

Correcting An Adulterous Marriage

By Ron Boatwright

The Greek word MOICHOS which is translated adulterer is defined in Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, p. 34-35, "denotes one who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another". That which is sacred and holy in marriage is immoral and sinful outside of a scriptural marriage. Marriage is a covenant made with one's spouse and with God. Violating this covenant is adultery. Adultery as defined in scripture is not only 1) an extra-marital affair but, 2) also when one divorces his spouse and marries another, or 3) when one marries one who is divorced (Luke 16:18). And as we see in Romans 7:3, one continues in the lost state of adultery, "So then if **while** her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress". Could the Bible make it any clearer?

Baptism does not make the sin of adultery or any other sin into a virtue. Where would this false theory lead? If a person steals a car and drives it to church and is baptized, can he keep it? No. If a homosexual is baptized, can he keep his lover? No. If a man marries another man's wife and is baptized, can he keep her? No.

Forgiveness of sins does not absolve the consequences of that sin. A murderer still has to face the consequences of his sin. He may have to spend the rest of his life in prison or even be executed. If he has children they will also suffer. God is not the one who put the children into such a heart wrenching situation. Who is really to blame for their situation in case of divorce? One or both of the parents who did not care what their divorce and remarriage would do to their children or the children in a second marriage. Even the dissolving an unscriptural marriage does not relieve the parents of their responsibility toward their children.

When people violate God's law on marriage, divorce, & remarriage, they sin. If they continue in their sin they will be lost. It is better for us to help people recognize their sin so they can get out of it. We must not help them to deny their sins by perverting the teaching of the Bible in a futile effort to try to justify them.

Repentance is a change of mind or will and must always manifest itself in a change of action. An alcoholic must give up his bottle, a homosexual must give up his lover, an adulterer must give up his adultery. Which sins can we continue in and still have God's approval and go to Heaven? None. Romans

6:1-2, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid". One who has repented of sin does not continue to practice it.

In Matthew 3:8 John the Baptist said "bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance." All sinful relationships must be repented of whether they exist among those out of the church who are wanting to be baptized or those in the church. There is no double standard for sin.

There is only one way to get out of adultery when one is living in an adulterous marriage and that is to sever the adulterous relationship with that person. An adulterous marriage is an unlawful marriage as far as God is concerned (Matthew 19:9, Romans 7:2-3, Mark 10:11-12). Proverbs 28:13 says, "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy." We have got to give up our sins if we expect mercy from God. In Ezra chapters 9 & 10 a number of the Jews who had to give up their unlawful marriages. God had commanded them not to marry pagan wives, but some did. In some of these marriages there were also children involved. But to be obedient to God, they gave up their unlawful marriages. Whatever the pain of putting away an adulterous marriage it is as Romans 8:18 says, "not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." It all depends whether an adulterer wants to give up a sinful relationship in this life so he can go to Heaven, or suffer forever in the burning fires of Hell. It is a choice that every adulterer has to make.