

*The Bible inerrantly declares God's  
incontestable truth that...*



THE MARRIAGE BOND

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LIFELONG BOND

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**Hear counsel and receive instruction,  
that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.  
There are many devices in a man's heart;  
nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.  
Proverbs 19:20-21**

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## Preface

**The clear, biblical truth that the marriage bond is lifelong was erroneously denied by the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)** which in chapter 24:5, 6 made what was patently false appear to be judicially valid, and then it errantly declared desertion to be a second biblical ground for divorce (pg. 10):

In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce, and, after the divorce, to marry another, as if the offending party were dead... nothing but adultery, or such willful desertion as can no way be remedied by the church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient for dissolving the bond of marriage.

In the century before Westminster, these errant positions were supported in essence by such prominent theologians as Martin Luther and John Calvin, and have been broadly accepted by the church at large since Westminster. To attempt to widely apply true wedlock to the wreckage of marriage at large today would be humanly impossible. Five centuries of critical error have wreaked their havoc. But in the church that maintains wedlock's integrity, divorce and desertion are rare. And when they do occur, the result is a sharp reminder to have God as the focus of our lives. This is that cardinal experience which every believer is called to have, although we shrink from the pain that it often produces. **The overwhelming momentum of rejecting the lifelong union of husband and wife seems overpowering – until we give ear to God's call** that we watch, stand fast, quit ourselves like men, and be strong, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Our orders are clear.

## The Burden of This Tract

**The burden of this tract is to show that the Bible, given here in the King James Version, establishes the following truths of the marriage bond:**

- God created human marriage as a reflection, even an embodiment, of the unbreakable covenant of God with His elect people. (pg. 4, 5)
- God thus created marriage as an earthly bond unbreakable by man. Marriage is only an earthly bond because there is no human marriage in heaven. (pg. 3, 5)
- God alone breaks the earthly bond of husband and wife and does so only by the actual physical death of the mate. Such a death is the only biblical ground for a second marriage. (pg. 5)
- God, with divine carefulness, provides the possibility of divorce on the sole ground of fornication, but does not allow this legal separation to sever the real marriage bond, for both partners are required to remain unmarried or be reconciled. (pg. 7, 8, 9, 10)
- God judges it as adultery should either husband or wife marry some other person while the original spouse is still living. (pg. 5, 6, 8)
- Such adulterous remarriage, if persisted in, is continuing in sin. No adulterers shall inherit the kingdom of God if they do not repent of that sin. True repentance of this sin is confession of it in godly sorrow, turning from it in separation of the adulterous partners, and living alone unless reconciled to the original partner. (pg. 6, 9)

The prayerful design of this tract has been to be biblically correct, unambiguously clear, usefully concise, and principally complete. Of necessity it lacks comprehensive detail responding to either guileless questioning or aggressive attack. Professor David J. Engelsma accomplishes this latter task with extraordinary effect in his many writings on the subject. Two are footnoted on page 9. They are heavy artillery. This booklet is a rifleman's ammunition. Both artillery and rifles have their place in our spiritual warrings.

**Our circumstances today echo a biblical case of more than 2500 years ago:**

II Chronicles 34:14, 19, 21 <sup>14</sup>And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses. <sup>19</sup>And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes. <sup>21</sup>Go, inquire for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah concerning the words of the book that is found: for **great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book.**

## The Scriptures Supporting Lifelong Marriage

God's wrath is falling upon the church today, in part for the rampant sin of denying the lifelong bond of husband and wife. This denial is the dread result of ignoring the Bible's infallible authority and falsely shaping God's Word to fit changing cultural patterns. **May this simple gathering of Scriptures, which indisputably establishes the lifelong bond of wedlock, open the eyes of those who profess reliance on the unchangeable authority of God's Word. May they see the full truth of marriage and, in its witness, join those who live lives pledged to it.** But to those blinded to lifelong wedlock, these words may draw them to turn their backs upon this part of His Word, and errantly seek shelter in God's forgiving grace, which some erroneously say frees them from thankful obedience (pg. 12).

**God created marriage when He joined Adam and Eve as one flesh:**

**Genesis 2:18-24** <sup>18</sup>And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him. <sup>19</sup>And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. <sup>20</sup>And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. <sup>21</sup>And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof; <sup>22</sup>And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. <sup>23</sup>And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. <sup>24</sup>**Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.**

God joins man and wife in every marriage and commands that there be no putting it asunder by man. **Matthew 19:6 is the rich source from which the essential doctrinal truths of marriage are derived:**

**Matthew 19:3-6** <sup>3</sup>The Pharisees also came unto him [Jesus], tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? <sup>4</sup>And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, <sup>5</sup>And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? <sup>6</sup>Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. **What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**  
(Treatment of the continuing verses 7-12 is given on pg. 7, 8, 9).

**In both Old and New Testament the Bible links the earthly uniting of husband and wife with the eternal covenant bond of God and His elect people.** In the passages below, Jeremiah dramatically portrays this in the greatly stressed marital union of Jehovah and His chosen of Israel, while Paul shows the linking as the great mystery of Christ and the church. These two passages do not describe two different marriages, but show two portraits of the one marriage of God and His elect people. Jeremiah shows that marriage in its early tribulations, while Paul unveils its fruitful development.

**In this Old Testament passage, Jeremiah not only pictures Jehovah as wedded to Israel, but also shows God's own precedent for the lifelong bond of marriage.** He relates that Israel's egregious spiritual adulteries lead the LORD Jehovah to divorce her. This extreme measure is a legal separation, but does not break the marriage bond, for following the divorce, Jehovah is effectively still married to her as He calls her to repent:

Jeremiah 3:8a, 14 <sup>8a</sup>And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery **I had put her away and given her a bill of divorce...**<sup>14</sup>**Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD: for I am married unto you:** and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.

**Husband and wife reflecting Christ and His church is a great mystery:**

Ephesians 5:21-32 ...<sup>21</sup>**Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.** <sup>22</sup>**Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.** <sup>23</sup>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. <sup>24</sup>Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. <sup>25</sup>**Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;** <sup>26</sup>That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup>That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup>So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. <sup>29</sup>For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: <sup>30</sup>For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. <sup>31</sup>**For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.** <sup>32</sup>**This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.**

Many are the passages showing God as Husband and His people as bride:

**Ezekiel 16:8** <sup>8</sup>Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: **yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.**

**Isaiah 62:5b** <sup>5b</sup>...as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

**Hosea 2:20** <sup>20</sup>I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.

**Isaiah 54:5a** <sup>5a</sup>For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name.

**Revelation 21:1-3** <sup>1</sup>And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. <sup>2</sup>And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

The marriage bond is earthly, for there is no human marriage in heaven:

**Matthew 22:30** <sup>30</sup>For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

To the Corinthians and Romans Paul wrote that God alone breaks the bond of human marriage, and only by physical, not fabricated, death. Man is not able to destroy this bond, although he can adulterate it terribly:

**I Corinthians 7:39** <sup>39</sup>The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

**Romans 7:2-3** <sup>2</sup>For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. <sup>3</sup>So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

In these verses from Mark and Luke, our Lord does not enter into the matter of biblical divorce as He does in Matthew 19:9 and 5:31, 32 (pg. 7, 8), but His statements here directly corroborate and emphasize His words in Matthew and I Corinthians 7:10-11 (pg. 9). **All these verses from Mark, Luke, and Matthew put forth His unconditional command that whoever divorces and marries another commits adultery:**

**Mark 10:2-12** <sup>2</sup>And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. <sup>3</sup>And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? <sup>4</sup>And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. <sup>5</sup>And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. <sup>6</sup>But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. <sup>7</sup>For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; <sup>8</sup>And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. <sup>9</sup>What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. <sup>10</sup>And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. <sup>11</sup>**And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.** <sup>12</sup>And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery. (This passage records the same event as in Matthew 19:3-12, pg. 3, 8).

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

**Sharing bed with the spouse of another, however “officially approved” it may appear, is nonetheless open, continuing adultery which must be repented of,** must be turned from in the separation of the two adulterers, or entrance into the kingdom of God is denied:

**I Corinthians 6:9b, 10b** <sup>9b</sup>**Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers,** nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind... <sup>10b</sup>**shall inherit the kingdom of God.**

**Acts 26:20** <sup>20</sup>But [Paul] shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that **they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.**

Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 are the two New Testament passages which indirectly but clearly disclose biblical divorce. This divorce is granted while at the same time supporting lifelong marriage. The apparent incongruity is resolved by these truths:

- **Biblical divorce is possible, but only on the ground of fornication.**
- **And it is only a legal separation,** not a destruction of the marriage bond, for after divorce, neither party may marry another unless their spouse has died (I Corinthians 7:10-11, page 9; Romans 7:3, page 5).

The Lord deals with this marital separation not with His approval of divorce, but by His necessary appointing of it to protect the innocent and still make clear provision for possible reconciliation.

In Matthew 5:32 below, the husband who puts away his wife is held as the cause of her adultery should she marry another person, unless he puts her away because of her fornication. In this case, he may divorce her without being the cause of her adultery should she remarry. **The phrase “saving for the cause of fornication” is given only to establish the single biblical ground for divorce. There is no sanction for another marriage:**

**Matthew 5:31-32** <sup>31</sup>It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: <sup>32</sup>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.

**From the beginning of the Christian era, the church for centuries faithfully held to lifelong marriage. But about 500 years ago, a sharp departure arose, a bane in the midst of the Reformation’s spiritual blessings.** The heresy was a humanly appealing but erroneous interpretation of Matthew 19:9 which falsely permitted remarriage to a third person by the offended spouse who biblically divorced a fornicating mate (pg. 7, 8, 9). The errant use of this one verse became the spearpoint of the attack against lifelong wedlock, abetted by such distracting broken reeds as the fabricated fiction that considered the adulterer to be “dead” (pg. 8)—by the false claim that “willful desertion” was another biblical ground for divorce (pg. 10)—by the careless contention that the Bible nowhere stated directly that the injured mate must remain unmarried (pg. 9)—by the blatant error that God divorced Old Testament Israel and then later married the New Testament church, two separate marriages split by divorce (pg. 4). **Today, men adulterate the true marital bond for virtually any reason, while the church at large stands in irresponsible complicity. This appalling travesty is proven false by the Bible.**

**In Matthew 19:9 Jesus does not require a husband to live with a wife guilty of fornication.** He may, and sometimes he must, divorce her, but only on the one ground of her fornication, corroborating Matthew 5:32. However, he then must remain unmarried or be reconciled to her, because should he marry another, he commits adultery himself. In verses 10-12 our Lord calls the separated to live alone, or, according to I Corinthians 7:10-11 (pg. 9), be reconciled to her.

**Matthew 19:7-12** <sup>7</sup>They [Pharisees] say unto him [Jesus], Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>**And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.** <sup>10</sup>His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. <sup>11</sup>But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. <sup>12</sup>For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: **and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.**

**There are two opposing views possible in Matthew 19:9, each of which has some implied grammatical feasibility.** One maintains that remarriage following divorce is adultery, while the second contends that remarriage to another person is permissible following divorce. But Matthew 19:9 alone does not clearly declare either position unarguably. Other related passages must be brought forth to establish the truth in this critical matter. The position that this remarriage is adultery is consistent with every related passage in the Bible, while only this one verse gives any credibility to remarriage while the original spouse is still living. But then astonishingly, those holding remarriage refer to Old Testament stoning of adulterers and claim to view the adulterer as if he were dead. Augustine centuries earlier had boldly labelled this fictional death "absurd."<sup>1</sup> Clearly, the only point of possible leverage for remarriage remains in its *implied* grammatical credibility, because a living adulterer pictured as being dead is incredible (unless those who contend this call upon Luther or Calvin or the Westminster divines and then forget that these too were but men). **But God, in His unerring, sharply pointed Word, silences all debate with I Corinthians 7:10-11.**

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *Adulterous Marriages*, tr. Charles T. Huegelmeier, in *Fathers of the Church*, vol. 27, p. 104

In I Corinthians 7:10-11 Paul issues a command which, significantly, he attributes to Jesus, “**...I command, yet not I, but the Lord...**” In verse 10 Paul sums up Jesus’ commands in Matthew 19:6, Mark 10:6-12, and Luke 16:18 (pg. 3, 6) and his own commands in I Corinthians 7:39 and Romans 7:2-3 (pg. 5), “**Let not the wife depart from her husband...**”

But in verse 11, Jesus’ command in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 must be referred to because His first command in verse 10 is followed by His next saying in verse 11, “**But and if she depart...**” This is a plain recounting of Jesus’ acknowledgment of an offended spouse’s divorcing a fornicating mate, His one ground for divorce (pg. 7, 8). Then Paul states Jesus’ command, and his, that which was implied by Jesus in Matthew 19:9, “**...let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband.**”

Paul thus specifically makes clear Jesus’ brief instruction in Matthew 19:9 by writing that **both he and the Lord command that, if she divorces her adulterous husband** (but and if she depart), **that separation does not break wedlock** (let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband):

I Corinthians 7:10-11 <sup>10</sup>And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: <sup>11</sup>But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

**“I Corinthians 7:10-11 specifically and plainly forbids the remarriage of the innocent party in a divorce:** ‘let her remain unmarried.’ Thus, the text is the rock-bottom defense of marriage as a lifelong bond, which verse 39 of the chapter [pg. 5] expressly declares about marriage...<sup>1</sup>

And the one argument [Matthew 19:9, pg. 8] that even has a semblance of weight against the basic truth of marriage, namely, that the innocent party is permitted to remarry, is shown to be false by I Corinthians 7:10-11.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> David J. Engelsma, *The Prohibition of the Remarriage of the “Innocent Party”*, Hope PRC, Redlands, CA, 2014, p.2

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.3

For full doctrinal detailing of marriage, read Engelsma’s *Marriage, The Mystery of Christ and the Church: The Covenant-Bond in Scripture and History*, RFP, 1998 and the above notated booklet.

**Under his own full authority in itself, Paul denies that desertion breaks the marriage bond in I Corinthians 7:12-16.** There, one spouse is converted and the other not. It seems to begin with an unbelieving couple. Then one is converted. What must the believer do? Paul says to maintain the family as much as possible, but if the unbeliever departs, let him go. He denies that the faithful spouse must follow the partner's desertion in false chains of **bondage**. But the marriage **bond** continues unbroken "for what knowest **thou, O wife**, whether thou shalt save **thy husband?** or how knowest **thou, O man**, whether thou shalt save **thy wife?**" **The truth remains the same for both cases in verses 10-16. The marriage bond is lifelong:**

**I Corinthians 7:12-16** <sup>12</sup>But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. <sup>13</sup>And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. <sup>14</sup>For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. <sup>15</sup>**But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace** <sup>16</sup>**For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?**

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**Those into whose hearts and minds God places the pure truth of husband and wife, He charges that they herald that truth by Word and walk as widely as they are able.** For the proper depicting of human marriage produces a profound portrait of God and His people, of the Bridegroom Jesus Christ and His bride the church, the very goal of the gospel's good news. Rightful wedlock is a reflection of God's final purpose for the whole of creation, the loving covenant life of God with His people continuing eternally into a new heavens and a new earth.

Marriage is not just a useful, even vital, pattern for earthly life. It is the mystery of God by which He reveals the powerful witness to the gospel made by husbands and wives simply living out their God-honoring marriages as part of the body of Christ in loving thankfulness to God. This thankfulness is not only for His sovereign creation of His eternal saving union with each of them individually, but also for the reflection of that work, His sovereign creation of their lifelong wedding union with each other. **All honor, praise, and glory belong to God alone in His eternal bond of salvation and His lifelong bond of marriage.**

## Eternal Marriage and Its Human Reflection

**Central in the Bible is the story of how God, in His unfathomable, fore-ordained purpose, has sovereignly and lovingly chosen a spiritual wife from out of a rebellious and fallen mankind.** Throughout human history, He transforms her by His saving grace, and grounded in His own predestined, divine sacrifice, God patiently draws His bride, sinful but repentant, thankful and obedient—the elect of God—into His forgiving spiritual arms as He faithfully fulfills His unconditional and unbreakable covenant with her into all eternity. Her great joy lies in being the thankful and loving subject of her resurrected royal Husband, Jesus Christ, the Lord of lords and King of kings, who once died that she might live. In this role, she lives both now and into eternity within that wondrous light of all honor, praise, and glory shining forth from Him and to Him and through Him unto God Triune.

**God created human marriage as the express reflection of this divine narrative.** The espousal of husband and wife is the intimate earthly picture which captures in a beginning way the spiritual reality of God's unbreakable covenant bond with His people. God alone establishes and maintains unconditionally both this bond of salvation and the bond of human wedlock. He gives careful biblical mandates for the life of those sovereignly joined in each of these unions.

**Sadly, the church at large today, following a developing heresy for almost five centuries, besmirches and defiles God's gift of marriage** in such a disgraceful way that this is exceeded only by the blasphemies spat upon Jesus as He trod His painful way to Calvary. Even as eleven chosen men stood by passively, refusing to defend or even acknowledge Him, the instituted church, with singular exception, stands silently refusing to proclaim or enforce God's clear, undeniable law for lifelong marriage. And if driven to grant His truth by the plain meaning of words, in general she sets the law to the side, comforting people who walk in open, unrepented adultery by condoning the scripturally condemned heresy which holds that the grace of a loving God so overshadows His law that men may remain undisturbed in this sin (pg. 12). All this, despite the fact that for more than a thousand years from her beginning, the church consistently maintained lifelong wedlock. **And now, while there are yet many believers who faithfully live in witness to this truth despite its widespread denial, rare is the denomination which believes it, proclaims it, and has the courage to exercise the necessary discipline to maintain it.**

## The Flooding Tide of Heresy

Widespread, indiscriminate divorce, the adulterous couplings which follow, and yet worse things which defame the very principle of marriage, have flooded the church. **These travesties float on that heretical tide which falsely claims that God's abounding grace overshadows His commands**, leaving wide segments of the church openly sanctioning unrepented, abiding sin, sometimes sin of an unimaginably gross order.

**Against this ages-old heresy, Paul cried out in Romans 6:1-2,**

<sup>1</sup>What shall we say then? **Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup>God forbid.** How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

**And Jehovah Himself sharply castigated Judah for it in Jeremiah 7:8-10,**

<sup>8</sup>Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. <sup>9</sup>Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; <sup>10</sup>**And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?**

**And with outspoken plainness, the apostle John attacks the followers of this persisting heresy in I John 2:3-4,**

<sup>3</sup>and hereby we do know him, if we keep his commandments. <sup>4</sup>**He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.**

It is impossible for the child of God to live the life of the woman who would bestow all manner of her love on her spiritual husband, Jesus—except for one thing—her fornication with a man not her husband. She then pleads that, despite her continuing infidelity, in her heart of hearts she loves only Him, her true spiritual Husband.

She lies—for God, Who is love (I John 4:8), is a jealous God (Exodus 34:14b), and will not abide this hypocrisy: **“Surely as a wife departeth from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord”** (Jeremiah 3:20). And then He proclaims, **“Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings”** (Jeremiah 3:22a).

## Lessons in Spiritual Warfare

Defending and living out God's Word against the world, the flesh, and the devil in self, family, church, and society is the essence of spiritual warfare. The name of the particular battlefield described in this booklet is Lifelong Wedlock.

No sane man stands unafraid in the midst of battle's confused noise and garments wrapped in blood. But inwardly armed by the regenerating Holy Spirit, by the converting power of the Spirit-filled Word, and by the guiding discipline of that same Spirit upon his daily warring struggles, the believer assumes a vicarious courage which enables him to do his duty (General George Patton paraphrase).

The duties which the child of God owes to his Lord lie in simple, committed thankfulness for God's utterly sovereign work of salvation within him:

- His first duty to God is obedience.
- His abiding duty to God is to endure hardness.
- His ultimate duty to God is that he give his life in God's cause.

To preserve their earthbound walk, to save their physical lives, even the lives of their children—these are regarded by some as humanly reasonable grounds for any failure to perform their duty before God. But the reward of such defensiveness is a sad, expiring vanity when compared to hearing the Lord's voice saying,

Well done, good and faithful servant! You have done the very thing for which I have created you—to give all honor and glory to God Triune alone. Herein rests your and your children's serene joy, and that for eternity.

The important things are always simple.  
The simple things are always hard.  
The easy way is always mined.

When both sides in a battle think they are about to lose, they are both right.  
Never, never give up.

In a firefight, anything you do can get you shot, including doing nothing.

**Today the embattled church of God finds itself to be at the beginning of the end of the goal of life, the victorious return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, preceded by the unparalleled trials of apostasy and persecution of the church. And so it sends forth the clarion call to all, "Repent, believe, and take your post."**

**A sound of battle is in the land. Be valiant for truth and faithful unto death.**

Jeremiah 50:22

Jeremiah 9:3

Revelation 2:10

## Afterword

**This booklet of gathered Scriptures with brief comment flies the banner of the lifelong bond of marriage.** It is designed much in the way of David's sling and stones, a kind of biblical bandolier (a cloth sling with pockets enabling the rifleman to effectively carry and dispense his ammunition in combat). It is an expedient means at hand, easily unlimbered from pocket or purse, and which even when wielded by those only basically trained, can readily be brought into play to instruct the unknowing or to destroy any attempt to break down God's fortress that protects marriage, the lifelong bond of wedlock. **Feel free to recopy this tract intact if you find it of value in your witness.**

**All that is contained herein has been maintained by the Protestant Reformed Churches for six decades.** While this truth has been widely expressed by them, there has been little evidence of its outside acceptance by even a small part of the church at large. Nonetheless, an important goal here, resting upon the obligation to simply witness the truth, is that God may use this witness to work change in a person's life, if it be His will, so that even that one person might be brought out of an adulterous relation wherein he has been deceived. To God be the glory. Great things He hath done and can do.

May God take the truths expressed herein as being put forth to His honor and glory alone, and may He forgive and sovereignly dissolve the effect of anything written amiss.

These labors have been undertaken in thankfulness to God for His guiding, strengthening, and encouraging that part of the body of Christ included within the Protestant Reformed Churches in America (PRCA), who, not only hold to the lifelong bond of wedlock, but also, under the uttermost sovereignty of God Triune, do manifest and maintain especially, but not only, such biblically distinctive truths as:

- God's Word is inerrant and infallible. The KJV is used uniformly.
- God created the world out of nothing in six 24-hour days.
- The only people who survived the Flood were Noah and his family.
- The salvation of His people lies in God's absolutely sovereign hand alone.
- The saved of God walk in thankful commitment to godly obedience.

If your heart has resonated in some way by this tract, let us hear from you. A fellowship may be in store for us, which we would covet.

This little tract can be scanned effectively in a few minutes.

It can be fully read meaningfully in no more than a half hour.

It may well be studied intently much longer to take its truth to heart.

But for any attempt to refute the biblical truth of the lifelong bond of marriage, there is not enough time left in the world to do that.

While we see through a glass darkly and are sometimes perplexed by questions we cannot answer readily, may this never cause us to refuse to stand fast on the clear answers we cannot ignore guiltlessly.

If man thinks he can destroy the bond of marriage, then he imagines that man is more than man and God is less than God.

Our salvation rests in Jesus Christ alone,  
according to the Bible alone, by God's grace alone,  
through His gift of faith alone, all to the glory of God alone.  
Martin Luther (1485-1546)

*Upon these "solas" God's truth was restored in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries in what has been called the Reformation. We who live grounded upon these principles, and particular developments from them, are thankful to carry the name "Reformed."*

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