does not mean the absence of conflict until our earthly life is past.

In short, Jesus had sinful passions and evil propensities in His lower nature, where He kept them under the control of a sanctified will. But He did not have these passions and propensities in His higher nature, where we need not retain them either. Corruption and degradation is a matter of choice, not something involuntarily received at birth. Jesus' higher nature was not degraded, since that is where choice, character, and the will exist. Christians are to achieve the same state of purity.

Cherish those things that are true, just, pure, lovely, and of good report; but put away whatever is unlike our Redeemer. Every soul that gains eternal life must be like Christ, "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Heb. 7:26.

Christ alone can change your heart and then you will reflect the image of the Lord Jesus. God calls upon us to be like Him—pure, holy, and undefiled. We are to bear the divine image. Here, the earthly process of sanctification is being referred to, not the removal of the fleshly nature at glorification.

Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." John 14:30. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage.

This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble. "No sin in Him," means "no cherished sinful desires." Christ's spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin. Spiritual nature is the same as the higher nature. Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.

All are accountable for their actions while upon probation in this world. All have power to control their actions. If they are weak, in virtue and purity of thoughts and acts, they can obtain help from the Friend of the helpless. Jesus is acquainted with all the weaknesses of human nature, and if entreated, will give strength to overcome the most powerful temptations. The Christian's strongest temptations will come from within, for he must battle against the inclinations of the natural heart. The Lord knows our weaknesses.

By misuse of the marriage relation, the animal passions are strengthened; and as these grow stronger, the moral and intellectual faculties become weaker. The spiritual is overborne by the sensual. – EGW Quotes by Kevin D. Paulson Ω

tional evidence that divorce and remarriage is not in conformity with the perfect will of God.

Legislation of Moses Divorce and Remarriage Permitted

In the civil legislation given to Israel, a man was permitted to give his wife a bill of divorcement, send her away, and marry another woman. And the divorced woman could legally become the wife of another man. Deut. 24:1-5. Moses inserted in his legislation a provision which was contrary to the original plan of God and in conflict with the law of God because of the hardness of their hearts. With their Egyptian mentality, they were not prepared to adopt and appreciate the marriage institution in its original form and beauty and in harmony with the real intent of God's law. Therefore, Moses was permitted to grant them a concession which God actually and explicitly hated.

Another concession which was granted to Israel much against the will of God, is the use of flesh as food in Egypt, and the Lord let them have their way. Numbers 11:4-34.

In its true sense, the law of God demands love (Rom. 13:10): love toward God and toward our neighbor (Matt. 22:36-40), regardless of whether the neighbor is a friend or an enemy (Matt. 5:43-45). But the children of Israel were not prepared to understand the law of God in this light. Therefore, they were given a special concession which was later removed by Christ.

Jesus said to His hearers: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Matt. 5:38, 39, 43, 44.

If, instead of being lenient, God had strictly imposed His perfect will upon the Jews, forcing them to abide by certain standards which they were not prepared to accept, what would have happened? Rebellion after rebellion. And then, God would have been forced to destroy them utterly. Only God knows. What is important for us is that the above facts answer a basic question: While the hearts of God's professed people are in Egypt (Acts 7:39), may they get Egypt oriented concessions? Yes, they may.

The case in point is the Seventh-day Adventist church; called the remnant church in its formative stage in the mid-1800s, but which in its last stage (now), exhibits the characteristics of the Laodician church. Ellen G. White said: "The church has turned back from following Christ her leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt." 5T 217. Not the perfect will of God but worldly-minded concessions have prevailed among them. What Ellen White did in giving concessions was similar to what Moses had done before her. Here are a few examples:

1. Adventists have never considered meat-eating a serious issue. Ellen White was tolerant in this matter.
2. In cases of the violation of the seventh commandment, where the guilty party does not manifest true repentance, if the injured party can obtain a divorce without making their own cases and that of their children, if they have them, worse by so doing, they should be free. She said: "Why will not those who are overtaken in crime (adultery) manifest repentance proportionate to the enormity of their crime, and fly to Christ for mercy, and heal, as far as possible, the wound they have made?" However, there was progressive strictness in Ellen White's attitude toward the question of divorce and remarriage in her later years.
3. From its very inception, the SDA church has endorsed the practice of divorce and remarriage for the innocent party, much against the Bible advise.

However, the SDA church abides by the instruction that: "In the time of the end, every divine institution is to be restored." PK 678. "Sound an alarm in the holy mountain. Gather the host of the Lord, with sanctified hearts, to hear what the Lord will say unto His people; for He has increased light for all who will hear." TM 410.

The institutions which God's people have inherited from Eden are: the Sabbath, health reform, and marriage. At the end of her ministry, Ellen White appealed for a reformation in the lives of God's people in connection with these original principles, and her appeal is still in force. Now that the Second coming of Christ is at the door, this is our last chance to meet God's perfect and complete ideal for His people. Read about the law and the Sabbath in Isaiah 8:13-16, 20; 61:1-4; 58:12-14; about health reform in Isaiah 22:12-14, 22-24; and about marriage in Malachi 2:13-17.

While divorce was in harmony with a lower spiritual condition, where the tolerance of God was manifested, it does not agree with the highest spiritual condition, where the perfect will of God is to prevail (Eph. 2:1-6). It is better to err on the side of mercy than on the side of severity. But, keeping in mind the law of God, we cannot use too much leniency in connection with marriage problems.

Egyptian Concessions in SDA Church— Not Perfect Example

The main purpose of this article is to focus on the question of divorce and remarriage for the guilty party. "A guilty spouse, who is divorced, has not the moral right to marry another while the innocent spouse still lives and remains unmarried and chaste. Should he or she do so, he or she, if a member, shall be disfellowshipped. The person whom he or she marries, if a member, shall also be disfellowshipped.

"A guilty spouse who has violated his or her marriage vow and has been divorced and disfellowshipped and who has remarried, or a person who has been divorced on other than adultery and has remarried, and who has

been disfellowshipped from the church, shall be considered as standing under the disapproval of the church and thus ineligible for membership except as hereinafter provided.

“The marriage contract is not only more sacred but also infinitely more complex than ordinary contracts in its possible involvements; for example, in the factor of the children who may be born. Hence, in a case where any endeavor by a genuinely repentant offender to bring his marital status into line with the divine ideal presents apparently insuperable problems, his or her plea for readmittance shall, before final action is taken, be brought by the church through the pastor or district leader to the conference committee for counsel and recommendation as to any possible steps that the repentant one, or ones, may take to secure such readmittance.

“Readmittance to membership of those who have been disfellowshipped for reasons given in the foregoing sections, shall be on the basis of rebaptism.

“When a person who has been involved in divorce proceedings is finally readmitted to church membership, every care should be exercised to safeguard the unity and harmony of the church by not giving such a person responsibility as a leader; especially in an office which requires the rite of ordination, unless by very careful counsel. SDA Manual.

The Manual says (1) that the guilty party is allowed to remarry after the innocent party has taken this step, and that, in case disfellowshipment is necessary, (2) the guilty party can be refellowshipped with the second spouse. Practice, deeply regretted by many honest SDA's, shows that in many cases even the priority right established by the conjunction “while...is only a theoretical delusion. In this respect we have heard many complaints from earnest Adventists. The problem is exemplified hereunder:

“Some years ago a professional man had a succession of flirtations with various of his secretaries. He finally divorced his wife (a very fine and outstanding woman), who was not unfaithful to him, and married the current girl concerned. He and his new wife attended the same church that his first wife and three children attended. Of course, he and the new wife were disfellowshipped. They continued to attend church. Some years later he and the new wife and baby moved elsewhere. He succeeded in convincing the church leaders there that they should be taken back into church fellowship, which was done by baptism.

“Another professional man became infatuated with a musician. He lived with her for several months, finally returned to his wife and four children. Then he left again, and divorced his wife, who had worked hard for years to help care for them and their children while he was climbing the ladder to success. His wife had not been unfaithful to him. He married the other girl, and had a baby. He was disfellowshipped from the church. The second wife had not been a church member. Some years later, after large financial gifts to the denomination, he is now a local elder in one of our churches.

“The wife of one of our ministers was visiting a church one Sabbath, where she and her husband had once labored. She was horrified to see a man and wife baptized into the church whom she knew to be guilty parties in previous divorces. She wept through the service.

“Several ministers told a couple that they were living in sin, and could not be taken back into the church. One was a guilty party, and the other the innocent party to previous divorces. Then other ministers came along and told them that they were not living in sin, that they could and should be rebaptized and taken back into the church, which was done. This has brought confusion and division in the church, with the loss of souls.

“This problem of divorce and remarriage is an increasingly serious problem to this denomination, because of differences of opinion. Unscriptural Divorces and Social Relationships, pp.1-2. The seriousness of this situation was admitted in one of the most outstanding SDA publications: “Divorce and remarriage is the most perplexing and bewildering problem facing the church today.” Ministry, Sept. 1954. This is one of the greatest concerns as we consider the moral and spiritual condition of the SDA church today.

Ellen G. White said: “These are perilous times for the church of God, and the greatest danger now is that of self-deception. Individuals professing to believe the truth are blind to their own danger and wrongs. They reach the standard of piety which has been set up by their friends and themselves, they are fellowshipped by their brethren, and are satisfied, while they entirely fail to reach the gospel standard set up by our divine Lord. If they regard iniquity in their hearts, the Lord will not hear them. But with many it is not only regarded in the heart, but openly carried out in the life; yet in many cases the wrongdoers receive no rebuke.” 1T 214.

“Many like the king of Israel, follow their own carnal desires, and enter into unsanctified marriages. Many who started out in life with as fair and promising as morning, in their limited sphere, as Solomon had in his exalted station, through one false and irrevocable step in the marriage relation, lose their souls, and draw others down to ruin with them. 2BC 1031.

“There are many unhappy marriages because of so much haste. Two unite their interest at the marriage altar, by most solemn vows before God, without previously weighing the matter, and devoting time to sober reflection and earnest prayer. Many move from impulse. They have no thorough acquaintance with the dispositions of each other. They do not realize that the happiness of their whole life is at stake. If they move wrong in this matter, and their marriage life proves unhappy, it cannot be taken back. If they find they are not calculated to make each other happy, they must endure it the best they can.” 3SG 120.

Comparison Between Spiritual and Literal Marriage

The marriage relation that unites husband and wife is compared to the relation which exists between Christ and His church. Eph. 5:32: 23-32; GC 381.

The most important aspect of the parallel between the symbolic and the literal marriage, as Paul brings it out, is the wife's subjection to her husband and the husband's love for his wife.

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Eph. 5:23-25.

But there may be some negative aspects, too. What happens, for example, when those who profess to be God's church prove unfaithful? He rejects them and chooses others. "Because they failed of fulfilling God's purposes, the children of Israel were set aside, and God's call was extended to other peoples. If these too prove unfaithful, will they not in like manner be rejected?" COL 304.

"For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." Rom. 11:21.

Does this fact suggest that if apostasy brings a change in the relation between God and His professed people, then there must also be a similar change in the relation between husband and wife in case of adultery? Some say yes. As circumstances may prompt God to reject His professed church and choose another, it has been suggested that under similar circumstances a husband may also divorce his wife and marry another woman. It is claimed that there must be a perfect parallel.

We understand that a comparison between the two cases (Christ and the church/husband and wife) establishes only a limited parallel.

While a man's wife is just one person, Christ's church is a family (Eph. 2:19; 6T 168; DA 835; 4T 110). When there is apostasy in the church, at least some of its members remain loyal to the truth. God has never been left without a true remnant (Rom. 11:5). So, through a succession of faithful remnants, God has had one faithful church on earth from the beginning until now. In this sense God has never cast away or withdrawn His presence from His true church (Rom. 11:1, 2; Matt. 28:20), and the gates of hell have never prevailed against her (Matt. 16:18).

"From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth. In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people." AA 11.

In case of open apostasy, the unfaithful majority is referred to as an adulterous mother, while the faithful remnant is addressed as a virgin daughter (Hos. 2:2). When the mother is rejected, none other than the daughter

takes her place in the symbolic relationship between God and His people. In the spiritual relationship, even two daughters may be considered (Ezek. 23:1-18). As can be seen, a parallel here is impossible between the spiritual and the literal marriage.

But there is another aspect where a parallel is possible: God does not reject His people immediately in case of apostasy. He still pleads with them to give up their sin. He rejects them only if they refuse to repent. Read Isa. 1:4, 15-27; 2 Chron. 36:14-16. So, in the literal marriage relationship, neither the Bible nor the Spirit of Prophecy encourages divorce where there has been genuine repentance. AH 346. In the spiritual relationship, where God has already divorced His people because of inveterate apostasy, He still appeals to the adulterous mother church to return to Him, and He promises to forgive her and take her back on condition of repentance and conversion (Jer. 3:1, 7-14, 20-22; Rom. 11:15, 23). These circumstances show that the advocates of divorce and remarriage are making at least two mistakes: (1) where a parallel is possible they refuse to draw a parallel, because they are not ready to grant the guilty party a chance to repent and become reconciled to the injured marriage partner and because they overlook the harm that would be done to the children (AH 346); (2) and where a parallel is clearly impossible, because it would suggest incest (Ezek. 23:1-18), there they want to draw parallel. We are sorry, but we cannot agree with them on these points. Our duty is to help sinners, as far as possible, find repentance, forgiveness of sins, and reconciliation.

ADDENDUM

The doctrine of the ancient church on divorce was tolerably well established long before marriage came to be regarded as a sacrament in the more modern sense of that term. At the same time the sacramental character attached to marriage strengthened the view which Scripture authorized of its fixed and indissoluble nature. Even death was held by some, although never by the prevalent opinion, to be no dissolution of the bond. The original source of the doctrine was of course the declarations in the gospel, which were honestly and laboriously interpreted with a pretty uniform result long before the doctrine of the sacraments was developed. Before this the Christian spirit of forgiveness had an important influence on opinion in regard to divorce. A very early and important passage on divorce is contained in the Shepherd of Hermas (ii Mandat. 4, par. 1). We will give it in English.

"And I said to him, Master, let me ask thee a few things. Say on, says he, and I said, If any one had a wife faithful in the Lord, and found her in adultery, does the man sin if he lives with her? And he said to me, As long as he is ignorant, the man is without crime, if he lives with her. But if the man had known that his wife had offended, and the woman had not repented, and if she remains in her [sexual sin], and the man lives with her, he will be guilty of her sin and partaker of her adultery. And I said to him,

What then if the woman shall persist in her vice? And he said, Let the man put her away, and stay by himself (i.e. remain unmarried). But if he put away his wife and take another, he too commits adultery himself. And I said to him, What if a woman, when put away, shall repent and wish to return to her husband, shall she not be taken back by her husband? And he said to me, Verily, if her husband do not take her back, he sins, and allows himself to commit a great sin; he ought to take back the sinning woman who has repented; but ought not to do this often. For there is one repentance for the servants of God. On account of repentance therefore the man ought not to marry again. This conduct is incumbent on both man and woman. Nor is there adultery only, said he, if one pollutes his own flesh, but he also who makes an idol commits adultery. Hence, if one persists in such things also and repents not, withdraw from him and live not with him. Otherwise thou too art partaker of his sin. For this was the command given to you to remain unmarried, whether man or woman, for in things of this sort there can be repentance.” [This is from the first century.]

In this passage it is distinctly asserted that a man who puts away an adulterous wife, and marries another woman, commits adultery; and another reason is given for his remaining unmarried—namely that he may be in a condition to receive her back on her repentance. But such indulgence cannot extend beyond the first transgression. Here the foundation on which the first assertion is built is, no doubt, the words of our Lord, as explained by the Apostle in 1 Corinthians 7—“Let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband”—and Hermas conceived that the reconciliation there referred to was to follow a separation on account of the adultery of the husband. He reasons fairly, as others have done then and since, that if this be a command for the wife, it is such also for the husband. Thus his injunctions are all scriptural, according to his understanding of Scripture. He represents an opinion that must have been extensively held, and at length became the ruling one, and all this, long before the doctrine of the sacramental character of marriage obtained currency.

In the next three centuries many other witnesses appear on the same side:

Clement, of Alexandria, says (Strom. ii., 23, par. 144) that Scripture “regards marrying again to be adultery, if the other divorced partner is living”; and again, a little after (par. 145), “not only is he who puts away a woman the cause to her of this (adultery), but he who receives her also, as giving her opportunity to sin. For if he did not receive her, she would go back to her husband,” where reconciliation is thought of as possible and desirable, whatever the woman had done to occasion the divorce.

Origen seems to be of the same mind, where he says that some rulers of the church have permitted a woman to marry, while her husband is alive, contrary to what is written in 1 Corinthians 7:39, and Romans 7:3.

In the fourth century, near the end, Augustin did more than any other man to establish the same opinion. He advocates it in several places. His treatise, *de conjugiiis adulterinis*,...was written especially to show that

1 Corinthians 7:11, “let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband,” can be understood only of a wife who has withdrawn from her husband on account of his unfaithfulness.

In this work Augustin comes on ground where Hermas stood. Thus he says to his friend, “what seems hard to you, that one of the married pair should be reconciled to the other after adultery, will not be hard if faith is there. For why do we still regard as adulterers those whom we believe to have been washed by baptism or healed by repentance?”

Jerome, a contemporary of Augustin, is also decided in his opinion on the same side, as may be seen in his commentary on Matthew 19:4. A letter of his to a friend, Oceanus, is deserving of mention, as giving us the case of a divorce and remarriage of a Christian lady of high condition. Fabiola had a worthless, licentious husband. She had a right, says Jerome, to repudiate him, although not to marry again. —Transcribed from the book *Divorce and Divorce Legislation*, pp. 104-125, by Theodore D. Woolsey. Ω

THE INWARD CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT

by Ellen Prasad Pilla

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Romans 8:16. “He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Galatians 6:8.

“For the flesh desireth against the Spirit. Nature desires what is quite contrary to the Spirit of God. But the Spirit against the flesh. But the Holy Spirit on his part opposes your evil nature. These are contrary to each other—the flesh and the Spirit; there can be no agreement between them. That ye may not do the things which ye would—that, being thus strengthened by the Spirit, ye may not fulfill the desire of the flesh, as otherwise ye would do.” Wesley’s Notes for Galatians 5:17.

Jesus said: “Without me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5. “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13.

The word: “Self” in the Dictionary presents two sets of words that are opposed to each other. They represent the characteristics of God and Satan.

The Characteristics of God and His children are: Self-control, self-denial, self-development, self-discipline, self-distrust, self-examination, self-forgetfulness, self-preservation, self-renouncing love, self-reproach, self-restraint, self-sacrifice and self-sacrificing love. These produce the fruit of the Spirit, and lead to everlasting life.

The Characteristics of Satan and his children are: Self-confidence, self-dependence, self-esteem, self-exaltation, self-glorification, self-gratification, self-idolatry, self-indulgence, self-interest, selfish course, selfish

SDA Church Principles Regarding divorce & Remarriage

1. *To effect reconciliation when marriages are under threat. Separation better than apostasy, but marriage vow still binding.*
2. *Divorce in courts not accepted in the heavenly court: “Although Divorced, Still Married in God’s Sight—A woman may be legally divorced from her husband by the laws of the land and yet not divorced in the sight of God and according to the higher law. Although the laws of the land may grant a divorce, yet they are husband and wife according to the laws of God.” Adventist Home, p. 344.*
3. *Adventist ministers are forbidden to perform marriage ceremonies for persons who divorced or had been divorced without “Scriptural grounds.” The policy stated: “Whereas the practices of the society have become most deplorable as seen in the prevalence of unscriptural divorces, that we instruct our ministers not to unite in marriage any parties so divorced.”*
4. *That church must administer discipline in the maintenance of a high standard of moral purity and integrity. All members found guilty of adultery must be disfellowshipped, and could only be readmitted to the church by way of rebaptism even if they had reconciled with their spouse. People who were disfellowshipped because of wrongful second marriages could “not be readmitted to church membership so long as the unscriptural relationship continues,” And the pastor was responsible for investigating “all the circumstances,” and for requiring any member seeking to remarry to “produce satisfactory evidence in support of his or her claim.”*
5. *If the church’s reputation had been sullied by the flagrant actions of a transgressor, the church might elect to disfellowship him or her even if there was evidence of genuine repentance. The policy called for disfellowshipping the person who married someone who had been divorced without biblical grounds. (Lev. 21 prohibits priests and Levites marrying divorced women.) Members who divorced without biblical reasons, and remained single, were to be censured. But, if they later remarried, they and the one they married were both to be disfellowshipped.*
6. *To readmit formerly disfellowshipped members, there should be evidence of sincere repentance, the establishment of wholesome family life and a “praiseworthy reputation,” and fulfillment of financial obligations to one’s children or former spouse. How long must a person wait to be readmitted? “A period of years shall be required.”*
7. *In case where any endeavor by a genuinely repentant offender to bring his marital status into line with the divine ideal; if such a one was readmitted to the church, the policy insisted on rebaptism. And the readmitted member should not hold leadership positions in the church, especially positions requiring ordination.*
8. *The policy stated that the members should not be permitted to continue in church fellowship if they remarried while their former spouses, whom they divorced without biblical reasons, were still alive.*
9. *EGW saw no light in breaking up a second marriage, even though the circumstances that led to the marriage were not exemplary. – Adventist Family Ministries.*

The reason we highlight the SDA church is because it is supposed to be a light to the World. According to how the SDAs treat light, the world will be enlightened, convicted, or condemned. The church will be held responsible for the sins of the world. The punishment on SDAs for breaking God’s Law will be ten times greater than on rejectors of the Law. Hence, with regard to divorce and remarriage, the Indian SDA church should follow the Bible and Indian culture and should cleanse the camp and not look to West and not allow people to live do as they do. – by Ellen Prasad Pilla

heart, selfish interests, selfishness, self-justification, self-murder, self-pity, self-righteousness, self-seeking and self-sufficiency. These produce fleshly lusts, and lead to corruption and death.

Paul’s list of the fruit of the Spirit are: “Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Gal. 5:19-21. These are the natural law or the natural qualities put in our hearts by God.

Paul’s list of the works of the flesh are: “Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Gal. 5:22-25. These are unnatural qualities adopted by us from Satan.

Two Classes of People

When God created Adam, God put His perfect genes in Adam. Adam was the son of God. This is how man inherited Godly nature, God’s Spirit, and a holy and noble character.

Satan also put his genes in man through Eve to destroy man. This is evident (1) from God’s words on the day of the first sin: “I will put enmity between her seed (Christ’s) and your (Satan’s) seed. God spoke of two seeds on that day. (2) Eve was called “the mother of all living”, mother of both seeds. (3) God punished Eve with labour pains as a result of her sin. (4) The two seeds or classes of people are elaborately spoken of in the Bible. (5) The entire Bible is the story of the controversy between the two seeds: God’s children and Satan’s. This is how we inherited the lower carnal nature, and fleshly lusts. God hates fornication because of what Satan did and because the offspring born in fornication multiply evil seed and work to destroy God’s seed.

The Scriptures reveal that we have two fathers, and through them, we have inherited two natures: the spiritual and the carnal. The Spiritual nature will lead us to heaven, and the carnal nature will lead us to hell. We have a choice. If we do self-forgetful deeds; have LESS self-confidence, self-esteem, self-exaltation, self-glory, self-gratification, self-idolatry, self-indulgence, self-interest, selfish heart, selfishness, self-justification, self-pity, self-righteousness, self-seeking and self-sufficiency, we will inherit eternal life. But if we serve only SELF, we will reap death. There are in this world, the doers and the pretenders. The doers obey what the Lord says. But the pretenders, pretend to obey the Lord, but serve self. These are self-deceived because Satan knows that they are walking in his path.

Satan was full of SELF and “I”

The spirit of self-sacrificing love is the spirit pervading heaven. Man’s only hope of regaining Eden is through self-control. Christ exercised self-con-

trol stronger than death and followed the path of self-denial. The whole Christian life should be one of self-denial. Self-discipline is essential to mental strength, nobility of character; and is more valuable than eloquence. Christ's followers should cultivate self-distrust but not self-esteem, and self-denial but not self-indulgence. God-given wisdom leads to self-examination. Make self-examination on your birthday.

But instead of self-sacrificing love, Lucifer's sin originated in self-seeking, which inspired him in his rebellion. See how many "selfish" words are used for Satan. Satan had an "I" problem. He has the spirit of selfishness, which is the root of all evil and which is the fruit of the spirit of devils. Satan was selfish, covetous, and self-centered. He was a mighty angel, first and highest in command in heaven. He hated Christ. Satan wanted to be higher than God Himself and worked to dethrone God and His Law. Satan's ambition for position and honor led to his rebellion. Satan desired God's power, but not His character. He wanted to win the homage of heavenly beings to himself instead of the Creator. So, in his pride and ambition, in subtle and self-pitying way, Satan promised greater freedom to angels and claimed to present laws better than God's laws.

Lucifer's desire for self-exaltation, indulged little by little, led to his fall. Satan's spirit is to get and draw to self. Nearly one half of the angels joined him and 1/3rd of them fell. Satan misrepresented God by saying that He was unwilling to make self-sacrifice for others. Satan's self-idolatry laid at foundation of all sin and sin entered the world through self-exaltation. His fatal passion for self-indulgence caused his fall. When God asked Satan to change his ways, Satan began to justify himself. Self-justification originated in Satan. This led to self-righteousness, also an attribute of Satan. Source of self-esteem and unsanctified independence is the spirit of Satan. Satan accused God of requiring self-denial of angels; and accused God that He was not practicing self-denial. Satan lacked self-discipline, which is more valuable than Eloquence.

These are the principles of Satan's kingdom. Worshipers of self belong to Satan's kingdom. These lower passions have seat in the body and work through it. The downfall of kingdoms and men was caused by self-indulgence. There is no enmity between fallen angels and fallen men. Both through apostasy, are evil. Fallen men and fallen angels unite in a desperate struggle to destroy God's Law and God's law-abiding people.

The Flesh and the Spirit

These two principles are "contrary the one to the other." The flesh and the spirit are so contrary that they are **opposed to each other** upon every point. As white is opposed to black, as heaven is opposed to hell, as Christ is opposed to Satan, as truth is opposed to falsehood, as grace is opposed to sin, so "the spirit" and "the flesh" are contrary to each other. The flesh is hard, impenitent, obdurate, and unrepenting. There is nothing in it soft,

tender, and yielding to divine impressions; nothing in it that is melted into love or obedience. But the spirit is tender, yielding, penitent, contrite, broken, submissive, and bowed down before the throne of God. These two feelings are contrary. You never can reconcile penitence and impenitence; obduracy and contrition, hardness of heart and softness of heart; a seared conscience and a tender conscience. These are irreconcilable as light and darkness, as truth and error. The flesh is one and the spirit, the other. Therefore, they are contrary the one to the other. The flesh hates God, and in hating God, hates those who bear the image of God. But the spirit loves those who are begotten of God. There is no hope of eternal life in the carnal mind. The unregenerate are without hope and without God in the world. Eph. 2:12.

The Christian Warfare

The Word of God rebukes iniquity. His Law condemns the lawbreaker. The Law is the sin-detector, and therefore the very mention of the Commandments of God stirs up the evil attributes of him who is wilfully sinning against God. A single mention of God's Law is a sting to the conscience of such men. A single sentence of Holy Writ, which expresses the binding claims and the immutability of the Law of God, drives them beside themselves with rage. The words: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Ps. 19:7); "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments" (Ps. 119:6); "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law" (Ps. 119:18), cause them to be stirred to madness. They make no such prayer, but close the eyes of their understanding, lest they shall see, and be convinced and converted.

Those who hate the Law of Jehovah reveal that they have carnal minds, which are not subject to the Law of God, but to the stubborn resistance of their unbelieving hearts—not because of ignorance, but because they have set their feet in the path of transgression. It is not evidence that they need; for they have had evidence piled upon evidence, and it has only rendered them more desperate, abusive, and cruel in their denunciations. They are determined not to turn their feet out of the path of sin into the path of holiness; they will not run in the way of God's Commandments. They have cast the Lord's instruction behind their backs, and they manifest the attributes of the destroyer. This is the root and groundwork of all the terrible hatred against the Law of Jehovah. We have this hatred to meet, with the words: "It is written."

"Satan's work in our world today is to destroy the moral image of God in man, by making void the Divine Law; and our enemies are inspired by his spirit. By casting aside God's great standard of character, he can deprave human nature, and win men and women to his standard; for, "Where no law is, there is no transgression." Romans 4:15. With triumph, Satan watches the professedly Christian world, as they earnestly do the very work he is doing." EGW. — Ellen Prasad Pilla

Ω

Editorial — Of Two Christians

The first Christian is a true follower of Christ, my father, late Pastor Pilla Devaprasad, a shy, soft-spoken, saintly man. My father accepted truth at its face value and lived it all the 80 years of his life, and was known as a saintly person. He studied in a Catholic Seminary to prepare for priesthood. One day, he heard a sermon at a tent meeting where an American preacher by name C. S. Cooper, preached that seventh-day is the Sabbath. Touched by this revelation, father asked his priests for months to tell him about the Sabbath; and was disappointed at their stern warnings not to talk about the Sabbath. After enduring severe punishments, and realizing that truth was not coming from them, he left the seminary.

He then searched for a church that kept the seventh-day Sabbath and joined it. My maternal grandfather was the pastor of this church, who sent him to a college and gave his daughter in marriage. My father became a pastor and raised over 20 Seventh-day Adventist churches in Andhra and in Orissa. Some years ago, members of the Allur SDA church, the first church my father had pastored as a bachelor, when they saw me, wept and said: "As a bachelor, your father's life was like that of Christ's." The last church my father raised before retirement in the 1980s was a SDA church in Dandakaranya, Orissa, in which forest my mother and father lived a month among the Boda tribe people. My father was a true missionary to his own country. This church has history. In the riots against the Christians in Orissa some years ago, the pastor of this church was killed.

I will talk about my father's life that concerns this magazine. Two months before my father died in 2006, at the age of 80, my mother told me: "Your father never had women-problem, never." That was a profound statement because my mother rarely spoke the truth. Their marriage was the marriage of the opposites. She lacked faith, was impetuous, accused, abused and ill-treated him; but rarely did my father open his mouth. I wondered at his patience and long-suffering. Even when the accusations were wrong, he silently bore them without a word.

As a pastor, during his home visitations, father was always accompanied by mother and never visited homes alone. Like Job, he never looked at a woman. Never a lie, accusation, and unneedful word come from my father's lips. He was innocent, simple, and truthful and had firm principles. He would fast weekly and give that meal to the beggars. He was deeply spiritual. He would often tell us children during worships at home, about the wonderful providences of God in his life; about his delivering people from evil spirits; about his healing the sick with a prayer and natural remedies; and would always end by saying: "Whatever happened in my life, God always showed it to me before it happened." I have not seen sin in my father; and never a time when he said, "it was mistake." He was a strict disciplinarian and taught us children that our "yes" should always be a

"yes," and our "no," always a "no," and that anything in between comes from the devil. So, the four of us children grew up innocently and thought that the Christian world out there, are truthful just like our father, and never realized that there are wolves out there.

Since our characters are judged by our "selfish" or "selfless" acts; let me mention some "self-" words that are applicable to my father. He had self-discipline and self-control. At any time of the night when I woke up from sleep as a child, I always found father either studying his Bible or praying on his knees. He practiced self-denial. He fasted often. He was self-forgetful. Whether he had money or not, he made sure that his guests had good food. He had self-distrust and humility. He had self-renouncing and self-sacrificing love. Whenever he came to Bangalore to visit me, the next day he would say: "I wish your mother was here. She would be happy." In spite of troubles from her, he loved her with an everlasting love and never remembered her faults.

He had self-development. I got some spiritual books from my father's library. The sentences he underlined in them, which he lived, told of the spiritual giant he was. He had read books on child guidance in order to train us. Where the book said not to spare punishment, he underlined it and practiced it on us. Father never spared the rod. In spite of facing displeasure and rebellion from children, father made sure that our feet were put firmly on the path toward heaven. Even after our marriages, father stood by us and guided us. We could always depend on him. Father was a home-maker. In his books, he underlined the words that fathers should take children on family outings. Father often took us to the parks for picnics; played games with us, and at home, served hotel-type 'thali' food for us. He was very thoughtful and invested all his time in us. None of us became spiritual giants like our father; but father's kind nature is in all of us, for we are ever cautious that we represent Pastor P. Devaprasad.

I admired father's spirituality and decided to make his God as my God. Today, I run "Wake Up India" ministry and publish and distribute freely in India, "**For Such a Time**" and "**Health Reformer**" magazines at my cost from my savings. This is because of the selfless example shown to me by my father. It is my desire that, as a result of these magazines, people are saved into God's kingdom. It amazes me that on an average, my father's one member, now has 25 members in her family going to church; and the members are multiplying after his death.

What an influence one righteous life can have! We never go to heaven or hell alone. Someone will be in heaven or hell because of our good or bad influence on them. My father's crown will have hundreds or thousands of stars as a result of his self-sacrificing love and life. And I pray that I may have some stars, too. And perhaps YOU! If you have not accepted Christ as your Saviour yet; or have decided to endure your bad marriage to the best possible way as a result of this magazine, you could be that star; and I pray that God will see you through in your difficulties.

“Christian” means a “follower of Christ.” The other “so called Christian” I know, who I will call “B”, is a pretender and not a follower of Christ. He is a perfect example of “a son of the devil.” B has subtle rebelliousness and a strong natural bent toward evil. His paths are always crooked. He covers up his tracks with lies and never comes clean before God or man. He rebels against correction. B indulges in self-pity, self-esteem, self-exaltation, self-glory, self-gratification, self-indulgence, self-interest, selfishness, self-justification, self-righteousness, and self-seeking. He hates discipline and objected discipline to his children. “Train up a child in the way he should go,” is nothing to him because he wishes hell for them.

B proposed to a virtuous woman who asked if the promise would be permanent. He promised, but behind her, he had another woman. For making a promise to such a man, his wife married, but found that B was a serial adulterer and a promise-breaker. B never meant to keep any promise he made. B had high expectations, married a worthy woman but could not live up to her godly nature and despised correction. His wife wanted to be a missionary but failed to ask B if he had similar interest. This is why a lot of preparation is needed before marrying someone. Before finding all about a person, one should not agree for marriage. Dating under supervision should be allowed by the parents.

After 20 years of marriage, knowing that B was rebellious, hell bent, and caused disorder in the house, his wife decided to follow the Lord and invited B to be a missionary. To this, B said that “He never had a spiritual inclination.” His life showed how true this was. But not wanting to be behind her, B became an associate pastor in a church. As he lacks strength of character and self-discipline, he indulged in self-pity and immoral acts. B is a master at self-pity and self-attraction. He gave priority to outward adorning instead of inward beauty. B was an idler at home; but would dress fashionably and place himself on the crossroads to attract people. His self-pity and self-glory made his students to cause a strike in a school and get suspended (as a result of which B, too, was suspended); caused women to fall, and made a hundred members of his church to fall.

This “immoral pastor,” during his visitations, had affairs with several women in his church, and as Absalom, with self-pity tried to grab his father’s kingdom; B with self-pity and self-glory, broke his church and took 100 of their members and started his own church. In his self-interest and self-absorption, no evil looks evil to him. He never studies his Bible, nor spiritual books. True spirituality and right-living are hateful to him. Breaking 7th and 10th commandments are a small matter to him. He never seeks God or elders for guidance. His infatuation for woman led him to divorce; break his promise that he will be there forever for his children who he tore from the mother; and marry a divorcee, against the counsel of the Bible. Yet, B could not be stopped. Without faith and action, with gift of the gab, B has become a touring preacher. His church is a remnant church within a remnant church. This tells about the moral condition of the SDA church. For downplaying immorality in the church, this is what the church gets—im-

moral men leading the flock to destruction. What happened to Satan who sought to be above the Most High? He fell to the bottomless pit. Likewise, B will take hundreds to hell with him. A man who has less regard for God’s Law and made crooked paths all his life, will be left to his evil nature. God did not destroy Satan but allowed his sin to mature to show us and to Satan how far his sin can go. Likewise, God is allowing Satan’s children to fill up their cups with iniquity.

Today, the Christian churches are filled with such kind of “immoral pastors” who do not fear God or obey His Law. They hate right-living and right-doing. Righteous members will not make immoral men as pastors, except those with hidden sins. These self-deceived people are forming into bundles to be burned. Before these churches receive plagues from God, the righteous in these churches will be called out by the third angel: “Come out of her, my people.” If you are not already out of them, I hope that you will come out then.

Friend, are you living in adultery? Following fleshly lusts will lead to death. You can be cleansed. A righteous man may fall seven times but will raise up. We should be living-sacrifices to God. Fleshly lusts should be crucified. With God’s help, you can gain victory. Satan is an adulterer and a deceiver from the beginning. Why would you want to be like Satan? It is not worth trusting your valuable life with a loser. So, give up fornication and adultery.

If you have erred in divorcing and remarrying, and now repent, God will forgive you. But since you disobeyed God’s Law, and have set a bad example to the society, you may not be a leader or a teacher in the church any more, even if you repent. Accept church discipline and do humble duties in your church. Care for your children and spouse you abandoned. There is order in God’s government. Likewise, in God’s church. If you are disfellowshipped, accept it gracefully. You may not preach because your bad example will destroy many members to be like you and will bring confusion a bad name to the church. Your only hope is heaven. Without repentance and forgiveness from your wronged spouse, you have no hope to go to heaven. Your prayers and offerings will not be accepted by God until this is done. So, deal truly with your soul, if you really wish to be saved.

To conclude, there are only two kinds of people on this earth, those who are “selfless” and those who are “self-centered.” A young man or woman who is considering marriage should look for these characteristics in their partners. There is no hope for a selfish person because his eyes are always earthward, inward and carnal. He lives for self. A selfish person, who avoids correction and indulges in self, may reach to the heights because of his keen self-interest, but is sure to fall from his height just like his father, the devil, fell from the heights of heaven to the bottomless pit. On earth, such person’s life may look like a success, but in the heavenly eyes, he is a failure. On the contrary, the “selfless, self-denying, self-distrustful, self-

forgetful, and self-sacrificing” person may look like a loser on this earth because he gives up everything for others. In the silence of his soul, he trusts God to make things right one day. His patience and endurance will be tested, but he will gain eternal life. If such are going through a bad marriage, I would advise you to endure it to the best. One advise to keep in mind for these last days is: “A man’s enemies will be those of his own household.” During persecution, many righteous will be handed over by their own spouses. So, if a evil spouse wants to separate from you, or you want to separate from that spouse for a while to spend time with God, consider it. A righteous man who wants to live for Christ needs no divorce. So, do not divorce and sin.

In Bangalore, “Wake Up India” is a helpline for women. We get calls about marriage problems. The counsel we gave in this newsletter is sufficient, but if you wish to speak with someone or need a prayer, you may call or write. Those who speak Kannada may Call the following numbers: Cell: 8971310929 - Mr. Pushparaj; and Cell: 8123985443 - Mr. V. Bhasker. Those who speak English may call my number, write or email to me, which information is given on the second page of this magazine. May God bless you to be selfless and self-sacrificing overcomers! – Ellen Prasad Pilla Ω

SOME STORIES

Fifty years ago, there were no quick remarriages. When couples separated, they each attended church separately; and it was beautiful to see the members advise the couple to reunite. Here is a story of such reunion:

► S, a successful engineer and his wife, both church people, separated for years. She accused S of hitting her. To reconcile with wife, S followed her after work, and visited her home to meet his daughter. But wife refused visitation or reconciliation. Years passed. One day, I heard the wife enquire of someone: “Is there any news from that side?” The other person said: “No.” I presumed she was enquiring about her husband and passed the word. S came and asked me what I had heard. I told him what I had heard. After confirmation from me, S met her and she gladly accepted him. This happened 40 years ago. Today, the family are happily married and are living overseas. For staying single separately for years, it was possible for them to unite again. The Bible recommends such reunions.

► G and his wife H were a loving couple and had no children. G died when his wife H was young. Elders of H’s family wanted her remarried. They found a couple who were having problems, convinced M who has a son, to divorce his wife and marry H as she has a steady income; which he did, and married within a month after the death of the first husband. Unfortunately, these two are active elders in a SDA church; to the hurt of M’s son and his wife. One often heard H say in the church: “His wife regrets now, but he is mine now.” This is confusion. Bible calls this adultery. Here, the family erred in arranging a quick marriage for their own benefit, to the destruction of the other family, which should not have happened.

► B, of who I spoke in my Editorial, followed H’s example and divorced his virtuous wife and married a divorcee, to the hurt of his two children. Thus, each adulterer and adulteress, spreads his/her bad influence, like a ripple on the water, until the world is filled with immorality. The words of the song: “Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full into His wonderful face,” mean nothing to these sons of Baal who rebel against God’s Law; throw God out of lives and churches; and occupy church offices.

► J had an affair with a woman. This affected his wife mentally. Her only thought the rest of her life was that he had an affair; and she imagined of hearing footprints at night. To make sure J did not wander, after supper, she locked the bedroom of J which had no windows; yet accused him the next day that she heard some foot prints. J humbly submitted to his wife’s locked-door treatment in his old age. Though J never repeated his mistake, and his repentance was genuine. It was beautiful that he remained silent and cooperated the best possible way. This is being Christlike.

A thousand ‘salutes’ to virtuous men and women of India who are enduring bad marriages! I know many noble-minded uneducated women among Hindus, Muslims and Christians, who have smoking and drinking husbands, who face torture on a daily basis; get no any support from the police; yet tenderly care for their abusive husbands. Likewise are there men of dignity, who suffer under abusive wives. You lives are the best rebuke to this adulterous world. God will be your husband and will see you through until you reach the gates of heaven. Will meet you there! – Ellen Prasad Pilla Ω

Repentance is Obtained Only From Christ

“Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. When the heart yields to the influence of the Spirit of God, the conscience will be quickened, and the sinner will discern something of the depth and sacredness of God’s holy law, the foundation of His government in heaven and on earth. The “Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” illuminates the secret chambers of the soul, and the hidden things of darkness are made manifest. John 1:9. Conviction takes hold upon the mind and heart. The sinner has a sense of the righteousness of Jehovah and feels the terror of appearing, in his own guilt and uncleanness, before the Searcher of hearts. He sees the love of God, the beauty of holiness, the joy of purity; he longs to be cleansed and to be restored to communion with heaven.

The prayer of David after his fall, illustrates the nature of true sorrow for sin. His repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his guilt; no desire to escape the judgment threatened, inspired his prayer. David saw the enormity of his transgression; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. He longed for the joy of holiness—to be restored to harmony and communion with God. A repentance such as this, is beyond the reach of our own power to accomplish; it is obtained only from Christ, who ascended up on high and has given gifts unto men. We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ. Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin. Jesus said, “If I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me.” — EGW

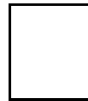
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DID YOU SEE THE QUICK SUCCESSION OF EXPOSURES THAT ARE TAKING PLACE—OF ADULTERIES, FORNICATION AND SECRET VICE—OF LEADERS BOTH IN CHURCH AND STATE? GOD'S JUDGMENTS ARE IN THE LAND. REPENT AND CLEANSE THE LAND FROM THIS MORAL POLLUTION LEST THE LORD CONSUMES PEOPLE ALONG WITH THE EARTH!!

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