

A Theory Set Forth

There is a theory set forth by Brothers E.C. Fuqua, James Bales, Leroy Garrett, Jack Evans and others that non-Christians are not amenable to the Law of Christ, the New Testament, or the gospel of Christ. It is presumed that a non-Christian may with God's approval marry and divorce (for any reason), as many times as they desire. Still further they assert that a non-Christian who has been married (for the sake of argument – five times), may while in the fifth marriage remain in that marriage with God's approval, after having become a Christian (having heard the gospel, believed the gospel, repented, confessed Christ and immersed for the remission of sins). This false doctrine is fraught with a multitude of inconsistencies, as well as lacking any biblical support whatsoever. I hope that you will study along with us with an open and honest heart as we continue our examination of this doctrine.

The reason that men and women often believe and teach doctrines that are totally foreign to Scripture, is because they have acted irrationally or are sincerely ignorant. Logic is a must when approaching the Word of God in study in order to uncover the truth of God's will. Logic is defined as the 'science of sound and valid reasoning.' The average individual uses logic everyday of their lives in the process of decision making, however, when it comes to religion, it seems that logic and rational thought cease to exist.

Despite what modernists teach in our universities today, truth is knowable and absolute (black and white). Jesus said, "*You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free*" (John 8:32). Our Lord goes on to say that the Word of God is the truth (John 17:17); that is the gospel, the doctrine and law of Christ to which every man and woman on earth is amenable. The Bible alone is God's standard for faith and practice, so it is to it we must turn, and rightly divide to find the truth concerning marriage, divorce, remarriage, and those who are amenable to it.

Methods of Circumventing God's Will

Too often individuals turn to standards other than the Bible for determining what they will believe concerning religion. The 60's brought us into the age of "if it feels good do it," and the acceptance of Pentecostalism has furthered the emotional hype of spiritual things. However, feelings are not an acceptable standard for determining what we are to believe and teach in religion. Mormons have a 'burning in the bosom,' yet it has failed to lead them to the truth. God has made it clear, "*That there is a way that SEEMS right to man, but the end thereof is the way of death*" (Proverbs 16:25 – emph. mine). Thus it is the case that feelings are not a good indication that we are right about what we believe and practice.

Another false standard is our own conscience. While it is true that it is a faculty that is God-given, which urges us to do the right thing, we can only know what that right thing is by turning to God's Word. Paul also tells us that it is wrong to violate our conscience (Romans 14:23), yet we must still seek God's Word to know for sure if our conscience is correct. Paul lived in all good conscience as he rounded up men and women to be sent to prison for being Christians, while at the same time being the chief of sinners (Acts 23:1).

Common sense is not the right standard to go by either. Jeremiah tells us, "*The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walks to direct his own steps*" (Jeremiah 10:23). Instead we are to trust in the Lord with all our hearts, and lean not on our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6).

The Bible alone is the only true standard whereby ALL accountable men and women in the world must turn to find God's will in faith and practice, as well as daily living.

Repentance

Our discussion revolves around the false premise that non-Christians (alien sinners) are not under law, not under the gospel of Christ, not under the New Testament, the New Covenant, the

Law of the Lord, the truth, the doctrine of Christ. They say that individuals may, with God's approval, and as many times as they wish, marry, then divorce their spouse for no particular reason, and marry another without committing sin. It is further asserted that said individuals upon learning about Jesus and desiring to become a Christian, may remain in the last marriage with God's blessings, because they have 'obeyed' the gospel plan of salvation (heard, believed, repented, confessed Christ, and immersed for the remission of sins).

We have thus far discussed and proved that non-Christians ARE under law, are under the gospel, the doctrine of Christ, etc., and therefore are amenable (accountable) to God according to Matthew 19:9 because of the universal term 'whosoever,' which applies to EVERY accountable man and woman in the world, in every generation.

Most people believe that repentance is nothing more than a simple verbal statement, "I repent," and that's the end of it, especially when it comes to issues that individuals adamantly defend which will automatically clear that person of all wrong doing. But clear Bible teaching, proves that this is just not the case! The word repentance comes from the Greek word, 'metanoia' which means "a change of mind." It is a change of mind that leads a person to a transformed life, a transformed life that will move one to restitution as is humanly possible. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 7:10 that 'godly sorrow' worketh repentance unto salvation. In other words, repentance comes from godly sorrow, not the other way around.

Godly sorrow results in a reformed life, a life that leads us to restore what we stole (honor, material goods, a spouse, etc.). Therefore, it is the case that if a man steals a horse, if he truly repents, he will not keep the horse, but will return it. Any honest student, who understands repentance, will clearly see that this is the case; otherwise if the man fails or refuses to return the horse, he has not truly repented. As John plainly warned his audience, "*bring forth fruits worthy of*

repentance" (Matthew 3:8), so it is the case that we too must do the same! Returning the horse would be the 'fruit' of a repentant heart, of one who truly has godly sorrow for what he had done. Why is it then, that men can understand this to be true, yet when it comes to marriage, divorce and remarriage, all rational thought concerning repentance flies out the door?

Why is it the case that one person may STEAL another person's spouse, and not have to repent of it? Please show me the 'exceptive sentence' in the Bible that tells us that everyone 'except' non-Christians must repent of stealing another man's wife! Or everyone 'except' non-Christians must repent of stealing another woman's husband! The fact of the matter is that Christian or not, ALL men and women (whosoever) are amenable to the Law of Christ and MUST repent, that is, MUST transform their lives, thereby returning what they have stolen.

If a person makes no attempt whatsoever to repair the damage they have done to their fellowman, then they DID NOT REPENT (Galatians 5:13-14)! It doesn't matter if the person one has married, has been divorced by their spouse (remember we are talking about couples who divorce for reasons other than fornication), it is still stealing, because they had no right to divorce them in the first place. They did so, because of covetousness, pride, selfishness, and any number of other sins, in order to circumvent God's will!

Therefore, repentance is a change of mind that results in a HEARTY amending of one's lifestyle. Repentance is not a onetime act, just before being baptized, it is a lifetime commitment! It is a lifestyle! It begins with hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17), then turns to conviction of heart (2 Corinthians 7:10), and remorse that motivates one to turn away from sin and embrace righteousness. The Lord says, "*Turn ye even to Me with ALL your heart*" (Joel 2:12), and "*repent, and turn yourselves from ALL your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin*" (Ezekiel 18:30). Remaining in an adulterous relationship is NOT repentance!

Baptism

The final step in God's plan of salvation for ALL accountable individuals is baptism (immersion in water in order to receive forgiveness). It is again asserted by those who believe this doctrine of 'Adulterous Persistence' that baptism 'sanctifies' a sinful relationship, that one is made a 'new creature' because of it. Because the Bible tells us that the purpose of baptism is to wash away sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; etc.), it is believed that when a person submits to baptism that God will automatically 'sanctify' a sinful action. In other words, on one side of the baptismal waters an action is sinful and will damn one's soul to hell, but on the other side of the baptismal waters God no longer calls it a sin. Now doesn't that seem hypocritical on the part of a perfect God who does not change, who is perfect in justice and not partial?

The words 'sanctify and sanctification' come from the Greek word 'hagiasmos' which means 'separation to God, setting apart, separation from the world of sin.' It is the same word that gives us such English words as "holy, holiness, saint, saints, as well as pure, undefiled, and sacred." Therefore, is it the case that God would declare a person pure, undefiled, or holy who remains in an adulterous relationship simply because they were immersed in water? We think not, and we'll prove why it is not the case.

First of all, in Matthew 19:9 we have already proved that the word 'whosoever' is universal, therefore making application to EVERY accountable person living on earth today (Christian or not). Secondly, in that same verse, we proved that it is also an 'exceptive sentence' that cannot be reversed by another passage. Thirdly, Matthew 19:9 states that ANYONE divorcing their spouse for a reason 'except' (other than) fornication, and then marries someone else 'commits adultery.' The force of what Jesus says here cannot be denied. The phrase, 'commits or committeth adultery' is in the third person singular present indicative which always indicates an action that continues on until such

time that the action is no longer participated in. In other words, Jesus is saying that a man who marries a woman, who has been divorced for a reason other than fornication, continues to commit adultery with her until such time that they dissolve the marriage. They must separate! Because of the universal passage, Jesus is saying, "EVERY man that does so continues to commit adultery!" There is no escaping the force of this passage, except through emotional and irrational means.

Now it is true and we admit that baptism does a good many things, which God designed it to do, but the question is, will baptism 'sanctify' a sinful relationship? Baptism does wash away sins that are repented of (Acts 2:38; 22:16); baptism does make one a new creature who is dead to sinful activity (Romans 6:4); baptism does make one a Son of God (Galatians 4:6; Acts 2:38); baptism does put one into Christ wherein salvation is located (Galatians 3:27; 2 Timothy 2:10); baptism does add one to the church of the saved – the church of Christ (Acts 2:47). However, baptism DOES NOT, and CANNOT 'sanctify' sinful activity! Why? Because baptism is not the only condition of salvation, in other words, the Bible does not teach 'water salvation.' A person must have faith based upon the Word of God, the gospel, the doctrine of Christ, the New Testament, and that faith must lead that person to repent of their sins, reform their life, cease sinful activity, severe all sinful relationships. A person's faith must cause them to confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Romans 10:9-10), and last but not least, a person's faith must cause them to submit to baptism, wherein God looks upon the heart of the individual to see if they are truly repentant, so that He may forgive them and sanctify them (Acts 22:16; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21; Ephesians 6:6). Baptism cannot make one a new creature, or sanctify them, unless their faith, confession and repentance is in line with God's will.

Logical Argument

So let's complete this study by proving through sound and valid argumentation that the doctrine of Adulterous Persistence is false.

1. IF it is true that baptism washes away sinful activity, thereby sanctifying it in the eyes of God; THEN it is true that baptism washes away and does sanctify ALL sinful activity, thereby allowing homosexuals to continue their relationships, polygamists to continue, as well as thieves, murderers, liars, idolaters and more to continue in their activities.
2. It is false that baptism washes away and does sanctify sinful activity, thereby allowing homosexuals to continue their relationships, polygamists to continue, as well as thieves, murderers, liars, idolaters and more to continue in their activities; because faith, repentance, and confession requires a person to transform their lives, to turn away from sinful activity, as well as to severe sinful relationships (2 Corinthians 7:10; Romans 12:1-2; Acts 17:30; 1 Timothy 1:9), proving the baptism is not a magic wand for the strengthening of evil doers.
3. Therefore this doctrine is false

We hope and pray that all will openly and honestly consider what has been said, and search it out for yourselves, that we may stop circumventing God's will.

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*What Saith
the Scriptures?
Concerning.....*

**Adulterous
Persistence**

Pt. 2



By Michael S. Demory