



Divorce and Remarriage

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On behalf of the Elders of Mars Hill Church

Introduction

The issue of divorce, particularly in the current cultural climate, is such a tremendously sensitive and poorly taught subject that the entire counsel of God must be examined to properly understand how it relates to Jesus' teachings. Many fine scholars who love the Lord disagree on this issue and it must be treated with a tremendous amount of mercy and grace. In no other period of human history has the ability to leave one's commitment of marriage been so prevalent and easy. Today, all that is required is a statement of irreconcilable differences. What, then, should be the response of the Christian?

Are Christians as apt to run and abandon our covenant of love and life together until death do us part as the rest of society? Sadly, statistics reveal that we are just as guilty. Maybe it is because of the fact that we really do not understand the concept of covenant, or maybe it is because we do not truly understand the sacrifice and forgiveness Jesus made for us. Either way, divorce has found a home in the church. It is our hope and prayer that it never makes its abode in yours.

The Biblical portrait of all relationship begins with God. Scripture tells us there is one God who exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (i.e. in Deut. 6:4 the word for "one" is *echad*). This concept of the Trinity provides for us the ultimate model for a relationship (i.e. in Gen. 2:24 the word for "one" is also *echad*). Likewise, a husband and wife united in God should seek to be in relationship as similar to the Trinity as is possible in a fallen world with finite people. In the Trinity we see that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit are all equal. Yet, we also see that Jesus submits to the Father, and that the Spirit submits to the Father and the Son. In the Trinity we also see great love, honest communication, authentic love & devotion, a diversity of personalities and functions, a unity of purpose, and complete oneness. Indeed, the Trinity is the ultimate relationship that serves as the model for all families and communities.

Christians should love the Word that God has given them and embrace the concept of marriage as the earthly manifestation of Christ and of His "bride" the church (Ephesians 5). Marriage is a living metaphor of this transformational relationship between Christ and the church. Instituted by God at creation, and designed to reflect the loving relationship between God and His people, marriage is preeminent, intended to be permanent, and must be guarded wisely. Just as we are new creations created for His workmanship, we are living out the new covenant in marriage.

The Christian marriage becomes a very vital way by which we bring glory to God. Our marriages speaks to the world the reality of Christ in our lives. His love and covenant with His bride (the church) are revealed through the love and covenant of two becoming one flesh. We no longer remain individuals with individual plans and ambitions. God joins us together into "ONE," and as one, we reflect the beautiful union between Christ and us.

Scripture is clear: God hates divorce (Malachi 2:16). The pain of divorce is well known and has deeply impacted many people's lives. Well over half of those who read this will have endured divorce as children of parents who gave up on their promises of lifelong devotion to each other. The subsequent ripples emanating from these rifts have adversely affected and scarred those in close proximity to the divorce, as well as future generations.

Scripture has much to say about the matter, but not exhaustively. Opinions are numerous regarding how to interpret what Jesus and the apostle Paul said regarding divorce and remarriage. This is partly due to very difficult exegetical options we encounter when studying Scripture. It is also due to the varying beliefs, behaviors, and degrees of commitment people bring into marriage. Complicating the issues are numerous challenges that assault families. These include unrealistic expectations and subsequent disappointment, financial problems, immaturity, selfish ambitions, commitment to personal pleasure, and sins that betray love, commitment, and safety within marriage.

Marriage is also assaulted from external sources. Embedded social temptations to taste the thrill of "the forbidden" endanger the covenant of marriage. Social structures make no-fault divorce laws inviting when relationship development becomes hard. Serial divorce-and-remarriage, a contemporary variation of polygamy, has become common. At the core of the problem is society's prevailing, but flawed, pledge to eudemonism, a philosophy that places happiness and fulfillment as the highest achievement of humanity. According to this philosophy, an action is morally right if it makes a person happy. God is expected to agree with and serve this goal or be abandoned.

It must be the commitment of all who wrestle with these issues to follow Scripture wherever it goes. We must live and enjoy life within the expectations God designed. This fully acknowledges that we live in a fallen world in which broken covenants, betrayals, and enormous harm are inflicted without apparent justice being served.

The elders of Mars Hill Church have struggled long and hard with these issues in order to faithfully represent the will of God. This document is an attempt to clearly present our consensus.

What do we know for certain about marriage?

1. **God created marriage** when He created Eve from Adam (Genesis 2:22–23). Following the story of her creation, Eve is immediately declared Adam's wife (Genesis 2:25).
2. **God designed marriage to be a permanent union** that is not to be broken (Matthew 19:4–6). The two became "one flesh," through sexual union, resulting in a singular, unique relationship. Since God ratifies the marriage, no one is to separate the marriage.
3. **Marriage is a covenant**, which is comprised of a man and a woman declaring their devotion to each other, stipulating commitments, and binding themselves to one another through solemn vows. Witnesses ratify and officially record the event. Anniversaries are celebrated to revisit the covenant. Although similar to a contract in many respects, a covenant has higher obligations since the parties enter into it agreeing with God that it is to be a lifelong, loyal union to which He (God) is witness (Malachi 2:14; Ecclesiastes 5:4).

4. **A husband must provide.** A biblical marriage partnership is one in which the husband commits to providing materially and emotionally to ensure his wife's and children's well-being (Exodus 21:10; Ephesians 5:28–29; 1 Timothy 5:8).
5. **A husband is accountable** for his family's well-being and conduct. Along with the husband's requirement to provide comes his responsibility for his family. When family members do wrong, he is responsible to correct and assure it is made right. When events endanger the family or members of the family, he is responsible to defend and prudently steer his family to a right outcome. Adam did neither. He stood silent while Eve inhaled the pox of death from the serpent's breath and in doing so condemned all generations that followed (Genesis 3:1–6). God called for Adam, not Eve, as the primary agent of responsibility for the family (Genesis 3:8–11). This is called headship. Headship is being the primary agent of responsibility, whom God will ultimately call to give an account. This God-given role of headship, and the wisdom attained from the fear of God (Proverbs 1:7), create the motivation for a man to manage his home responsibly (1 Timothy 3:4; 1 Peter 3:7).
6. **God hates divorce:** God made no provision for severing a marriage relationship. God is opposed to divorce (Malachi 2:16). God hates divorce unequivocally.
7. **Death ends the marriage covenant:** The death of a spouse terminates the marriage covenant (Romans 7:1–3; 1 Corinthians 7:39).

Does Mars Hill honor cohabitation relationships as marriages?

No. When a couple cohabitates for the purpose of avoiding taxes or other obligations common to married people, we would regard the relationship as sinful and illegitimate (Romans 13:1–3). All responsibilities toward the partner, children, and government are regarded as obligations to be honored. We would urge the couple to marry, to seal their relationship within covenant, to honor God, and obey the civil authorities.

Men and women commonly cohabit with one another claiming that living together is more honest because a marriage license is merely a "piece of paper" that trivializes their love. The unspoken reality is that lifelong commitment to each other is not necessarily expected or desired. In this type of arrangement, children conceived in these relationships are forced to live and adapt to an environment deeply embedded with "self-ism." Though they are not told overtly, implied in the structure is a built-in exit plan. Legacy, inheritance, and family lineage are not cherished. Questions hang over the arrangement: Is it a marriage with moral and covenantal obligations or is it a mutual agreement to be used and then discarded when the going gets tough?

What constitutes the legitimate ending of a marriage?

1. **The death of a spouse:** (1 Corinthians 7:39; Romans 7:2–4).
2. **Adultery:** Under the old covenant, death was the means of ending an adulterous relationship (Deuteronomy 22:22). Luther and Calvin both considered the civil authority in Europe unbiblical in its refusal to exercise the biblical civil mandate that adultery was a capital crime. Therefore, Luther taught that the guilty adulterer or adulteress was as good as dead, so the innocent party was free to remarry.

We at Mars Hill Church are bound by civil authority, which does not regard adultery as a capital offense. However, it should be sobering to us all to recognize the serious civil obligation God put Israel under on the matter. Adultery is a grievous sin and a profoundly serious matter. We agree with Jesus that adultery can be a reason for divorce, and also agree with him that "hardness of heart" is the real reason.

3. **Non-Christian divorce:** In the event that a non-Christian chooses to divorce their Christian spouse, the Christian is free to remarry in due course after the divorce is final. The Christian should not initiate divorcing a non-Christian, but should live graciously with their spouse to quietly represent Christ with an infectious demeanor, kindness, generosity, and service (1 Corinthians 7:15).
4. **There are no other legitimate reasons.** All other reasons for divorce have embedded in them defiant sin (a hardness of heart) in one or both of the parties (Matthew 19:8).

What is the root sin?

1. **Adultery committed by a spouse:** Adultery breaks faith, trust, and fidelity with the spouse to whom it was promised. Adultery, in absolute defiance of the Lord Jesus, places another person between the "one flesh" relationship, thereby causing division in that union. Adultery demeans, shames, and abandons the other for selfish gain. Adultery, by definition, selfishly hates the other and loves the forbidden. Adultery can be a legitimate reason for seeking divorce by the betrayed husband or wife. However, reconciliation is the goal if the betraying spouse is repentant. Repentance means not only an abandonment of the cause of betrayal, but a turning toward one's partner with a new level of devotion and practice that improves the relationship. It is not a return to status quo. Reconciliation means to re-enter the relationship in such a way that both partners are changed and the marriage is richer and more resilient. Divorce is only the result of hardness of heart. Jesus left the identity of the one with a hard heart ambiguous, since it could be the betrayer or the betrayed, or even both (Matthew 19:8; Mark 10:5).
2. **Wide range of sexual sins (*porneia*):** Much debate is generated over this word (Matthew 5:32; 19:9). It is used in combination with *moicheia* (Matthew 5:32), which some consider to be a literary device to emphasize adultery. Others take the words to speak of two categories of sin.

Moicheia [*moichao* / moy-khah-o]: to have romantic or sexual relations with a married man or woman not one's lawful spouse (adultery).

Porneia [*porneia* / por-ni-ah]: illicit sexual intercourse, adultery, fornication (sexual activity before marriage), homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals, incest.

We take the position that sexual deviancy in a broad range of sexual activity constitutes immorality (*porneia*), which is a violation of the covenant of marriage (Proverbs 2:16–17). It is a betrayal of one's spouse and of God's witness and ratification of the marriage.

3. **Treachery or treasonous betrayal:** Marriage is entered with promises, sincerity, and assurances of safety, loyalty, and longevity until death terminates the marriage. Vows are given to be loyal to one's spouse through hardship (including financial

trouble, relocation, social danger, physical and emotional sickness). Promises are made to nurture and build relationship, rather than allow marital disintegration through years of accommodation, lazy performance, self-seeking, and neglect.

Treachery is a breach of covenant that evaporates all "one-fleshness." Adultery and immorality violate the person and the covenant, since another person has come between and before the sole position of the spouse. God stands as witness and ultimate defender of the weak and innocent. Thus God says, "Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant...let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. 'For I hate divorce,' says the LORD, the God of Israel" (Malachi 2:14-16, NASB).

In this biblical context God has withheld blessing because of Israel's immorality and adulterous behavior, and God's curse, not blessing, is on the betrayer as long as he will not repent.

4. **Hardness of heart:** Moses allowed divorce as concession to the hardness of heart in men and women. Hardness of heart violates two primary relationships simultaneously: relationship with the spouse and relationship with God. It is impossible to betray one's spouse and be rightly related to God at the same time (Matthew 19:8).

What will the elders of Mars Hill do if my Christian spouse insists on divorcing me?

If a Christian initiates divorce, the elders will begin church discipline. An immediate intervention will be initiated to investigate the grievances and begin a mitigation process and counseling to bring about repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation (Mark 10:11-12; Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, 27). If reconciliation is not achievable because of the hardness of heart of a spouse, each spouse is expected to remain single until the other spouse repents and they reconcile, or until the other spouse remarries or dies.

Does this mean women must endure abusive relationships?

No. Abuse is never tolerable in marriage or against family members, especially children or the elderly. Abuse is sinful violence and must be treated as such. Those being harmed must be removed from the environment that endangers them so they can know and experience safety. At the least, it means separation for a period of time, so that measured progress can be achieved by the violent partner. A "no tolerance of future harm" stance must be clearly understood and consistently demonstrated by the violent partner for reunion to occur.

At the worst, if trust is not recoverable, the harmed spouse must be respected to determine if they can or will reenter the relationship again.

Scripture does not address abuse as a legitimate reason for divorce. This issue becomes a judgment call on the part of the elders.

Domestic violence which is physical in nature will not be tolerated. Even though difficult to determine or measure, verbal or emotional abuse is also gravely harmful and always damaging. Emotional abuse will not be tolerated by Mars Hill Church.

We submit to the State of Washington regarding domestic violence and sexual abuse of children, the infirm, or the elderly.¹

Though all of the above are not direct biblical grounds for divorce, each constitutes a severe breach of covenant which may end a marriage because of hardness of heart. Despite what may have originally led to the divorce, the position of the elders is that repentance and reconciliation are the goal.

Am I required to take back my spouse after they have committed adultery?

Whenever possible, reconciliation is the primary motivation behind our actions toward those who have done great harm to us (1 Corinthians 7:11). Jesus says, "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your father in heaven" (Matthew 5:43-45).

How does one do this in practice? Doing good to the offending spouse will mean praying for God to deeply cut the offender to the bone of their resistance, so that there is no more opposition to change. Reconciliation is not simply entering into relationship again as though nothing happened (Luke 17:3). It is not entrusting yourself to a betrayer who is likely to betray again. And it is not melting before whatever display of apology the betrayer can muster. Repentance is deep, life-changing remorse by the betrayer in the face of their depravity. It is the betrayer coming to the end of themselves and authentically turning toward those harmed to be permanently oriented toward blessing, not harming or neglecting, them.

Repentance is not simply an apology; in fact, an apology is merely an admission that one has been caught, a want to be "let off the hook." Confession, not apology, is required (James 5:16). Confession spells out the offense in full.

Repentance is a well-considered path of measurable change that is demonstrated over time. As transformation is seen and confirmed, trust is regained. Restitution, where possible, is completed and reconciliation is begun with a better level of honesty, trust, and intimacy than existed before.

Repentance abandons all forms of violence (physical, which includes restraint, and standing in doorways; verbal, which is shouting, threats, demeaning ridiculing words; emotional, which can be subtle or over manipulation, and withholding.) It is a requirement on the part of the victim to forgive the offender when this authentic, long-lasting repentance is seen (Colossians 3:13).

If, however, there is no repentance, then there is no requirement to live together in the marriage (1 Corinthians 7:10-11). The temptation, though, is to give up prematurely. It is to lose hope that the restoration could occur sometime in the future. Other times it is more sinister. It is being hardened by resentment and wanting to make the other person pay.

Can I remarry if my spouse dies?

Yes. The marriage covenant ends with the death of one's husband or wife. You are free to marry (1 Corinthians 7:39).

Can I remarry after divorcing an adulterer?

This is the most disputed issue on the topic of divorce and remarriage. On the face of it, Jesus and the apostle Paul made no allowance for remarriage.

- "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery." (Matthew 5:31– 32)
- "I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery." (Matthew 19:9)
- He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery." (Mark 10:11–12)
- "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery." (Luke 16:18)
- To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. (1 Corinthians 7:10–11)

These statements by Jesus and Paul set the parameters for remarriage.

1. Jesus restricts the grounds for divorce to *moicheia* (adultery) or *porneia* (a broader net of sexual misconduct). Jesus speaks to the husband directly. If the husband is divorcing his wife, he is to give her a certificate of divorce, so she can remarry, rather than punish her by keeping her in a state of unsupported marriage. Jesus, in Luke 16:19, states that though an adulterous woman is given a certificate of divorce making it possible for her to remarry, the man who marries her commits adultery. The consequence of sexual sin is grave and not resolvable for the offending spouse, outside the mercy, forgiveness, and grace of the other spouse. Hardness of heart will demand punishment. Mercy and grace will work toward authentic repentance and restoration.
2. The innocent party of a divorce due to adultery may remarry. Remarriage after one has been betrayed by an adulterous spouse does not constitute adultery. The person marrying a previously married spouse who was the victim of an adulterous person also does not constitute adultery. This is implied but not specifically proscribed in Matthew 19:9. Scripture is clear: marriage is a covenant relationship that should not be broken even under extreme circumstances of betrayal such as adultery. It should be restored through repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Paul instructed members of the Corinthian church who separated from their spouses to remain unmarried, so reconciliation could occur. Reconciliation is the priority (1 Corinthians 7:10).
3. A believer who remarries after a non-Christian spouse divorces the believing spouse constitutes a legitimate marriage (1 Corinthians 7:15).

4. If divorce occurs before a person has surrendered his or her life to Christ, and an appropriate effort to restore the marriage has been undertaken without favorable results, remarriage is appropriate, so long as the believer marries a Christian.

Does this mean the innocent party should remain single indefinitely?

It means they should remain single for as long as every effort is applied to reconcile with their husband or wife under the supervision of the church elders. Though divorce and remarriage is intensely personal, the counsel and objectivity available through consultation with the elders will greatly increase the likelihood of avoiding impulsiveness (Proverbs 15:22; Hebrews 13:17).

If the offending spouse remarries, is there any obligation for me to remain single?

This is a matter of conscience as no further option is available to restore the marriage. Remarriage to a former husband or wife who since the divorce has been married to another person is clearly forbidden (Deuteronomy 24:3–4). In this case the innocent party would be free to remarry, provided that resentments and relational issues are resolved so they are not carried forward into the new marriage.

Are there other justifications for remarriage?

Jesus made it clear that marrying an adulterer or adulteress constitutes adultery. This means the one who is guilty of breaking faith and violating the covenant of marriage is committing himself or herself to a life of singleness. It is implicit that the innocent party may remarry, but the offender may not (Mark 10:10–12; Luke 16:18).

The elders take a conservative stance on remarriage, which we believe agrees with Jesus. This means that the primary thrust of any effort is to bring about repentance in the offender, restoration of relationship, forgiveness by the offended, and mutual reconciliation of the marriage.

The elders would not support remarriage unless the previous marriage ended because of the stubborn unrepentance of the adulterer/adulteress (*moicheia*), or immoral person (*porneia*), or because of violence by the spouse of the previous marriage.

Can I remarry if I divorced my spouse just because we were incompatible?

No. Work toward reconciliation, which means discovering what made you incompatible, and change. There are few legitimate reasons for divorce. Incompatibility is not one of them (1 Corinthians 7:10).

What if I divorced my spouse because of domestic violence, child abuse, or abandonment— can I remarry?

The Bible gives no direct instruction in these cases. However, the Bible is clear in this regard: a husband is responsible to love his wife, which means caring for her and protecting her from any harm. He is also responsible for the care and protection of his children. He must assure that no form of harm or exploitation comes to them (Ephesians 5:21–31).

The elders would expect every effort and sufficient time be allowed for the abusing spouse to repent. If no repentance was demonstrated, and reconciliation was improbable, remarriage would be permitted.

Some have used biblical teaching on wives submitting to their husband to force battered women to stay in their marriages. This is not our position. Physical harm to spouses or children is absolutely not acceptable.

What if I was divorced while a non-Christian?

Though marriage is a blessing given to all humanity and is to be honored as a binding covenant even when entered into before being in Christ, it is understood that the non-Christian is ignorant of God's decrees and expectations. Therefore, a non-Christian cannot be bound by the same expectations governing a Christian. The atonement Jesus achieved by His blood is sufficient to pay the penalty of previous sin. Therefore, that person would be eligible to remarry a Christian, but only after every effort is made to restore the previous marriage through a reconciliation process.

It is expected that the previous spouse would be sought out with the express purpose of reconciliation. A certified letter would be sent to the estranged spouse requesting a meeting to explore the possibility of reconciliation. If they do not reply within 30 days, the elders may consider the matter closed and remarriage may be pursued. If, however, the spouse will entertain the possibility of reconciliation, every effort should be applied to restore the marriage.

Am I eligible to assume leadership in the church if I have been divorced or remarried?

The highest offices in the church are elders and deacons (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). Those who hold these offices do so because of their devotion to Christ, His call on their lives, their character, and their skill in leadership and service. They are responsible to conduct their lives in Christ so others may imitate them (Hebrews 13:7).

Mars Hill will not accept a man who has left a covenant marriage between two Christians unless he pursues reconciliation to correct his sins. Mars Hill will not accept an elder candidate who has been divorced and remarried as a believer unless there are extreme mitigating circumstances. Though we recognize that it is a high calling to request that a man remain unmarried until his previous spouse repents and reconciles, or is remarried, or dies, we want to encourage Christian men to treat their wives as our Lord Jesus Christ does His church (Ephesians 5:22-33) by conducting themselves like Hosea, who sought reconciliation to please God.

Mars Hill will accept a man who was divorced as an unbeliever and has met all other biblical criteria for the office since his sins have been forgiven in Christ and he has become a new creation in a new covenant of grace with God.

If a potential elder is married to a woman who has had a divorce in the past, and her previous spouse is either remarried or has released her from their marriage bond prior to her remarriage to the potential elder we would accept the elder candidate's nomination. If the elder candidate's spouse's divorce occurred as an unbeliever or by

the leaving of an unbeliever we would accept their covenant remarriage as biblical and deem the man as above reproach.

Concluding Remarks

There is unending biblical debate regarding the issue of divorce and remarriage. People wanting to justify sin will always find a way to vindicate themselves in their own mind. The elders recognize that there are many complicated factors and variables in each marriage and we will prayerfully and biblically seek wisdom as we judge each case on its own merits in light of the clear direction of Scripture.

Primary texts concerning divorce and remarriage:

Genesis 2:23–24

Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18

Exodus 20:17

Deuteronomy 24:1–4

Malachi 2:14–17

Matthew 5:31–32

Matthew 19:3–12

Mark 10:2–12

Luke 16:18

Romans 7:2–4

1 Corinthians 7:10–17

1 Corinthians 7:39

1 Timothy 5:14

Secondary texts:

Genesis 1:26–28 (Male and female represent the image and likeness of God)

Genesis 2:18 (It is not good for man to be alone)

Genesis 3:16 (A woman's desire will be to rule or take preeminence over her husband's headship, but he will rule over her by God's decree)

Genesis 16:1–16; 21:8–21 (Hagar is named Abram's wife)

Genesis 20:1–7 (God confronts Abimelech to prevent him from defiling Sarah)

Genesis 24:1–67 (Rebekah is found and brought to Isaac. Pay particular attention to v. 58, where Rebekah agrees to the marriage. Marriage is not intended to be arranged against the will of the bride. Marriage is consensual, which also applies responsibility to the woman for joining into covenant.)

Genesis 30:14–16 (Leah obliges Jacob to impregnate her by purchasing the obligation from Rachel. There is implied neglect of Leah's right to intimacy, which Jacob was not inclined to give.)

Genesis 39:1–23 (Joseph's encounter with Potiphar's wife. Pay particular attention to vv. 8-10, where Joseph regards adultery as an offense against God as well as against her husband.)

Exodus 21:7–11 (Husbands are to provide food, clothing, and marital rights.)

Exodus 22:16–17 (If a man seduces a virgin he is not engaged to marry, he must pay the bride price. If her father refuses to have him as his son-in-law, he must still pay the bride price without gaining her as his wife.)

Leviticus 18:6–18 (Various forms of incest)

Leviticus 20:10–21 (Capital sexual offenses)

Numbers 5:11–31 (The jealousy water test)

Deuteronomy 21:10–14 (Captured women)

Deuteronomy 22: 13–19 (Charge and proof of virginity)

Deuteronomy 22:22–30 (Various laws related to rape)

Deuteronomy 25:5–10 (Levirate rite: at the death of a brother another brother was to take his brother's wife as his own. If she had no children, he was to impregnate her to provide heirs for his brother's name and estate.)
Matthew 5:27–29 (Adultery expanded to looking lustfully at a woman.)

¹ For the full Washington State Legislature, see RCW 26.50, which discusses domestic violence prevention (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=26.50>) and RCW 26.44, on the abuse of children (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=26.44>).

Exhaustive Scripture Index

The Holy Bible: New International Version. 1996, c1984. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Genesis

1:26-28

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

2:18

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

2:23-24

The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

2:25

The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

3:1-6

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

3:8-11

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the

garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

3:16

To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

16:1-16

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me." "Your servant is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her. The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. And he said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered. Then the angel of the LORD told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her."¹⁰ The angel added, "I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count." The angel of the LORD also said to her: "You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers." She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me." That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered. So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

20:1-7

Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. For a while he stayed in Gerar, and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, "She is my sister." Then Abimelech king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her. But God came to Abimelech in a dream one night and said to him, "You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman." Now Abimelech had not gone near her, so he said, "Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation? Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister,' and didn't she also say, 'He is my brother'? I have done this with a clear conscience and clean hands." Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her. Now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all yours will die."

21:8-21

The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, and she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac." The matter distressed

Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. But God said to him, "Do not be so distressed about the boy and your maidservant. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. I will make the son of the maidservant into a nation also, because he is your offspring." Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the desert of Beersheba. When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. Then she went off and sat down nearby, about a bowshot away, for she thought, "I cannot watch the boy die." And as she sat there nearby, she began to sob. God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation." Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink. God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.

24:1-67

Abraham was now old and well advanced in years, and the LORD had blessed him in every way. He said to the chief servant in his household, the one in charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh. I want you to swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I am living, but will go to my country and my own relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac." The servant asked him, "What if the woman is unwilling to come back with me to this land? Shall I then take your son back to the country you came from?" "Make sure that you do not take my son back there," Abraham said. "The LORD, the God of heaven, who brought me out of my father's household and my native land and who spoke to me and promised me on oath, saying, 'To your offspring I will give this land'-he will send his angel before you so that you can get a wife for my son from there. If the woman is unwilling to come back with you, then you will be released from this oath of mine. Only do not take my son back there." So the servant put his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and swore an oath to him concerning this matter. Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and left, taking with him all kinds of good things from his master. He set out for Aram Naharaim and made his way to the town of Nahor. He had the camels kneel down near the well outside the town; it was toward evening, the time the women go out to draw water. Then he prayed, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, give me success today, and show kindness to my master Abraham. See, I am standing beside this spring, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water. May it be that when I say to a girl, 'Please let down your jar that I may have a drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too'-let her be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master." Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, who was the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor. The girl was very beautiful, a virgin; no man had ever lain with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar and came up again. The servant hurried to meet her and said, "Please give me a little water from your jar." "Drink, my lord," she said, and quickly lowered the jar to her hands and gave him a drink. After she had given him a drink, she said, "I'll draw water for your camels too, until they have finished drinking." So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, ran back to the well to draw more water, and drew enough for all his camels. Without saying a word, the man watched her closely to learn whether or not the LORD had made his journey successful. When the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose ring weighing a beak and two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels. Then he asked, "Whose daughter are you?"

Please tell me, is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?" She answered him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son that Milcah bore to Nahor." And she added, "We have plenty of straw and fodder, as well as room for you to spend the night." Then the man bowed down and worshiped the LORD, saying, "Praise be to the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his kindness and faithfulness to my master. As for me, the LORD has led me on the journey to the house of my master's relatives." The girl ran and told her mother's household about these things. Now Rebekah had a brother named Laban, and he hurried out to the man at the spring. As soon as he had seen the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister's arms, and had heard Rebekah tell what the man said to her, he went out to the man and found him standing by the camels near the spring. "Come, you who are blessed by the LORD," he said. "Why are you standing out here? I have prepared the house and a place for the camels." So the man went to the house, and the camels were unloaded. Straw and fodder were brought for the camels, and water for him and his men to wash their feet. Then food was set before him, but he said, "I will not eat until I have told you what I have to say." "Then tell us," Laban said. So he said, "I am Abraham's servant. The LORD has blessed my master abundantly, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, menservants and maidservants, and camels and donkeys. My master's wife Sarah has borne him a son in her old age, and he has given him everything he owns. And my master made me swear an oath, and said, 'You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live, but go to my father's family and to my own clan, and get a wife for my son.' "Then I asked my master, 'What if the woman will not come back with me?' "He replied, 'The LORD, before whom I have walked, will send his angel with you and make your journey a success, so that you can get a wife for my son from my own clan and from my father's family. Then, when you go to my clan, you will be released from my oath even if they refuse to give her to you—you will be released from my oath.' "When I came to the spring today, I said, 'O LORD, God of my master Abraham, if you will, please grant success to the journey on which I have come. See, I am standing beside this spring; if a maiden comes out to draw water and I say to her, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar," and if she says to me, "Drink, and I'll draw water for your camels too," let her be the one the LORD has chosen for my master's son.' "Before I finished praying in my heart, Rebekah came out, with her jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water, and I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.' "She quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too.' So I drank, and she watered the camels also. "I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?'

"She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor, whom Milcah bore to him.' "Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms, and I bowed down and worshiped the LORD. I praised the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master's brother for his son. Now if you will show kindness and faithfulness to my master tell me; and if not, tell me, so I may know which way to turn." Laban and Bethuel answered, "This is from the LORD; we can say nothing to you one way or the other. Here is Rebekah; take her and go, and let her become the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has directed." When Abraham's servant heard what they said, he bowed down to the ground before the LORD. Then the servant brought out gold and silver jewelry and articles of clothing and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave costly gifts to her brother and to her mother. Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night there. When they got up the next morning, he said, "Send me on my way to my master." But her brother and her mother replied, "Let the girl remain with us ten days or so; then you may go." But he said to them, "Do not detain me, now that the LORD has granted success to my journey. Send me on my way so I may go to my master." Then they said, "Let's call the girl and ask her about it." So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will

you go with this man?" "I will go," she said. So they sent their sister Rebekah on her way, along with her nurse and Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her, "Our sister, may you increase to thousands upon thousands; may your offspring possess the gates of their enemies." Then Rebekah and her maids got ready and mounted their camels and went back with the man. So the servant took Rebekah and left. Now Isaac had come from Beer Lahai Roi, for he was living in the Negev. He went out to the field one evening to meditate, and as he looked up, he saw camels approaching. Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel and asked the servant, "Who is that man in the field coming to meet us?"

"He is my master," the servant answered. So she took her veil and covered herself. Then the servant told Isaac all he had done. Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

30:14-16

During wheat harvest, Reuben went out into the fields and found some mandrake plants, which he brought to his mother Leah. Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." But she said to her, "Wasn't it enough that you took away my husband? Will you take my son's mandrakes too?" "Very well," Rachel said, "he can sleep with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes." So when Jacob came in from the fields that evening, Leah went out to meet him. "You must sleep with me," she said. "I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he slept with her that night.

39:1- 23

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there. The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. So he left in Joseph's care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her. One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, she called her household servants. "Look," she said to them, "this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house." She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house." When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is how your slave treated me," he

burned with anger. Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined. But while Joseph was there in the prison, the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

Exodus

20:14

"You shall not commit adultery."

20:17

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

21:10

"If he marries another woman, he must not deprive the first one of her food, clothing and marital rights."

21:7-11

"If a man sells his daughter as a servant, she is not to go free as menservants do. If she does not please the master who has selected her for himself, he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to foreigners, because he has broken faith with her. If he selects her for his son, he must grant her the rights of a daughter. If he marries another woman, he must not deprive the first one of her food, clothing and marital rights. If he does not provide her with these three things, she is to go free, without any payment of money."

22:16-17

"If a man seduces a virgin who is not pledged to be married and sleeps with her, he must pay the bride-price, and she shall be his wife. If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he must still pay the bride-price for virgins."

Leviticus

18:6-18

"No one is to approach any close relative to have sexual relations. I am the LORD. Do not dishonor your father by having sexual relations with your mother. She is your mother; do not have relations with her. Do not have sexual relations with your father's wife; that would dishonor your father. Do not have sexual relations with your sister, either your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether she was born in the same home or elsewhere. Do not have sexual relations with your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter; that would dishonor you. Do not have sexual relations with the daughter of your father's wife, born to your father; she is your sister. Do not have sexual relations with your father's sister; she is your father's close relative. Do not have sexual relations with your mother's sister, because she is your mother's close relative. Do not dishonor your father's brother by approaching his wife to have sexual relations; she is your aunt. Do not have sexual relations with your daughter-in-law. She is your son's wife; do not have relations with her. Do not have sexual relations with your brother's wife; that would dishonor your brother. Do not have sexual relations with both a woman and her daughter. Do not have sexual relations with either her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter; they are her close relatives. That

is wickedness. Do not take your wife's sister as a rival wife and have sexual relations with her while your wife is living."

20:10-21

"If a man commits adultery with another man's wife—with the wife of his neighbor—both the adulterer and the adulteress must be put to death. If a man sleeps with his father's wife, he has dishonored his father. Both the man and the woman must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads. If a man sleeps with his daughter-in-law, both of them must be put to death. What they have done is a perversion; their blood will be on their own heads. If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads. If a man marries both a woman and her mother, it is wicked. Both he and they must be burned in the fire, so that no wickedness will be among you. If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he must be put to death, and you must kill the animal. If a woman approaches an animal to have sexual relations with it, kill both the woman and the animal. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads. If a man marries his sister, the daughter of either his father or his mother, and they have sexual relations, it is a disgrace. They must be cut off before the eyes of their people. He has dishonored his sister and will be held responsible. If a man lies with a woman during her monthly period and has sexual relations with her, he has exposed the source of her flow, and she has also uncovered it. Both of them must be cut off from their people. Do not have sexual relations with the sister of either your mother or your father, for that would dishonor a close relative; both of you would be held responsible. If a man sleeps with his aunt, he has dishonored his uncle. They will be held responsible; they will die childless. If a man marries his brother's wife, it is an act of impurity; he has dishonored his brother. They will be childless."

Numbers

5:11-31

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'If a man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him by sleeping with another man, and this is hidden from her husband and her impurity is undetected (since there is no witness against her and she has not been caught in the act), and if feelings of jealousy come over her husband and he suspects his wife and she is impure—or if he is jealous and suspects her even though she is not impure—then he is to take his wife to the priest. He must also take an offering of a tenth of an ephah of barley flour on her behalf. He must not pour oil on it or put incense on it, because it is a grain offering for jealousy, a reminder offering to draw attention to guilt. The priest shall bring her and have her stand before the LORD. Then he shall take some holy water in a clay jar and put some dust from the tabernacle floor into the water. After the priest has had the woman stand before the LORD, he shall loosen her hair and place in her hands the reminder offering, the grain offering for jealousy, while he himself holds the bitter water that brings a curse. Then the priest shall put the woman under oath and say to her, "If no other man has slept with you and you have not gone astray and become impure while married to your husband, may this bitter water that brings a curse not harm you. But if you have gone astray while married to your husband and you have defiled yourself by sleeping with a man other than your husband"—here the priest is to put the woman under this curse of the oath—"may the LORD cause your people to curse and denounce you when he causes your thigh to waste away and your abdomen to swell. May this water that brings a curse enter your body so that your abdomen swells and your thigh wastes away." Then the woman is to say, "Amen. So be it." The priest is to write these curses on a scroll and then wash them off into the bitter water. He shall have the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse, and this water will enter her and cause bitter suffering. The priest is to take

from her hands the grain offering for jealousy, wave it before the LORD and bring it to the altar. The priest is then to take a handful of the grain offering as a memorial offering and burn it on the altar; after that, he is to have the woman drink the water. If she has defiled herself and been unfaithful to her husband, then when she is made to drink the water that brings a curse, it will go into her and cause bitter suffering; her abdomen will swell and her thigh waste away, and she will become accursed among her people. If, however, the woman has not defiled herself and is free from impurity, she will be cleared of guilt and will be able to have children. This, then, is the law of jealousy when a woman goes astray and defiles herself while married to her husband, or when feelings of jealousy come over a man because he suspects his wife. The priest is to have her stand before the LORD and is to apply this entire law to her. The husband will be innocent of any wrongdoing, but the woman will bear the consequences of her sin.”

Deuteronomy

5:18

“You shall not commit adultery.”

21:10-14

When you go to war against your enemies and the LORD your God delivers them into your hands and you take captives, if you notice among the captives a beautiful woman and are attracted to her, you may take her as your wife. Bring her into your home and have her shave her head, trim her nails and put aside the clothes she was wearing when captured. After she has lived in your house and mourned her father and mother for a full month, then you may go to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife. If you are not pleased with her, let her go wherever she wishes. You must not sell her or treat her as a slave, since you have dishonored her.

22:13-19

If a man takes a wife and, after lying with her, dislikes her and slanders her and gives her a bad name, saying, "I married this woman, but when I approached her, I did not find proof of her virginity," then the girl's father and mother shall bring proof that she was a virgin to the town elders at the gate. The girl's father will say to the elders, "I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, but he dislikes her. Now he has slandered her and said, 'I did not find your daughter to be a virgin.' But here is the proof of my daughter's virginity." Then her parents shall display the cloth before the elders of the town, and the elders shall take the man and punish him. They shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give them to the girl's father, because this man has given an Israelite virgin a bad name. She shall continue to be his wife; he must not divorce her as long as he lives.

22:22

If a man is found sleeping with another man's wife, both the man who slept with her and the woman must die. You must purge the evil from Israel.

22:22-30

If a man is found sleeping with another man's wife, both the man who slept with her and the woman must die. You must purge the evil from Israel. If a man happens to meet in a town a virgin pledged to be married and he sleeps with her, you shall take both of them to the gate of that town and stone them to death—the girl because she was in a town and did not scream for help, and the man because he violated another man's wife. You must purge the evil from among you. But if out in the country a man happens to meet a girl pledged to be married and rapes her, only the man who has done this shall die. Do nothing to the girl;

she has committed no sin deserving death. This case is like that of someone who attacks and murders his neighbor, for the man found the girl out in the country, and though the betrothed girl screamed, there was no one to rescue her. If a man happens to meet a virgin who is not pledged to be married and rapes her and they are discovered, he shall pay the girl's father fifty shekels of silver. He must marry the girl, for he has violated her. He can never divorce her as long as he lives. A man is not to marry his father's wife; he must not dishonor his father's bed.

24:1-4

If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, 2 and if after she leaves his house she becomes the wife of another man, 3 and her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies, 4 then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of the Lord. Do not bring sin upon the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.

24:3-4

. . . and her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies, then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of the LORD. Do not bring sin upon the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

25:5-10

If brothers are living together and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother shall take her and marry her and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her. The first son she bears shall carry on the name of the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel. However, if a man does not want to marry his brother's wife, she shall go to the elders at the town gate and say, "My husband's brother refuses to carry on his brother's name in Israel. He will not fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to me." Then the elders of his town shall summon him and talk to him. If he persists in saying, "I do not want to marry her," his brother's widow shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, take off one of his sandals, spit in his face and say, "This is what is done to the man who will not build up his brother's family line." That man's line shall be known in Israel as The Family of the Unsandaled.

Proverbs

1:7

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.

2:16-17

It will save you also from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words, who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God.

15:22

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

Ecclesiastes

5:4

When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow.

Malachi

2:14

You ask, "Why?" It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

2:14-16

You ask, "Why?" It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. Has not the Lord made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. "I hate divorce," says the Lord God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the Lord Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

2:16

"I hate divorce," says the Lord God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the Lord Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

Matthew

5:27-29

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell."

5:31-32

"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery."

5:32

"But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery."

5:43-45

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven."

19:3-12

Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery." The disciples said to him, "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry." Jesus replied, "Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it."

19:4-6

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

19:8

Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning."

19:9

"I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery."

19:19

"'...honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Mark**10:2-12**

Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" "What did Moses command you?" he replied. They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

10:4

They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away."

10:5

"It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied.

10:10-12

When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

10:11-12

He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

Luke**16:18**

"Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

17:3

"So watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him."

Romans**7:1-3**

Do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to men who know the law—that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man.

7:2-4

For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man. So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.

13:1-3

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.

1 Corinthians**7:10-17**

To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord):

If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? Nevertheless, each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches.

7:11

But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

7:15

But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

7:27

Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife.

7:39

A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

Ephesians

5:21-31

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”

Colossians

3:13

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

1 Timothy

3:1-7

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife,

temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

3:4

He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.

5:8

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

5:14

So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander.

1 Timothy

5:1-16

"Honor widows who are widows indeed; but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God. Now she who is a widow indeed and who has been left alone has fixed her hope on God and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day. But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives. Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work. But refuse to put younger widows on the list, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married, thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge. At the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention. Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach; for some have already turned aside to follow Satan. If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed."

Titus

1:5-9

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is

self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Hebrews

13:7

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

13:17

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

James

5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

1 Peter

3:7

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.