

# **Chapter Three**

## **A Couples**

### **Shared Vows To God**

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# Bible Study

## Chapter Three

Scripture Memory Verse –

***MAR 10:9 "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."***

Back Review:

- Matthew 19:4 - 6
- Proverbs 2:16 & 17
- Malachi 2:14

**A husband's and wife's covenant needs, are created by God, they are lasting and legitimate needs, for which they have no morale outlet outside of marriage.**

**God Hates Divorce  
"For I hate divorce,"  
says the Lord, the God of Israel, ...  
Malachi 2:16**

We have been studying the importance of faithfulness in marriage. Take a moment to look back at the previous studies and then together, make a list of the reasons below as to why God hates divorce. You can use your previous studies as well as your own creative thoughts.

In Malachi 2:16 God the Holy Spirit makes a very strong statement concerning divorce. Read this verse and circle the word which describes God's feelings toward divorce.

*"For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."*

From a dictionary, write out a definition for the word "hate".

From this definition, how does God feel about the sin of divorce?

If your spouse told you, "You can do the action, I will remain married to you, but I want you to know that I hate it!" Would you feel free to follow through on the action?

If God were to tell your from His holy Word, "You can get a divorce under these circumstances, but I want you to know that I hate it!" Would you feel free to follow through on the actions?

In Matthew 5:31-32 God the Holy Spirit provides a for divorce in certain circumstances. According to this passage under what circumstances may a spouse seek divorce?

***"And it was said, 'Whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce'; but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."***

Does this passage say that God's feelings about divorce change?

How does this affect your view of the "escape clauses" which are often presented as reasons for divorce?

Many doing this study may find themselves under the realization that they either divorced for unbiblical reasons or re-married in an unbiblical manner. This of course is sin. It is not however the unforgivable sin. It is never-the-less sin.

According to Proverbs 24:16, when a righteous man "falls" what does he do?

***"For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of calamity."***

This passage does not say a righteous man is the one who does not fall – far from it. Rather, from this passage what do the righteous and wicked have in common?

From this passage, what differentiates the righteous and the wicked?

For the Christian, the definition of "rises again" is to ask for forgiveness, repent and make whatever restitution is necessary. In other words, are there people you need to ask forgiveness of, is their money you owe, is their an action that needs to be taken. If you have fallen, or sinned in either the area of divorce or remarriage, what is the correct biblical response to restore you in fellowship with God as a righteous man?

For some Christians who have not sinned in this area it is easy to become judgmental. To think of themselves and their marriages as more holy, more sanctified, than their brothers or sisters in Christ who have sinned in this area. This tendency to create in our minds "good sins" and "bad sins" is common throughout Christianity.

For instance the obese man who does not have a problem with anger arbitrarily categorizes obesity as a "good sin", he will say to himself, "Hey, we all struggle with weight, the Bible does not give an ideal weight, this may be a problem, but it is not all that terrible" on the other hand, since he does not struggle with anger he will cry out, "We need to deal with that man, he has a real anger problem. Matthew 5:22 says anger is like murder, we can't have him on this

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committee. Where are our standards!” For this man anger is a “bad sin”, because he does not struggle with it, while obesity, which happens to be his problem - well, we all struggle with that, it is a “good sin”.

Contrastingly the man who struggles with anger but is trim and physically fit. Well for him, “anger” is a good sin, maybe even a virtue. After all, weren’t the prophets angry, did not Jesus drive the sinners out of the temple, it is anger, yes, but it is used of God, “Sure I know that I sometimes cross the line, but no one is perfect, we all loose our temper sometime.” This is not however his attitude towards obesity. Since he does not struggle with this problem, it is one of the “bad sins”. He complains, “When are we going to set some standards for our pastor, elders and deacons. When are we going to quit allowing prevailing culture to dictate what is and is not sin. Look at the obesity problems in our church leadership! Doesn’t the bible in Proverbs 23:21 equate gluttony with drunkenness. We have a complete double standard and we need to remove this men as if they were drunkards!” For this man obesity is a “bad sin”, because he does not struggle with it, while anger, which happens to be his problem – well, we all struggle with that, it is a “good sin”.

I regularly see this good sin, bad sin standard used in the church as it pertains to divorce and remarriage. For those who have never been divorced and remarried, divorce is one of the “bad sins”. These people are adulterous and as a result viewed as second class citizens in the church. These people speak very strongly of the injunction, “you shall not commit adultery”.

However this standard is very selectively used and enforced. According to Matthew 5:27-28, besides those who are divorced and remarried having committed adultery, who else has committed adultery?

***"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart."***

The divorced person commits adultery when he remarries, that is a one time sin. How often does the man who is faithful to his wife commit the sin of adultery through lust? Is it a one time event or a regular occurrence?

I can remember teaching a large adult Bible study where the church curriculum was taking us through the sermon on the mount. As we came to this study you could see clearly that those who had been divorced and remarried were somehow viewed as different than the rest of the class. I started the class by laying it on the line. Those in the class who had divorced and remarried had indeed committed the sin of adultery. There is no doubt about it from the sermon on the mount and this sin needs to be faced, confessed and repented from if their marriages were to move forward. Then we read Matthew 5;27 & 28, ***"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart."*** I then went around the class and asked each man present, “If adultery is to look at a woman and lust, since getting married have you committed adultery, not once, but multiple times?” I first responded, “yes” and then went around and each man, those who had never been married, and those who were divorced and remarried, admitted before all, that according to the Biblical standard, they were all adulterous. Then I said, “Good, we have that established, every man in this room is an adulterer. Now what are we going to do?” Of course the answer is clear, when we sin we are going to confess, repent  
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and get on with the Great Commission. We are not going to have “good sins” and “bad sins” to make ourselves out to be better than our brothers and sisters in Christ but rather as a fellow sinners we are going to forgive each other and get on with the ministry.

In your marriage vows, you stated before God, before the Church, before your family and friends, you swore to the state, you made a solemn vow to God, “till death do us part”.

A. What did you vow when you repeated those words?

B. Does God really expect you to remain married until one or the other dies, no matter what?

C. As you read the following passages...

- First read the passage or segment
- Second circle the word or words that reveals how seriously God takes the sin of divorce
- write out in your own words how this verse supports or expresses God’s seriousness about the vow, “till death do us part”, which you made to Him.

1. Malachi 2:16 *"For I hate divorce,...."*

2. Mark 10:2-12 *And some Pharisees came up to Him, testing Him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife. And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?" And they said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. "For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and the two shall become one flesh; consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." And in the house the disciples began questioning Him about this again. And He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery."*

3. Romans 7:2 & 3 *"For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then if, while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she*

*shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man.*

4. I Corinthians 7:39 *“A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.”*

One of the mistakes that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century church is making is to downplay the sin of divorce and remarriage so as not to offend those who have committed this sin. This is wrong for two reasons. First the church must concern itself with the protection and the preservation of those marriages and families which are still unaffected and unblemished by this sin. Secondly and just as important, those who have sinned by divorce and remarriage, if they have truly confessed and repented of this sin will not be offended. In my non-Christian past I was a thief, a drug user and a profane man. When I hear sermons preached about the sins of drug use, the evil of thievery and dishonesty, the sin of profanity, I do not get my feelings hurt, I do not leave the church in a huff, I say a hearty “AMEN!” I want others to be protected from this sin and when I give my testimony I freely share the evils of these sins and warn others about them.

I remember a woman in our church who had been through a divorce and remarriage. When she gave her testimony, when she covered this issue, she freely told the ladies in her Bible study, “What I did was sin. You do not have to sin in this way. Here is my testimony in the hopes that you will be protected from this sin!” She freely admitted this sin. When there was a sermon on divorce and remarriage and the sin of adultery, she did not get hurt, she did not leave in a huff, rather she would pray that God would use this sermon to protect others from the pain and hurt her sin had caused her and her family.

According to II2 Corinthians 7:10-11, for those who have committed the sin of adultery through divorce and remarriage, what will their emotional response be to this sin if they have truly turned to God for forgiveness and repented?

*“For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you: what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong! In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter.”*

How will they respond to teachings or messages on this sin?

When they share their testimony, what will be their attitude towards this sin?

## Fidelity In Marriage

Adultery, whether it is by unfaithfulness to your marriage vows through an extra –marital affair or through divorce and remarriage, is sin in the sight of God. As you read the passages below, circle the key word or phrase that deals with the subject of God’s view of adultery.

1. *Exodus 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery.*
2. *Leviticus 20:10 If there is a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.*
3. *Proverbs 6:24-29 To keep you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress. Do not desire her beauty in your heart, nor let her catch you with her eyelids. For on account of a harlot one is reduced to a loaf of bread, and an adulteress hunts for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Or can a man walk on hot coals, and his feet not be scorched? So is the one who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whoever touches her will not go unpunished.*
4. *Jeremiah 7:9-11 Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal, and walk after other gods that you have not known, then come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered!'-- that you may do all these abominations? Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your sight? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," declares the LORD.*
5. *Jeremiah 23:14 "Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: The committing of adultery and walking in falsehood; And they strengthen the hands of evildoers, So that no one has turned back from his wickedness. All of them have become to Me like Sodom, And her inhabitants like Gomorrah.*
6. *Hosea 4:1-4 Listen to the word of the LORD, O sons of Israel, for the LORD has a case against the inhabitants of the land, because there is no faithfulness or kindness or knowledge of God in the land. There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing, and adultery. They employ violence, so that bloodshed follows bloodshed. Therefore the land mourns, and everyone who lives in it languishes along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky; and also the fish of the sea disappear. Yet let no one find fault, and let none offer reproof; for your people are like those who contend with the priest.*
7. *Matthew 5:27 & 28 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.*
8. *Matthew 5:32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.*

9. *Matthew 19:16 - 19* And behold, one came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?" And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." He said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "You shall not commit murder; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; Honor your father and mother; and you shall love your neighbor
10. *Romans 13:8-10* Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. For this, "You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.
11. *1CO 6:15 - 20* Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be! Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, "The two will become one flesh." But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.
12. *HEB 13:4* Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

## **Abhorrent Association**

Often times we tend to group sins in our minds. By associating them with other sins we get a feel for their seriousness. In our culture, our entire legal system is built upon this principle, misdemeanors are organized by their numerical equivalents in terms of seriousness, as are the more serious crimes which are classified as felonies and again given numerical classifications - 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Felonies, 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Felonies and so on. Under each heading and classification are listed the offences and their appropriate punishments.

Where do you place divorce in terms of the sins with which you would associate it? Most would not consider it as serious and heinous as sin as God. For us divorce is one of those unfortunate cultural realities. For man, any sin that is practiced by an emotional critical mass, lets say over one third or up to one half, cannot be classified as very bad simply because in our estimation not only cannot man simply not be that bad, but it is unfair to so categorize that many people as sinful.

God's feelings towards sin are not regulated by a numerical curve. When the entire world was sinful God did not stop at drowning every man, woman and child on the face of the earth save Noah. When the majority of the population of the world chooses to reject Christ, God does not balk at sending the majority of the world to an eternity in Hell. When so many Christians in a church get divorced and remarried that it becomes awkward for us to speak of it in strong terms, this does not change the language of the Bible.

When God speaks of his hatred of sin, He speaks in very strong terms. When He lists the sin of adultery, which occurs when divorcées remarry, again He speaks very plainly concerning the class of sins and people with which He associates adultery. Adultery is characterized by sexual relationships which violate the marriage covenant. For God it is the same, be it as a result of a public act of divorce and remarriage or a secret act of cheating on your spouse. We get a feel for God's feelings concerning divorce by the sins He classifies it with.

**As you read the following passages list the sins that God classifies with adultery as falling within the same set of offences.**

- First: Read the verses
- Next: Make a list of the sins God classes with adultery (some will be used more than once, in that case keep a running numerical count of the times the sin is mentioned).
- Last: Place a check mark by those sins which you would not have included in the same class of sins as adultery.

*Jeremiah 7:9 "Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal, and walk after other gods that you have not known,*

*EZE 23:37 "For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. Thus they have committed adultery with their idols and even caused their sons, whom they bore to Me, to pass through the fire to them as food.*

*Hosea 4:2 There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing, and adultery. They employ violence, so that bloodshed follows bloodshed.*

*Romans 13:9 For this, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

*HEB 13:4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

*JAM 2:11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law*  
*2PE 2:14 having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children;*

*Revelation 2:22 'Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.*

List of the number of times each sin is mentioned:

Adultery – 10

**What is the penalty associated with adultery? Read the following passages and circle the penalties associated with adultery.**

*Leviticus 20:10 If there is a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.*

*PRO 6:29 So is the one who goes in to his neighbor's wife; Whoever touches her will not go unpunished.*

*Jer 29:22-23 'And because of them a curse shall be used by all the exiles from Judah who are in Babylon, saying, "May the LORD make you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire, because they have acted foolishly in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives, and have spoken words in My name falsely, which I did not command them; and I am He who knows, and am a witness, "declares the LORD."*

*1 Tim 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,*

*1 Tim 3:12 Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.*

*HEB 13:4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

## Committed to their spouse

The Bible is unequivocal on the subject of leaving one's home – either for personal satisfaction and/or the pursuit of a personal goal, or for another, to make a new life together. This is one of the central vows you make to God – to be committed to the covenant of marriage as you create a new family and home life together. No one, not family, not society, not culture, not church, no one can neutralize this vow or override the responsibilities you have as a result of this vow.

As you read the passages below...

- First group them under one of the two general headings provided - What the Bible says about the husband leaving his family or What the Bible says about the wife leaving her family.
- Second: Having done so now write a summery statement for each based on the verses you have chosen.

*GEN 2:24 For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.*

*GEN 31:14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Do we still have any portion or inheritance in our father's house?"*

*PSA 45:10 Listen, O daughter, give attention and incline your ear; Forget your people and your father's house;*

*MAT 19:5 and said, ' For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh'?*

*EPH 5:31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.*

*EPH 5:33 Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.*

*TIT 2:4 that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,*

### **What the Bible Says About the Husband Leaving His Family:**

Key Passages:

Summery Statement:

### **What the Bible Says About the Wife Leaving Her Family:**

Key Passages:

Summery Statement:

**Now, in your own words, write a one sentence summery statement dealing with this issue:**

## Raise obedient children in the faith

Few couples when they marry look past their own needs. Most simply state that children and the family can wait. They envision marriage as kind of a legal way to live together. Yet in our relationship with God we cannot separate marriage and family. When a family is decided upon, again most young couples decide on the two children family without thinking. The thought that God might want them to set aside certain career and material goals in order to fill the earth with Christian children is like something out of the dark ages. Yet for God, marriage and family are inseparable. God would have us prayerfully consider what our capacities are for the family and children, not to just accept the world's standards but to actively seek God's will.

### I. How do the following verses speak to this...

First read the passage

Next circle the key words as they pertain to God's desire that marriage and family and children

*Gen 1:26-28 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

*Gen 9:1 & 7*

*1 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth... And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it."*

*Ps 127:3-5 Behold, children are a gift of the LORD; the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; they shall not be ashamed, when they speak with their enemies in the gate.*

*Ps 128:3-4 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine, within your house, your children like olive plants around your table. Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD.*

## II. According to the following passages, what is one of the blessings of God which He bestows upon His people”

- First read the passage
- Next circle the word or phrase that indicates God’s blessing

Gen 17:20 "And as for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

Gen 28:3 "And may God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples.  
(NAS)

Gen 35:11 God also said to him, "I am God Almighty; be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come forth from you.  
(NAS)

Lev 26:9-12 'So I will turn toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will confirm My covenant with you. And you will eat the old supply and clear out the old because of the new. Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you. I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

Jer 23:3 Then I Myself shall gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and shall bring them back to their pasture; and they will be fruitful and multiply.

Throughout biblical history children have been viewed as one of the great blessings of God. It is only in the last 50 years that this view has changed among Christians. Reflect honestly on your own cultural values. Do you view large families as blessed of God or as personally irresponsible?

If God, apart from your own efforts, were to bless you with a large family would you view this as a blessing from God or a personal trial?

Why do people who are “surprised” by God with children, perhaps resulting in a substantially large family than they had planned, tend to view this as a trial and not a blessing?

If all non-Christians buy into the two child family and all Christians have four or more children whom they raise in the faith, how will your country be a different place in your life time?

If all non-Christians buy into the two child family and Muslims, Mormons and Animists continue to have 4, 5 or even more children, how will your country be a different place in your lifetime?



### III. What is God's expectation of the home in terms your of children's behavior?

God expects more of Chrsitain parents than to simply bear children. Go has very real expectations for the Christian home as it pertains to the behavior of children. In the project below...

First read the verse

Then circle the key words as they pertain to God's expectation of chidlren's behavior in the Chrsitian home

Lastly, after reading all the verses write a summery statement.

*EPH 6:1 - 3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.*

*COL 3:20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.*

*3 Jn 1:4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.*

Summerize these verses in the context of the question: What is God's expectation of the home in terms of your children's behavior?

### IV. How active a role does God expect of parents in bringing about this obedience?

Is it enough for parents to delegate the rasing of their children as long as they "turn out all right"? What is God's expectation of the parents role in the raising of Christian children. Can thisw responsibility be delegated to the extended family, to child professionals, to public or private institutions, to the church, to those hired, such as nannies? How active a role does God expect Christian parents to play in bringing about this obedience?

First read the verse

Then circle the key words as they pertain to God's expectation of parents in terms of the chidlren's behavior in the Chrsitian home

Lastly, after reading all the verses write a summery statement.

*EPH 6:4 And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

*Prov 6:20-23 My son, observe the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the teaching of your mother; Bind them continually on your heart; Tie them around your neck. When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; and when*  
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*you awake, they will talk to you. For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light; and reproofs for discipline are the way of life,*

*PRO 13:24 He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.*

*PSA 78:5, 6 For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should teach them to their children, That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, That they may arise and tell them to their children,*

*ITI 3:4, 4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?);*

*Heb 12:8-10 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness.*

Summarize: How active a role does God expect Christian parents to play in bringing about this obedience?

## Present a Christ centered home to the world

When non-Christians enter our home, when they observe our behavior towards each other and towards our spouse, when they observe the behavior of our wife, when they look around at our home, what does God expect them to observe?

- ❖ Read the following verses,
- ❖ circle the key words that describe the home life that God expects of Christians
- ❖ and then write out in your own words what this home is like.

*Prov 24:30-34 I passed by the field of the sluggard, and by the vineyard of the man lacking sense; And behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles, its surface was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and received instruction. "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest," Then your poverty will come as a robber, and your want like an armed man.*

*Eccl 10:18*

*18 Through indolence the rafters sag, and through slackness the house leaks.*

*Titus 2:3-5 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.*

*1TI 3:4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity*

*1TI 3:12, 13 Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.*

*ROM 16:5 also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaphroditus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.*

*1CO 16:19 The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.*

*COL 4:15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house.*

*PHM 1:2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:*

Summarize: When a non-Christians observes your home and family, what does God desire him to see?

Does your home - your relationship of your wife, the behavior of your children, the condition of your house provide an atmosphere by which you could carry on an active ministry? Most couples have so compartmentalized their faith that they actually think of their home as theirs and not God's, for God's use in the ministry. How has this thinking influenced your family in the day to day functioning of your home?

List four changes that if implemented would make your home more suitable as a center for the ministry of your church...

## Chapter Three

### A Couples Shared Vows To God

**A husband's and wife's covenant needs, are created by God, they are lasting and legitimate needs, for which they have no morale outlet outside of marriage.**

**Introduction: The couples shared vows to God...**

**In the marriage covenant the couple makes a shared vow before God to remain married until death, to remain faithful in thought and in action until death, to be totally committed to one another, above family, above friends, above career, above all save God, to raise disciplined, obedient, Christian children, that in all things the home might be a lighthouse for Christ bringing glory to Him as a witness to all.**

- A. What are those vows which are shared equally between husband and wife at marriage?
    - 1. God's expectation of marriage as a shared relationship
    - 2. The failure of modern evangelicals to grasp the spiritual transformation which takes place in marriage
    - 3. The doctrinal fallacy of freedom in Christ
  - B. The danger of exceptions which have not been submitted to the scrutiny of the Word of God.
    - 1. The failure to view our parents marriages critically
    - 2. The failure to view our own convictions concerning marriage in the critical light of scripture
    - 3. The failure to view our world view in the light of scriptures
      - a. God wants me to be happy doesn't He
      - b. If it does not work it is not God's will
      - c. Forgiveness comes without consequences - God
      - d. Forgiveness comes without consequences - The Church
      - e. Majority rule
    - 4. The equating of our emotions and rational thought patterns with God's
- I. Till death do us part...**
- A. Key passages
    - 5. Malachi 2:16 *"For I hate divorce," says the Lord, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the Lord of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."*
    - 6. Mark 10:9 - 12 *"What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." And in the house the disciples began questioning Him about this again. And He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery. "*
    - 7. Romans 7:2 & 3 *"For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then if, while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man."*

8. I Corinthians 7:39 *"A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord."*
- B. The marriage vow was meant to be until death. The phrase, "until death do us part is not romantic poetry, it is a vow in line with the Word of God.
1. In God eyes one who divorces commits an act which He hates.
  2. If you divorce and reconciliation is possible, then you commit adultery.
  3. Marriage was meant to be for the life time of those who vowed before God.

## II. Fidelity in marriage

### A. Key Passages

1. *Exodus 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery.*
2. *Leviticus 20:10 If there is a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.*
3. *Jeremiah 7:9 "Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal, and walk after other gods that you have not known,*
4. *Jeremiah 23:14 "Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: The committing of adultery and walking in falsehood; And they strengthen the hands of evildoers, So that no one has turned back from his wickedness. All of them have become to Me like Sodom, And her inhabitants like Gomorrah.*
5. *Hosea 4:2 There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing, and adultery. They employ violence, so that bloodshed follows bloodshed.*
6. *Matthew 5:27 & 28 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.*
7. *Matthew 5:32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.*
8. *Matthew 19:18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "You shall not commit murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness;*
9. *Romans 13:9 For this, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*
10. *1CO 6:15 - 20 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be! Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, "The two will become one flesh." But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.*
11. *1Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,*
12. *1Timothy 3:12 Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.*

13. *Titus 1:6 namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.*
14. *HEB 13:4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*
13. *Revelation 2:22 'Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.*

**B. In God's eyes adultery is not small matter.**

1. It is a sin linked in the same categories with such actions as murder, bloodshed, violence and the most grievous forms of idolatry.
2. God calls it a "horrible thing"
3. It disqualifies a man from the ministries of Pastor, Elder and Deacon in the Church.
4. It is a violation of the very nature of our salvation, desecrating the Temple of God within which the Holy Spirit has taken up residence. Of all the sins mankind can commit, only adultery touches on the Holy Spirit.
5. Adultery is a sin which God quickly judges and with which God has no patience in terms of His Church's leniency or tolerance.
6. The inciduoussness of adultery is that while it is viewed as the "victimless sin" by the church because of the consenting nature, in reality it has a multitude of victims, the foremost being God the Holy Spirit. In understanding this we begin to understand both satan's concentration on this sin and his delight in the churches laxity in discipline in this area.
7. As a result the marriage bed is a holy thing, it is good, right and exciting in the bonds of marriage, but it must be held in honor by all and not marred by adultery or fornication.

### **III. Committed to their spouse**

**A. Key passages**

1. *GEN 2:24 For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.*
2. *GEN 31:14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Do we still have any portion or inheritance in our father's house?"*
3. *PSA 45:10 Listen, O daughter, give attention and incline your ear; Forget your people and your father's house;*
4. *MAT 19:5 and said,' For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh'?*
5. *EPH 5:31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.*
6. *EPH 5:33 Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.*
7. *TIT 2:4 that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,*

**B. In God's eyes, there is within the marriage covenant a mutual commitment. Not just legal but emotional and spiritual. When we take our marriage vows, binding ourselves by our covenant with God, we commit ourselves to our spouse**

1. We commit ourselves to our spouse and our new home, over that of our parents and extended family relationships.

2. We bind ourselves by love and respect to our spouse, above and beyond all others and as such become mutually committed to each others spiritual, emotional and physical well being.

#### **IV. Raise obedient children in the faith**

##### **A. Key passages**

1. *GEN 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.*
2. *PSA 78:5 For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should teach them to their children,*
3. *PSA 78:6 That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, That they may arise and tell them to their children,*
4. *PSA 127:3 Behold, children are a gift of the Lord; The fruit of the womb is a reward.*
5. *PSA 127:4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth.*
6. *PSA 128:3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine, Within your house, Your children like olive plants Around your table.*
7. *PSA 128:6 Indeed, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!*
8. *PRO 13:24 He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.*
9. *EPH 6:1 - 3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.*
10. *EPH 6:4 And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*
11. *COL 3:20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.*
12. *ITI 3:4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity*
13. *ITI 3:5 (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?);*
14. *ITI 3:12 Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.*
15. *TIT 1:6 namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.*
16. *HEB 12:8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.*

##### **B. In marriage the commitment not just to have children but to raise obedient Christian children is not an implication but rather a command.**

1. To view children as a gift of the Lord, a blessing from God, something that should be rejoiced in.
2. To raise our children in the faith
3. To discipline them with the rod, raising obedient children who are a testimony by their behavior.
4. That the raising of disciplined obedient children would reflect the vows of the marriage covenant.

#### **V. Present a Christ centered home to the world**

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A. Key passages

1. *TIT 2:5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.*
2. *ITI 3:4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity*
3. *ITI 3:7 And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*
4. *ITI 3:12 Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.*
5. *ITI 3:13 For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.*
6. *ROM 16:5 also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaphroditus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.*
7. *1CO 16:19 The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.*
8. *COL 4:15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house.*
9. *PHM 1:2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:*

B. In coming together as a married couple, in taking vows before God, we are pledging to represent Him through our marriage.

1. If Matthew 5:16; "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." , was true for us as individuals, how much more is it true for a married couple, for the two have become one flesh.
2. The conduct of our marriage, in every way should be a testimony to the World of Christ's Lordship.
3. The relationship with the spouse, the management of the home, the behavior of the children, the commitment to use the home as a lighthouse for Christ, all should stand as a clear testimony to those around us of the power of Christ in the marriage and our comment to the vows made in the marriage covenant.

**VI. Reflection:**

- A. If you decide that you are not individually responsible for any of the covenants mentioned. Who do you want to step in and do it in your place?
- B. Who do you want to model these responsibilities for your spouse? Who do you want to step in to fill the void which your negligence has created?
- C. If you are unwilling to respond responsibly to your vows, to the covenant you have made with God, who do you want to take your place?

**VI. Conclusion:**

**In the marriage covenant the couple makes a shared vow before God to remain married until death, to remain faithful in thought and in action until death, to be totally committed to one another, above family, above friends, above career, above all save God, to raise disciplined, obedient, Christian children, that in all things the home might be a lighthouse for Christ bringing glory to Him as a witness to all.**

# POST STUDY PROJECTS CHAPTER Three

**Remember:** You do not have to do what I do but you have to do something. In terms of your application of Scripture, you do not have to do it my way. My applications are in no way inspired by God, they are simply given to you as a service. Perhaps you will find them helpful, perhaps they will stimulate your thinking as creative ideas and you will use them as a stepping stone to your own creative applications. You do however have to do something. If you respond, “Rev. Mahon, that is your way, it reflects your age, gifts and calling, that is just not me.” That is perfectly OK, I have no problem with that, as long as I when I ask you, “Fine, what is ‘your way’?” that you do not respond, “nothing”. You do not have to do what I do but you have to do something, “nothing” is not an acceptable answer, the Word of God demands an application. You do not have to use my application but you have to do something.

Scripture Memory Verse –

***MAR 10:11 & 12 And He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery. "***

Back Review:

- Matthew 19:4 - 6
- Proverbs 2:16 & 17
- Malachi 2:14
- Mark 10:9
- Malachi 2:16

**A husband's and wife's covenant needs, are created by God, they are lasting and legitimate needs, for which they have no morale outlet outside of marriage.**

## **Recommitting Our Vows To God**

It is not uncommon in different areas of our lives, to recommit ourselves to God. Often, after an especially moving sermon on evangelism or missions or daily devotional life we will once again commit ourselves to the Lordship of Christ in the area being presented. As you consider the shared vows both you and your spouse committed to at your marriage it might be good to go over them once again and commit them to God. It is also a good time to bring up the fact that not only are most couples only fleetingly aware of the vows they made to God when they married, they have never gone back to review any of them. Not only have they not gone back to review them but they do not know where they are, what exactly they said, what they committed themselves to before God nor how they are doing.

Take a moment aside and consider your own vows to God and the place these vows have held in your subsequent descions in life. Now read the following passage which pertains to God's view of vows made to Him...

Eccl 5:4-6

4 When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it, for He takes no delight in fools. Pay what you vow!

5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.

6 Do not let your speech cause you to sin and do not say in the presence of the messenger of God that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry on account of your voice and destroy the work of your hands?

Do you and your spouse need to go before God, confess that you have at best only a fleeting knowledge of what you vowed and ask Him to forgive you?

If this is the case, then do this now. If not, in the space below list the key points of your marriage vows as repeated outloud, before God, before His minister, before family and before the church...

Husband

Wife



**IV. Raise Obedient Children In The Faith...**

A. Key passages to pray over

B. One change in our marriage that will bring it more in line with our marriage vows...

C. Now pray this passage back to God, rededicating your marriage to it's principles.

**V. Present A Christ Centered Home To The World...**

A. Key passages to pray over

B. One change in our marriage that will bring it more in line with our marriage vows...

C. Now pray this passage back to God, rededicating your marriage to it's principles.

**VI. In the chart below list the five changes that you have agreed upon in the order that they need to be addressed in terms of brining your marriage into line with your marriage vows and next to each one write an action step.**

Changes in the order they will be worked on	One Simple Action Step For Each Change

## Personal Evaluation

### VII. In Doing This Evaluation Consider The Key Points Of This Chapter

#### Husband:

If you decide that you are not individually responsible for any of the covenants mentioned, who do you want to step in and do it in your place?

If you are unwilling to personally fulfill your responsibilities towards your covenant vow what alternatives does that leave your wife with in terms of a man meeting these needs in her life?

If you are unwilling to respond responsibly to your vows, to the covenant you have made with God, are you willing for another Christian woman, who is your age and equally compatible with your spouse, to step in and to take your place?

#### Wife:

If you decide that you are not individually responsible for any of the covenants mentioned, who do you want to step in and do it in your place?

If you are unwilling to personally fulfill your responsibilities towards your covenant vow what alternatives does that leave your husband with in terms of a woman meeting these needs in his life?

If you are unwilling to respond responsibly to your vows, to the covenant you have made with God, are you willing for another Christian man, who is your age and equally compatible with your husband, to step in and to take your place?

**If you are doing this study as part of a small group it may be several days before you get together and discuss this chapter. In the space below write any questions or observations which you want to be sure to bring up when you get together in your home group or Bible study.**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**  
*JEREMIAH 15:16*  
**THEME: A Couples Shared Vows To God**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Malachi 2:16**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Mark 10:9 - 12**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Ephesians 5:31 & 33**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**  
***JEREMIAH 15:16***  
**THEME: A Couples Shared Vows To God**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Ephesians 6:1 - 4**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: I Timothy 3:4, 7, 12, 13**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Matthew 5:16; Romans 16:5; I Corinthians 16:19**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**