

Must Adulterers Separate? #2

Last week we considered the nature of repentance as it relates to many now who are in marriages which the scriptures define as adulterous. Let me emphasize that the purpose of this instruction is not to be cruel or uncaring. It is for the purpose of seriously considering the requirements of repentance and urging people to follow them.

Many might object and say, "God has forgiven me of my adultery and therefore I do not need to divorce my husband or wife." The word in the Greek translated "*committeth adultery*" (Matthew 19:9) is in the present tense which denotes continuous action. The adultery is committed as long as the couple cohabits. For a parallel consider the word "*believeth*" (John 11:26) which is also present tense. Does it refer to the initial act of faith or a progressive faith? Colossians 3:5-7 clearly shows that one can "live in adultery." Verse 5 enumerates some sins which must be put to death. Among them is the sin of fornication. Then, verse 7 says that the Colossians had one time "lived in them." Romans 7:2-3 shows that a woman would be an adulteress as long as her first husband lives. Without question, people can and do live in adultery.

There is no doubt that this is a highly-charged, emotional subject. When Ezra commanded the men of Israel to put away their foreign wives (Ezra 10:10-11), I am certain it was an emotional difficulty for them. However, it is what God demanded of them to be righteous in His sight. The same is true of the situations regarding divorce and remarriage which are so prevalent in our time now. If you would like to study this important topic further, please contact us.

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