

# Voice OF ZION

May 2005

## *Sanctity of Marriage*



*For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. Mark 10:7-8*



**Wade H. Phillips**  
*Presiding Bishop*

# The Sacredness of Marriage

“And the Lord God...brought [the woman] unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh my flesh” (Genesis 2:22, 23).


“And [Jesus] said, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:4-6).

In her book—*Divorce, Remarriage, and the Falling Away*—published in 1999, Carol Nendel argues that the prevalence of divorce and remarriage in contemporary society, and the errors and confusion in Christian circles in regard to the doctrine of marriage, are symptomatic of a much greater problem. She probes beneath the collapse in modern society of marriage as a sacred and indissoluble union, and discovers that institutionalized Christianity as a whole is in the midst of a “falling away” from the true Gospel. Further, she purports that this apostasy among the institutional churches is greatly responsible for the collapse of marriage and other moral standards in the world: for the world looks to the churches as the model for moral behavior.

I refer to Nendel’s book to emphasize the fact that she represents thousands of ministers and groups of Christians in the world today who stand in agreement with us on our traditional interpretation of the sacredness of marriage—including the important aspect that death alone dissolves the holy union. These multitudes of the faithful may differ slightly on their views in regard to divorce, and the difference between fornication and adultery, but they have with one voice and judgment stood firm against remarriage under any circumstances (except death). Recently I was pleased to learn that a Pentecostal organization centered in Oregon has remained firm for almost one hundred years in its stand against divorce and remarriage. Not long ago I received encouragement from Judith A. Brumbaugh in Oviedo, Florida, commending the stand we have taken in Zion Assembly on the indissolubility of the marriage bond. Judith is the president of *Restoration of the Family, Inc.*, a ministry aimed especially at restoring the biblical teaching on marriage. Many of our readers are familiar with Joseph A. Webb’s book, *Till Death Do Us Part?* Brother Webb’s views are so consistent with our stand on the principles of marriage, that the former general overseer, Bishop Billy Murray, purchased a copy for every state overseer in the church to read. Other ministers and groups, standing true on the principles of this divine institution, can be found in almost every state and region of the world. To be sure, we are not alone!

It may surprise some to learn that our stand against divorce and remarriage was until recent times the prevailing view among holiness-Pentecostal people everywhere. Even the renown leader of the great Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, W. J. Seymour, was in full agreement with our stand on the sacredness of marriage, forbidding remarriage under any circumstances except the death of one’s spouse. So also J. H. King, the great general overseer of the Pentecostal Holiness church, who himself lived most of his life alone, because his young bride refused to join him to fulfill his call into the ministry. Florence Crawford, the leader of the Apostolic Faith movement in Oregon, also stood firm against divorce and remarriage. And so the list goes on. In point of fact, divorce and remarriage was generally frowned upon by the Western World until modern times. It was not that long ago that divorced teachers could not find a job in the public schools of America. In Italy, those that desired to commit the act of divorce were forced to leave the country: for the government itself would not permit it. This “sense of the sacred” was due in large part to the influence of the Christian faith on western culture. The early church fathers—Clement, Irenaeus, Ignatius, Tertullian, et al.—were almost entirely in one mind and judgment against remarriage under any circumstances (except death). And they had based their theology in this regard on the teachings of Christ and the apostles, some of whom had been taught personally at the apostles’ feet.

There can be little doubt that the collapse of marriage in the world today is a sign of a far greater evil—that of a general falling away from the teachings of Christ and His apostles. We are now, in fact, manifestly in the midst of the “great falling away” predicted under inspiration by the apostle Paul (2 Thessalonians 2:1-6). Let us beware, then, that we do not run with the crowd—for “wide is the gate that leads to destruction!”

The following sermons and articles by some of our great Pentecostal pioneers and leaders featured in this issue should serve to bless and strengthen the faith and resolve of our readers. May the Lord help us to remain steadfast in the faith! 

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**Featured on the front cover: Bishop J.W. Jernigan, and his wife, Betty, will be celebrating 63 years of marriage on June 7, 2005. They have raised four children and have been faithful in the church for many years. They now reside in Milton, TN. We wish to thank them for sharing these photos, and to congratulate them on being a model of fidelity to the sacred covenant of marriage.**

# Divorce and Remarriage

by M.A. Tomlinson  
General Overseer (1943-1990)

The following paragraph from “Advice to Members” is fully in line with the Bible, and with the Church’s stand concerning “The Divorce and Remarriage Evil.”

“A member who may have a living companion should never marry another under any circumstances, even if divorced. Neither should a member marry anyone who has a living companion, although such a person may be divorced.”

Divorce is not good, because it creates a set of circumstances that lead to adultery or fornication. The Pharisees tempted Jesus with a question about “putting away,” or divorce. His reply, if taken at face value, answers many questions. Read from Mark 10:2-9: “And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.

“And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

A.J. Tomlinson said: “It is too much for people to misunderstand the meaning of Jesus where He says, ‘What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.’ Many interpret this to mean that God joins a man and woman together in marriage as husband and wife. *But God does not marry anybody.* The laws of the land and the man having authority that says the ceremony and pronounces them husband and wife do that. The thing that God has joined together is the fact that when they are married properly and lawfully they are one flesh.

“Then He said they are no more twain, They are *no more two, but one flesh as long as they both shall live.* By marriage they become one flesh. Please notice that it does not read, ‘**Them** therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder,’ or separate. The correct reading is not **them**, but ‘**What** therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.’ That is, God said they were one flesh when they were married. Since they **became** one flesh, they

have to **remain** one flesh, because God has not changed it and man is without authority to change it. So when they are married they remain one flesh and married until one of them dies, because God made it so from the beginning that husband and wife are one flesh, and man cannot make it otherwise.

“This makes plain the Scriptures in Matthew 19:3-6. Paul is so sure that no separation can be made that he declares that even if a man is joined to a harlot they are one flesh, ‘For two, saith he, shall be one flesh.’ Therefore, it is the being of one flesh that cannot be put asunder (1 Corinthians 6:16).”

The marriage covenant can be broken by civil law, but this does not put asunder the one flesh that God has joined together. The “one flesh” is for life, as long as both shall live; therefore the covenant is not forgotten, as far as God is concerned. And remarriage

while the “one flesh” covenant remains is sin. It is adultery. The Church teaches against this because those who commit adultery cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven (See 1 Corinthians 6:9,10).

Romans 7:2,3 clearly shows that death is the only thing that can dissolve a lawful marriage: “For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as 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 and 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.”



M.A. & Ina Mae Tomlinson on their wedding day in 1928.

Now, for those who are inclined to accept the world's definition of "fornication," rather than the church's stand on this awful sin, it seems good to give here the full account of the manner in which this was settled by the Holy Ghost after several years of study, discussion, and indecision. The following account is taken from A.J. Tomlinson's article in the *White Wing Messenger* dated December 2, 1923, following the 18th Annual Assembly. Though somewhat lengthy, it seems in season to include it here:

"When the divorce and remarriage question was introduced through the Committee on Questions and Subjects, there was a new drama introduced. The chairman thought to briefly mention the subject and pass it over as usual with no discussion and no decision; but as he was about to do this, it was clearly witnessed that the Holy Ghost was about to be displeased. The chairman realized this and took up the questions again that had been passed over to the clerk's table.

"As he did this, he continued the subject by saying that if he should be called upon to express his view of the subject at this time, he would have to say that *the only cause for separation and remarriage is that, where one marries another who has a living companion, he can put away the other and marry another and both be members of the church; but if divorced for any other cause and re-married while a companion is still living, they should not be taken into the Church, but that such people should be taken under the watch-care of the Church, if they wish to be, and treated kindly while they are considering the matter and waiting on God to assist them in getting out of the tangle.*"

"When this statement was made, it was shown plainly that *the Holy Ghost set His approval upon it*, and the explanation could hardly be finished until He had taken control; and soon the saints were on their faces in tears of gratitude because the Spirit had at last taken the subject in hand, dealt with it so simple and plain, and yet powerful, after it had been under discussion so long and still remained unsettled.

"To those who were there, it was more than wonderful. It was shown how those who are in the Church and have entanglements in their marriage relation should be excluded; and how careful the churches and ministers must be in dealing with such cases. They must be talked to kindly, told about the decision made by the Holy Ghost

and the Bible, and kindly and gently dismiss them from membership, but give them the privilege of attending the services and continue to pray for them that God will show them what to do.

"The sweet, smooth way that the Holy Spirit did this is indescribable. We found ourselves so under His influence that *we hardly consider that we had anything to do with it except to accept His decision*. The word *wonderful* does not approach a description of the scene or the peculiarly wise and loving way it was done. Just now while trying to give this information, I find it difficult to describe the wonder working power of the Holy Ghost."

"There was a sweetness about it that never has been observed in any Assembly in the past. There was a glory, a joy mingled with sadness, that reminds me of the rays

of light that come from the brightness of the silvery moon on a beautiful, clear September night. Visions of fire, light, arches of light, flowers, a star, and perhaps other things were witnessed. There was a sacredness upon the platform, a mellowness in the atmosphere, a sweetness all around that brings a hallowed feeling over me tonight as I am telling others about it. No one could speak for some time except as the Spirit directed. When all was over and everyone knew it was God, we felt like we had been on holy ground and in a holy place with holiness all around."

I wish I could describe the sacredness of those precious moments. Those who were there can do nothing else but accept it as God's work. *This decision agrees with the Bible and the Bible agrees with this decision*. And now we would be afraid to make any contrary

comments. 'To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband' (1 Corinthians 7:2).

"The Scripture forbids a man having another man's wife, and a woman having another woman's husband. To do this is fornication, for which they may separate, and the innocent one may marry another and be guiltless. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery. And this is because he has another man's wife which he has no right to have."

I believe an honest-hearted appraisal of the subject of "Divorce and Remarriage" will convince the gainsayers that the Church's counsel on this vital question is timely and sound.



**A.J. and Mary Jane Tomlinson on their 50th Wedding Anniversary (1939)**



# God's Primary Institution

by Billy D. Murray  
(1930 - 2004)



*The following is an excerpt from Bishop Murray's last annual address in 2000 (Bishop Murray served as General Overseer from 1990 - 2000). He was visibly disturbed with the trend in the church to compromise the divine institution of marriage. He shared with our presiding bishop via telephone a few months before he died expressing his confidence that we had a solid foundation for our traditional stand on marriage. This message was his final counsel and warning, as it were, to the church on this critical subject.*

The family is God's primary institution. Long before there was a nation or a church, the family existed. It has been correctly termed the linchpin of society. Civil governments are ordained by God, as is the church, but both the nation and the church were created to serve the family, not just be served by it. In many places, Satan has succeeded in making the family subservient to autocratic or authoritarian governments, but this was never God's plan. In like manner, this enemy also has reversed the ministry of churches to the family, making the families to become servants to the church. This is wrong.

Through whatever means Satan may employ, I believe the family today finds itself under the most furious attack it has ever suffered. Homes are being torn apart, and children are being traumatized as what should be their bastion of security, the stable family unit, is being swept away. Emotional scarring occurs that may never heal. When God's primary institution fails, the church cannot compensate for the damage that is done. We can help some, and we want to help where we can.

This is not to criticize noble attempts by the church, or even civil governments to ameliorate the painful conditions that are left behind when a home is broken up; these are to be appreciated, but emotional scars remain. We must recognize and identify the destructive enemies of this God-ordained institution.

When Paul warned against some of the perils of the last days, he wrote, "For men shall be lovers of their own selves..." (2 Timothy 3:2) Strong families will not be built by self-loving, self-centered parents. To the contrary, a spirit of selflessness must prevail in the home. "He (she) does not meet my needs" is a cry heard often in ongoing calls for divorce. Meeting the needs of our partner instead of having our needs met is a step toward building a solid marriage. Selfishness indicates immaturity, and it leads to childish, destructive behavior.

Divorcing is rampant in a self-loving, self-serving society. Statistics vary as to the percentages of marriages ending in divorce, but even the lowest figures we are given

are much too high. When we observe the damage that is done with the breakup of a home, it is easy for us to understand why God said that He hates putting away (Malachi 2:16). Jesus was emphatic in His stand on this matter. His answer to those who questioned Him was, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, 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? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:4-6).

The reason God hates divorce is easy to recognize. It is an instrument designed by carnal man to contravene the words of an all-wise God. Being birthed in a hardened conscience, divorce strikes at the core of God's primary institution, the family, causing great pain to those who are dear to the heart of Jesus. The children are dear to the heart of Jesus, and to see them hurt hurts Him.

We are told that here in America, 18 million children grow up in a single-parent home. Of these homes, only one in eight, is headed by a father. The fathers are the ones most likely to skip out of a marriage. The results of a fatherless home is devastating. We are told that from fatherless homes come 71 percent of teenage pregnancies, 75 percent of all adolescents in chemical-abuse centers, 85 percent of all youths in prison, 85 percent of children exhibiting behavior problems, 90 percent of all homeless and runaway youths, 63 percent of youth suicides, and 71 percent of school dropouts.

Difficulties arise in most every marriage, and relationships can become strained. This is to be expected, but such is a time for developing understanding. It is a time for forbearance and emotional growth. We grow and mature in our relationship with one another. This is especially true in the relationship between husband and wife. Marriage was designed for this purpose—to help you mature. When God gave you a wife to be your helper, it was to help you mature. It wasn't just to carry your slippers to you. She's not going to always agree with you. She's got a mind of her own. These conflicts are

for our growth. I want you to get that in your mind. When you say, “you’re not helping me like you’re suppose to,” she may be helping you more than you know.

Reconciliation may not always be the easiest course to pursue, but it is the one which Jesus approves; and it is what He has exemplified as He abandoned His own will and, ultimately, gave up His life as a price for the reconciliation He would affect with us. It cost Him something, but we will be blessed when we reconcile our relationships.

To see people opt for divorce as the easy way to resolve conflicts must surely grieve our Lord, especially when it occurs among Christians. And some of you have read the statistics that have come out—that Christians are opting for divorce more than non-Christians. That’s shameful. And the statistics are too high in the Church of God of Prophecy. The covenant of marriage is a holy ordinance as two people vow in the presence of God and witnesses to forsake all others and to cleave to each other as long as they both shall live. It is Satan who promotes thoughts of divorce. God hates divorce! When Satan wins the battle and divorce is followed, he rejoices. Recognizing their vulnerability to his devious schemes, he will set about to lead the divorced persons toward the sin of adultery within a second marriage.

The Church . . . has stood firmly for a long time against the sin of divorce and remarriage as we have embraced Jesus’ words: “Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery” (Luke 16:18). It is important that we continue to be faithful to Jesus’ teaching against the sins of divorce and remarriage.

At the same time, we must know that if there was no divorce there would be no remarriage. It is time to lift up our voices against the evils of divorce. We must see it as a man-made instrument which is employed as a means to annul God’s Word. Jesus said, “...What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:6). A divorce may be necessary sometimes as a legal instrument to annul a biblically illegal marriage, but it can never dissolve a biblically valid marriage.

It is time to teach our young people, with greater conviction, the sanctity of marriage. We may be sure, with Satan’s determination to destroy the family as a divinely created institution, that he will intensify his efforts to create disturbance and conflicts in the home. Then he will be pointing out to emotionally distraught couples that divorce is the solution to their problem. The success that this enemy is now enjoying is devastating, and it must be stopped! It’s devastating to the children. The church must rise up against him with a firm conviction, a conviction based soundly upon God’s word. People must hear from us that divorce is not their answer. Positive action must be taken. The need for premarital counseling must not be overlooked. We must not be reactive, but pro-active in ministry to those couples that Satan is attacking.

Let us remember that the family, not the church, is God’s primary institution. It is the church’s business to minister to the family. To fail in this ministry carries devastating consequences. Family breakdowns are primarily responsible for the ills of our society today. And that is the truth! I rode on a plane with a judge recently, and asked him, “Do you see any hope for the people who are constantly coming before you?” And he said, “Frankly, no. The only solution is the family becoming what it is suppose to be.” Oh, I am so stirred about this! If we would listen to the judges in our criminal courts, this is what we would be told over and over again.

Let us then pray for a greater sensitivity to the needs among us—to sense the needs before they get out of hand. A sensitive church is more likely to be a ministering church. We can be and we must be more pro-active in addressing needs and ministering to these needs, rather than simply being reactive after the damage has been done.

Where there are those who are divorced among us through no fault of their own, we certainly need to be supportive. Let me emphasize that. There are those among us who are divorced through no fault of their own. Many of them are living on reduced incomes; and in every way we can, we need to minister to them and their children. Someone needs to assume a father role to their children. And the church needs to address financial needs as we are able to do so. We can ill-afford to see further destruction of the family. May God help us!

### **Journey Of A Lifetime**

I entreated Your favor with my whole heart --Psalm 119:58

The two most important transactions in my life happened about 12 years apart. The first was when I prayed to accept Jesus as my Savior. The second was when I stood with my best friend before a church congregation and married her. Sue and I have grown tremendously in our relationship over the past 27 years. We’ve exchanged millions of words of conversation, made thousands of decisions together, and cooperated in the guidance of our four children.

Imagine how odd it would have been for us to assume that once we said our wedding vows there was nothing else we needed to do. What if we said, “Okay, that’s it. We made the decision. We don’t need to nurture our relationship.”

Now think about that other transaction I mentioned, the one you also made if you are a Christian. Because you have trusted Christ, do you think you don’t need to do anything else? That would be worse than not nurturing a marriage. Salvation is the first step in a journey of a lifetime. Our relationship with God will grow stagnant if we don’t talk with Him, grow in our knowledge of Him, and increase in our love for Him.

How’s your relationship with the Lord today?

--J. David Branon

*Our Daily Bread (RBC Ministries)  
September 21, 1999*

# The Marriage Tie

by W.J. Seymour

**Editor's Note:** *The impact of the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles on the world is now well known. It is said that more than 100,000 people were genuinely baptized with the Holy Spirit during this great outpouring of the Spirit that happened between 1906 and 1909. Hundreds of missionaries were sent out from this humble mission to many nations of the world proclaiming the outpouring of the Spirit as prophesied by the prophet Joel (2:28-32; Acts 2). The leading human instrument in this powerful revival was a holiness preacher by the name of W. J. Seymour. God used this man in an extraordinary way during this time to help launch the last days outpouring of this Pentecostal Gospel. In reflecting on Seymour's ministry, and the faith espoused by the saints at the Azusa Street mission under his leadership, it is remarkable to note the similarities with our faith in Zion Assembly. Seymour emphasized a definite and instantaneous second work of grace—sanctification—modesty in dress and appearance, the practice of feet washing, divine healing, Spirit-baptism evidenced by speaking in tongues, and many other teachings that we hold in Zion Assembly. Not the least important was his stand against divorce and remarriage. Though he allowed divorce on the grounds of adultery (a view that we do not encourage), yet he forbade remarriage under any circumstances (except death), leaving open the hope and possibility of reconciliation by the separated couple. The following message written by Seymour in 1907 has been edited and formatted to fit this issue of the Voice of Zion.*

Marriage is a divine institution which God Himself has instituted. "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:18,24). "Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" (1 Corinthians 11:9).

God commended it. Genesis 2:18 and Proverbs 18:22 . . . God is in it. "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:4, 6). It is honorable in all. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

Christ attended a wedding in Canaan [sic]. He went to adorn it, to beautify it with His presence. "And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage . . ." (John 2:1-2).

## Marriage Binding for Life

God has approved of but one wife and one husband.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). "The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, 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? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:3-6).

The husband and wife are bound for life. "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." (Romans 7:2). "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" (1 Corinthians 7:39).



**W.J. Seymour (1870-1922), outstanding pastor of the famous Asuza Street Mission in Los Angeles.**

No court of man should sever the marriage tie. "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Matthew. 19:6). Death alone severs the marriage tie . . .

### **Moses' Law of Divorce**

Under Moses' law, he suffered men to divorce their wives and marry again, because of the hardness of their hearts. "They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? 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" (Matthew 19:7-8). Under Moses' law they had been accustomed, for any uncleanness, adultery, fornication, or some cause not as much as that, to put away the wife by giving her a bill of divorcement, and she could go and be another man's wife. But under the New Testament law, the law of Christ, she is bound by the law to her husband till death.

### **The Edenic Standard of Matrimony**

Jesus did away with the divorce law, and restored matrimony back to the Edenic standard. Under Moses' law, the sacredness of matrimony was lost through the hardness of hearts. But under the law of grace, it is restored back as in the beginning of grace. Praise God. God's promises are true and sure. Hallelujah! Amen . . .

### **Adultery and Fornication**

The act of adultery is between a married person and another who is not the lawful companion. Both parties may be married or only one. When only one is married, the act is called fornication. Matthew 19:9 and 5:32. Jesus said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery. . . ."

No man can enter the kingdom of heaven without confessing and forsaking adultery and fornication. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 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 (Galatians 5:19,21). "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

### **The Innocent Party**


If Jesus had intended that the innocent party should marry, He would have said so, and would not have said, Moses suffered it because of the hardness of your hearts. Jesus makes it very plain. If the innocent party marries, they are living in adultery. Jesus is showing the sacredness of matrimony. Dear beloved, let us obey God in spite of everything. There is one Scripture where many people are tied up, it is Matthew 19:9. Where Jesus said, "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." Now dear loved ones, let us stop and pray over this. "except it be for fornication, and shall marry another." Some think that this party would be entitled to marry again, but let us stop and see what Jesus is teaching here. If he puts away his wife except for the cause of fornication, he committeth sin, because he will cause her to commit adultery. Therefore he is bound by law as long as she lives, bound right to the Edenic standard. Amen.

Dear loved ones, if Jesus instituted that the innocent party could get another wife, He would be instituting the same thing that was permitted by Moses, and would have the church filled with that today . . .

Paul in 1 Timothy 3:2 says. "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife." He also says, "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man" (1 Timothy 5:9). This shows plainly that they recognized in the church that a man was to have one wife and a woman one husband.

### **After Light Has Come**

Romans 7:2-3 and 1 Corinthians 7:39 give us very clear light. O may God help us to accept Bible salvation, instead of having our own opinion and losing our souls... "If we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship one with another and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Let us obey God's Word if it takes our right eye or right hand.

So we find under the New Testament there is no putting away the first wife and getting another. Death is the only thing that severs the marriage tie. Romans 7:2 and 1 Corinthians 7:39. 

**The sanctity of marriage and the family relation make the corner-stone of our American society and civilization.**

- James Abram Garfield

# Wonderful Revival In West Virginia



Worship filled the community center.



Pastor Tom Brown, Youth Minister, J.J. Davis, and Deacon Dave Ashley pray for seekers.

The church in Marion County, WV, located in the northern part of the state, was blessed recently with a mighty move of God during a revival meeting. The international director of evangelism, Zachary Snyder, regional overseer, Ron Massey and the church's presiding bishop served as evangelists for the meeting. The meeting drew believers from miles around, including visiting ministers. Worship, praise, and outpourings of the Spirit filled the community center in Metz where the meeting was conducted. On Sunday night the presiding bishop received into the church four new members, who reaffirmed their covenant. The meeting concluded with the regional overseer installing Tom Brown as the pastor. Brother Brown has a powerful testimony of salvation, and a divine call into the ministry on his life. He recently accepted the call to pastor. This congregation has many seasoned veterans in the church, and a wonderful group of young people who are excited about the Lord and His bride in these last days. Leading the youth is J.J. Davis who serves as youth minister. He is assisted by his wife, Ashley. We look to hear mighty exploits for the Lord continuing to come from this part of the country.



The four new members in the center are from left: Harold and Cindy Price, Cheryl and Jeff Harvey.



Regional Overseer, Ron Massey, makes presentation to Pastor Brown.

## Missionary Spirit in Action



**Pastor Charles Fields**

**At the First Annual Youth Convention in November 2004, Pastor Charles Fields from Bayou La Batre, Alabama presented a check for the purchase of a cow and two goats for the regional overseer of East Africa, Bishop Joshua Amara. Brother Amara expressed the need during a visit to Alabama shortly after the General Assembly. The Bayou La Batre church raised the needed funds, plus a large assortment of clothes, shoes, and other items very much needed in this part of the world.**



**Bishop Joshua Amara at home in Suni-Migori, Kenya with his son, Mike, showing their new goats.**



**Brother Amara with the new cow purchased with funds raised by the Bayou La Batre Alabama Church.**

# THE “EXCEPTION CLAUSE”



**Joseph A. Steele**  
**Managing Editor**

Without a doubt, the most confusion and debate on the divorce and remarriage issue stems from the so-called “exception clause” found in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. For the scope of this article I will deal with these verses primarily. Although it should be noted that other parallel Gospel passages, such as Mark 10:10-12 and Luke 16:18, mention nothing of an exception to God’s universal law pertaining to marriage. Neither does Paul make an exception to the indissolubility of marriage, holding that death alone breaks the bond (Romans 7:2,3; 1 Corinthians 7:10,11). The Matthew passages should be interpreted, therefore, to reconcile with the rest of the New Testament on the subject. They do, in fact, harmonize perfectly.

The Wycliffe Bible Commentary says this about the word fornication in Matthew 5:32: “Fornication: Some restrict this term to Jewish custom, as describing unfaithfulness during the betrothal period (cf. Joseph’s problem, 1:18-19), and thus find no cause whatever for divorce [and remarriage] today. Others see “fornication” as equivalent to “adultery” in this passage, and thus the one cause for divorce allowed by Christ.” Certainly those who hold this latter view are incorrect since both words, fornication and adultery, cannot mean the same thing in the same verse. Both terms appear also, or a form of them, in Galatians 5:19 and 1 Corinthians 6:9, obviously carrying different meanings. So we must have a substantial definition for each of these terms. Adultery (according to Thayer’s Lexicon) is unlawful intercourse with another’s wife [or husband]; in other words, extra-marital sex. It involves the violation of an already existing marriage; either violating one’s own marriage and/or that of someone else. Fornication comes from the Greek word *porneia* and has both a broad and narrow meaning. In the broad use fornication means: any “sexual immorality” including adultery, homosexuality, sex with close relatives, or with animals (Thayer’s Lexicon), basically those sins listed in Leviticus 18. But there is also a narrow usage of the term, which is indicated when fornication appears in the same verse with the word “adultery.” The

narrow meaning of fornication is: harlotry; to act the harlot (Strong’s Dictionary). This could also be described as sexual intercourse between unmarried persons, such as premarital sex. So one valid definition of fornication in the “exception clause” (which would be the narrow application) is sex between unmarried persons. Does this mean that if one learns later that his/her spouse had sex with another person before marriage that divorce and remarriage is then justified? Absolutely not. Matthew wrote primarily to the Jews and this narrow definition of fornication applied to a specific situation within the Jewish culture that Wycliffe referenced above.

A Jewish BETROTHAL involved a prearranged proposal before witnesses, a letter of transaction accompanied by the giving of nuptial coins (Luke 15:8,9) and a dowry as a binder to the covenant. Although the wedding and actual consummation of the marriage had not yet taken place, and they were not yet made one flesh by God, nevertheless they were called “man and wife.” To dissolve this covenant actually required getting a divorce! (See Deuteronomy 22:13-24 and Matthew 1:18-20,24,25.) If the fornication (harlotry; premarital sex) was discovered during the betrothal period, before the wedding, a divorce could be obtained cancelling the betrothal and any obligation to that person. This was certainly an allowance that Jesus gave for divorce in that context, and thus for remarriage. But this Jewish cultural exception in no way correlates to our marriage practices today, wherein the two have already been made one flesh by God. “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:6b). By this application there is no exception at all today for putting away and marrying another. For this same reason, there was no need for Mark, writing to the Romans, or Luke, writing to the Greeks, to include this “exception clause,” because those peoples had no such marriage customs, just as we do not.

Although valid from the narrow perspective on fornication, this explanation does not take into account the fact that there are marriages (or man-made unions)

entered into that could never have been sanctioned by God in the first place. This would include such abominations as incest marriages, same sex unions, or marrying into a condition of adultery (that is, violating an already existing, God-made marriage). The only safe ground in broadening the meaning here for fornication is in the case(s) where an existing union (“marriage” according to man’s laws) was not sanctionable by God from the start. This would be a case where God never made of the two one flesh. Remember that the broad definition of “fornication” includes such acts as homosexuality, sex between parents and children, and with animals (Leviticus 18; 1 Corinthians 5:1). God would not have made these one flesh. So the

need often exists to break the bond that holds two people in an unholy, man-made union. Be it understood though, that in such cases there was never a one flesh bond that had been made or ordained by God.

Zion Assembly Church of God is firmly adhering to the conclusion of the matter that has guided our steps for many years. Regarding a couple that God has made one flesh, only death shall part them under God’s universal law of marriage. This is Biblical, and the position that God has favored in the church in many visible ways. The world is counting on the church to speak the clear will of God on this issue. 🕊️

## A Tragic Choice — A Happy Ending

### Remembering the Life and Ministry of J. H. King

Joseph Hillary King (1869-1946) was the founder and first general overseer of the Pentecostal Holiness Church. Thereafter he led the church for most of the first half of the twentieth century. He was a Pentecostal pioneer and considered by most of his peers to be a spiritual giant. Yet this man of God lived most of his without a companion: for his young bride rejected the call of God upon his life, and forced him virtually to choose between obeying God and bowing to her wishes. He chose to obey God. In his memoirs—*Yet Speaketh*—he tells of the “tragic choice” he made in regard to this marriage.

“The day following our marriage I was twenty-one years of age. I did not know on that glad day that the step I had taken would prove to be the saddest thing I ever did in life.

The first few days of my married life were the only happy ones I experienced in this relation. I was soon plunged into the most awful trouble seemingly could come to a person endeavoring to live right before God. The girl that I married with confidence in her sincerity soon made known to me that she would not go with me into the ministry. This was a terrible announcement to me. I reminded her of the promise she had made to me before our marriage, but she declared that such promises were like pie crusts—made to be broken.”



“And she trampled upon that promise with both feet, and turned against me. If she had any love for me it soon died in her heart. I tried to persuade her by all that seemingly I could think of, to go with me into the work of the Lord, but she would not be persuaded. Her heart was . . . adamant—absolutely unmoveable. I soon gave up all hope of being able to persuade her to go with me.”

The marriage soon collapsed after King fully committed to obey God and to step out into the ministry. He relates how difficult it was to accept the stigma of a failed marriage, and yet to perform the demands of the ministry without a companion. Yet he persevered—triumphantly! His ministry was manifestly powerful and fruitful. Multitudes were saved, sanctified, and baptized with the Holy Ghost through his illustrious ministry, and scores of young ministers were set forth and sent into the harvest fields under his leadership.

King’s convictions about the sacredness of marriage would not permit him to remarry while his wife was alive, and thus he vowed to remain celibate. He remained faithful to this commitment, and married again only after learning of the death of his first wife. In 1920 he married Blanche Leon Moore, and to their union were born four children. King died while still in office in 1946, having lived his life consistent with the holy Scriptures and victoriously in Christ unto the end. WHP 🕊️



**Pictured above from left: Louis Morgan, Wade Phillips, Dale Phillips, Harold “Stan” York, David Roebuck, Adrian Varlack, Nicholas Fugate, Bob George, Eric Waggoner, James Beaty, Marie Crook**

## **Bishop Phillips Named President of the Historical Society of Church of God Movements**

Zion Assembly’s presiding bishop was named president of the Historical Society of Church of God Movements during the society’s third annual meeting held on May 21, 2004. He succeeds Church of God historian, Dr. David G. Roebuck, in this position. Dr. Phillips had served as first vice-president since the society was organized three years ago. Also the Reverend Michael Padgett, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Church of God Mountain Assembly was elected first vice-president, and Reverend Adrian Varlack was elected second vice president.

The historical society was organized on May 15, 2002 in the new Museum Center at Five Points in Cleveland. Delegates to the organizational meeting included representatives from the Church of God, Church of God of Prophecy, Church of God Mountain Assembly, The Church of God (Jerusalem Acres), and the International Pentecostal Holiness Church.

The second annual meeting was held in the international office building of the Church of God of Prophecy on May 24, 2003. The theme was “Bradley County, the Fire-Baptized Holiness Movement, and the Church of God.” Dr. Daniel Woods and Dr. Phillips presented papers concerning the Fire-Baptized Holiness Movement and its impact on the beginnings of the Church of God and the Pentecostal movement. Dr. Phillips then led the delegates on a tour of early fire-baptized holiness sites in Bradley and McMinn Counties.

The third annual meeting was held on May 21, 2004 in the community center at Culberson, North Carolina. The main presenter in this meeting was Harold Stanley York (Regent Divinity School). His topic was “Sam Perry: Let Me Introduce You to Jesus and Full Salvation.” Bishop Phillips responded to this paper. Discussion followed. After lunch, Bishop Phillips led the delegates on a tour of the sites in the small community of Culberson, where A. J. Tomlinson had established in 1899 a mission and an industrial school. It was while Bishop Tomlinson lived and worked in this community that he joined the Holiness Church at Camp Creek (now Fields of the Wood) fourteen miles away. He moved from Culberson to Cleveland in December 1904.

The purpose of the Historical Society of Church of God Movements is to promote the study, interpretation, and appreciation of the history and heritage of the various Church of God fellowships that have their roots in the holiness-Pentecostal tradition. The Society seeks to encourage the production of historical materials (written, audio-visual, Internet), and to preserve historical documents, records, and photographs related to the fellowships. It endeavors also to plan meetings and events in which the fellowships may learn to appreciate and to celebrate their common holiness-Pentecostal history and heritage.

---Louis Morgan and Marie Crook, reporters

## Youth Camp Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Male [ ] Female [ ]

Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**I understand that in signing this application, that I am agreeing to abide by all the rules, policies and discipline of the Retreat and Camp as set forth by the Director and Staff.**

Camper Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ (Required if under 18 years old)

Please mail application and deposit to: Make checks payable to "Zion Assembly Church of God"

Mail to: **Lisa Dunn**  
**401 Alsup Rd**  
**Prospect, TN 38477**

**Tuition \$100.00. Deposit required ~ \$30.00 (Non-Refundable, we have to make a deposit to the campground that is non-refundable) Tuition includes lodging, all meals, and swim time. Other activities are available but will cost extra.**

### Medical Information

**Is he/she on a special diet? Yes [ ] No [ ] If yes please specify \_\_\_\_\_**

**Are there any activities in which the camper should not participate? Yes [ ] No [ ] If yes please specify \_\_\_\_\_**

**Family Physician \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_**

Does your family have health insurance? Yes [ ] No [ ] If yes please list your insurance carrier \_\_\_\_\_

**Name and address of insurance \_\_\_\_\_**

Please list any medical condition the camp needs to be aware of and or comments \_\_\_\_\_  
Any allergic reactions to: Bee sting [ ] Penicillin [ ] Food [ ] \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
All medications must be administered by the camp nurse for campers 18 yrs and younger. The nurse will collect the medications at the time of registration. I understand that if any accident should occur or any sickness, It is my own responsibility, and the Zion Assembly Church of God Youth Camp will not be held liable for any expense in such case. In case of emergency I understand that every effort will be made to contact parent or guardian. If I cannot be reached, I hereby give permission to the physician to secure proper treatment for, hospitalization, and to order injection, anesthesia, or surgery for my child as named above.

**Do you give permission for the camper, if under age 18 to participate in baptism? Yes [ ] No [ ]**

Parent or guardian \_\_\_\_\_



## **Zion Assembly Youth Camp July 1-4, 2005**

**“FAITH FACTOR---SAFARI AFRICA”**

**Check in time: 4:00 PM on Friday and Check out time: 11:00 am on Monday**

**HORNS CREEK RESORT, OCOEE, TN  
WEBSITE FOR HORNS CREEK: [WWW.HORNSCREEK.COM](http://WWW.HORNSCREEK.COM)  
FOR INFORMATION CALL:  
931-424-6882(LISA HOME) or 931-575-8425 (LISA CELL)  
931-363-0808 (PASTOR WILLIAM CROOK)  
E-MAIL [ldunn@wm.com](mailto:ldunn@wm.com)**

***PLEASE SEND YOUR APPLICATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO ENOUGH ROOMS  
CAN BE RESERVED!***

**Must be a least 8 years of age to attend**

**Upon receiving your application, a letter will be mailed with directions to the camp and other information  
that you will need.**

**Come and enjoy a time of spiritual refreshing and fellowship.**

