**Can Sinner Stay In Unscriptural Marriage At Conversion?**

Last week we quoted Matt 19:9 where Jesus said “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.” We pointed out that divorcing for any other reason and remarrying led to adulterous marriage. Then we illustrated what should be done if one finds himself in such unscriptural marriage with Mark 6:17-18 “For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.” We then had a caller with a good question – Can a sinner stay in such marriage when he is converted to Christ?

Here are some spiritual facts that should help us answer that question …

Marriage was instituted and defined before Christianity started, so how could becoming a Christian change that relationship?

Gen 2:24 "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Are two non-Christians married or just living in sin?

Heb 13:4 "Marriage is honourable in **all**, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

Sin (like adultery) is what causes someone to be lost in the first place.

Isaiah 59:2 "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

The New Testament divorce law is addressed to "Whosoever" not just to Christians.

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Human relationships aren't changed by baptism.

Eph 6:1-5 children were still to obey their parents, fathers were still to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and servants were still to be obedient to their masters

The wife is bound to husband as long as he lives - has been true for all time, and for all people.

Rom 7:2-3 "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. 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."

And is true for non-Christians.

Repentance of sin (like adulterous marriage) must occur at conversion.

Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Here is the definition for "repent" according to Thayer's Lexicon - "to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins." Don't you think if we truly develop an abhorrence of our past sins, we aren't going to want to commit those sins over and over again as most seem to think is okay? And that is what happens in unscriptural marriages – adultery is being committed over and over again.

All other sins must be repented of at conversion; why not adulterous marriage?

* Rom 1:26-27 homosexuality
* I Cor 7:2 polygamy
* Matt 15:9,14 false teaching
* Gal 5:21 drunkenness
* Eph 4:29 cussing

What does God expect of an unscriptural marriage?

Mark 6:17-18 "For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is **not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.**"