



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Malachi 2:10-16

"The Lord God on the Subject of Divorce"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee again for the privilege of the study of the word of God and we ask Thy blessing upon us as we look again into the prophecy. We pray that our minds and our hearts may be freed from the distraction of our daily lives and that we may be enabled to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures. And so, Father, we commit this time to Thee. We ask Thy blessing upon each one present. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] I think it is very fitting in one way that tonight we come to Malachi chapter 2, verse 10 through 16 because our subject is "The Lord God on the Subject of Divorce." And for those of you who have been following through in the Gospel of Matthew, you will know that that was the subject last Sunday in Matthew chapter 19. And so, I think it's fitting that we should look at the New Testament interpretation of the problem and also the Old Testament on the same problem.

I am sure that we all realize from the acquaintance with our life in the western world in the twentieth century that the problem of marriage and divorce is not simply a spiritual problem within the Christian church. It is a problem of our society. And it's not

surprising that we should find even in the secular world a great deal of concern over the question of marriage and divorce.

Now, of course, we want to look at this question from the standpoint of the word of God. And I am sure that if we each look at this question in the light of the word, then we shall have the solution that God intends for us to have.

It is, you know, one of the things that Dr. Clark tried to say to us over the weekend, that our *principium* our first principle, the foundation of the Christian faith is the doctrine that the Bible is the word of God.

Now we have accepted that presupposition. As Christians, it is something that is given us by the Holy Spirit, incidentally, in regeneration. For when the Holy Spirit works in a Christian's heart, he creates within him the conviction that the Bible is the word of God and that that is his first principle in all of his thought concerning life.

Now that means that when we consider a question like marriage or a question like divorce, our ultimate and final authority is: What do the Scriptures say? Martin Luther said, "I have grounded my preaching upon the literal word; he that pleases may follow me; he that will not may stay." It's evident that Luther accepted that as his own *principium*, too. And I do believe this, that if we follow the Scriptures in what they say concerning marriage and divorce, we shall miss a great deal of the sorrow of those who have not followed it.

Now, this is the second large division of the Book of Malachi, and the subject is impiety, and here particularly, impiety in marriage and divorce. So let me look now first of all at verses 10 through 12 of chapter 2. And again I'm reading from the New American Standard Bible. Chapter 2 of Malachi, verse 10 through verse 12.

"Do we not all have one father? (Malachi asks) Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously each against his brother so as to profane the covenant of our fathers? Judah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in

Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the Lord which He loves and has married the daughter of a foreign god. As for the man who does this, may the Lord cut off from the tents of Jacob everyone who awakes and answers, or who presents an offering to the Lord of hosts?"

There's an opening principle that is expressed in verse 10 that we want to take a look at just briefly. He says, "Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us?"

Now naturally in reading something like this, we might ask the question: When Malachi says, "Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us?" Is he speaking about the fact that God is the father of all men by creation? Is this the vantage point from which he makes his following deductions?

Now, there is a sense in which we can speak of God as the Father of all by creation. It's the only way in which we can speak of the fatherhood of God. It certainly is not possible for us to say that God is the spiritual father of every man for he is not. But it is, it seems to me, impossible to interpret this passage even in that sense here because he says, "Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us?"

Now, in the light of the context, and in a moment he will mention Judah and Israel, it would seem that what he is referring to is the nation Israel. So, he is not talking about all men universally, but rather all in the nation Israel, all in the covenantal nation. So, what he is saying is that God is the father of the nation by virtue of his creation and election of them. That's his point. And so, from the standpoint of God's choice of Israel and of his forming them into one nation, he is going to argue the case of mixed marriages. "Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us?", that is, in the nation.

Now, remember in Exodus chapter 4, he calls Israel his son. In Hosea chapter 11 that's referred to, "Have not I called Israel my son out of Egypt?" So, the background of

this is the covenantal relationship between the Lord and the nation Israel. He is, of course, incidentally, the father of individuals by creation and by new birth. But that's not in his mind. What he is thinking about, then, is the covenantal relationship.

Then he asks, "Why do we deal treacherously each against his brother so as to profane the covenant of our fathers?" The covenant of our fathers is a reference to the Mosaic covenant. The problem that Malachi is addressing is the problem of mixed marriages. That's evident from the context in what follows here. And evidently what was happening in the Nation Israel is that which is often happened in our society. A man marries a woman. And they are joined together in holy wedlock. They begin to live together. They have a family, children. And then the time comes when the husband puts away his wife for a younger one. The same kinds of problems that we have in 1977, Israel had here four hundred years before the time of Jesus Christ. So, it is the problem of mixed marriages.

"Judah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the Lord which he loves and has married the daughter of a foreign god."

What made it even worse, if you can think of it being worse, is that the Israelites were putting away their Israelitish wives in order to marry the wives of the heathen. And evidently, they were also marrying those that were the young of them. Notice he says they are marrying the daughter of a foreign god. So, what they were doing was putting away their wives within the nation in order to marry someone outside the nation Israel. And in so doing inevitably they were marrying someone who believed in a different god. So they were guilty not only of putting away their wives, but guilty also of introducing idolatry into the nation Israel.

Now, they had been warned that they were not to do that. That was one of the things that God had spoken to them about. And I think it's in Deuteronomy chapter 7 and verse 3 and 4 that Moses specifically speaks on this point. He states in Deuteronomy chapter 7 and verse 3,

"Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you."

So, this was direct disobedience of the word of God for them to put away their wives and then to marry others and marry others who were the daughters of a foreign God. Now in the New Testament.

Well, let me just make a comment concerning verse 12. There are a couple of things here that may be a little difficult to understand. "As for the man who does this, may the Lord cut off from the tents of Jacob everyone who awakes and answers."

Now, that's a very strange expression and I don't imagine that most of us, I certainly wouldn't, would have understood this if we hadn't done a little bit of study on what it means, "Everyone who awakes and answers." Well, that's the Old Testament Hebraic way of saying everyone who is alive and kicking. So "everyone who awakes and answers" is everyone who's alive and kicking. So he says, "As for the man who does this, may the Lord cut off from the tents of Jacob everyone who is alive and kicking, or who presents an offering to the Lord of hosts."

Now, what he means there is that as a result of this sin, the guilty person is to have no survivor in his family to worship the Lord God through the Levitical system. So it's an expression of judgment upon them, such judgment as that they would not even be

able to carry on spiritual worship as a result of this sin. You can see that God is not very happy about mixed marriages.

Now, let's turn over to the New Testament and look at a passage in 2 Corinthians chapter 6 in which the Apostle Paul makes some statements that I do believe bear on the question that is before us here in Malachi chapter 2. 2 Corinthians chapter 6. Let me begin at verse 12. 2 Corinthians chapter 6 and verse 12, "So although." Well, I better read chapter 6 instead of chapter 7, and I will go ahead and begin verse 14.

"Do not be bound together with unbelievers; (Paul says to the Corinthians) for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord. "And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty."

Now, this is a very important passage and of course the gist of it is the opening statement, "Do not be bound together with unbelievers, for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness?" There are different kinds of yokes that a Christian may take up. Paul refers to these yokes here when he says, "Do not be bound together with unbelievers." There is a kind of social yoke that a Christian may take up. It's a rather serious thing to take up a close friendship with a person who is not a Christian. It's very easy to become so involved that one sacrifices a little bit of his Christianity as a result of it.

I'm not suggesting, of course, that we become isolationists. That is obviously something the New Testament speaks, I think, rather strongly against. But even our social relationships should come under the judgment of the word of God. What is probably more significant in Paul's mind are the relationships that we make in our businesses. "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Or our religious relationships. But the thing I'm interested in particularly is our matrimonial relationships.

Now we have specific statements of the word of God that when a person marries he should marry in the Lord. The Apostle Paul makes that statement in 1 Corinthians chapter 7, and I think it's verse 39, in a statement that is I think extremely important. He says, "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." So that principle expressed there is a principle that is found in the word of God.

Now for those of us who are already married, it's too late. But God has a very important word here I think for those who have not married yet. Our marriages are to be only "in the Lord." The reason for this is expressed typically in the Old Testament when the apostle speaks about the ox and the ass in Deuteronomy chapter 22 and verse 10. He has, incidentally, in this passage the Old Testament in mind, and he's speaking out of the particular figures that are set forth in those passages.

Deuteronomy chapter 22 and verse 10, the apostle writes, "You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together." So when he says here, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers," he's referring to that Old Testament practice set forth in the law which expresses the fact that you should not put under the same yoke two animals that have entirely different dispositions.

And that's true when you put the yoke of marriage over a beautiful young lady and a handsome young man. Well then, if one of them is not a Christian and the other one is, then we have two people with different natures. And the ox and the ass do not plow very well together. So the apostle thinking about that writes, "Do not be yoked

together with unbelievers." So this is an important statement regarding the relationship of believers and unbelievers. "Do not be bound together with unbelievers." Mixed marriages are not very happy marriages as far as the Lord is concerned.

Now turning back Malachi chapter 2. Did you notice the use of this expression "deal treacherously"? That's God's evaluation of this kind of thing. Verse 10, "Why do we deal treacherously each against his brother?" For you see in the company of Israel, for one person to disobey the Lord and marry someone who was not an Israelite after divorcing his wife is to sin against the whole covenant community.

And incidentally, there is a sense in which our sins within the body of Christ affect all of the other members of the body of Christ. There is a sense too in which the sins of each one of us in Believers Chapel affect all of the others in Believers Chapel for God has brought the church into a unity. We are bound together. The things that happen to one of us, happen to all of us. So this is treacherous dealing in the sight of God.

Verse 11, "Judah has dealt treacherously." And now when we come to speak of divorce, we'll find three more occurrences of that expression, in verse 14, in verse 15 and again in verse 16, "to deal treacherously." Well that's to marry a person who is not a believer. Put away one's wife and marry an unbeliever is to deal treacherously with reference to the covenant that God had made with Moses.

Now we want to take a look at the next section, and here we have the prophet's words concerning impiety in divorce. And let me read verse 13 through verse 16. "And this is another thing you do." The Hebrew text is, "This is the second thing." So this is point number two in the Lord's message. Now this is point number two and incidentally, it's point number two in my outline, which means of course that it is an inspired outline [laughter] Now verse 13,

"And this is a second thing you do: you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with

favor from your hand. Yet you say, 'For what reason?' 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. But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit."

That means essentially that no one with spiritual insight has ever betrayed his wife. Or no one with an ounce of sense has ever done it. That's what he means by that statement. So you can be sure that when a man puts away the wife of his youth without biblical justification, that he is making the most foolish move that it would be possible for him to make. Nothing could be more stupid than to do something like that.

So he says, "Not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring?" I think that in a moment we'll, I'll try to point out this is reference to Abraham. But evidently they appealed to Abraham. They said, Well Abraham had another wife. He took Hagar to wife and then he put her aside, too. So isn't that alright? If Abraham did it?

"And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. "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." "

Now again he starts out by expressing the principle. And the principle is that we have all one father. "Has not one God created us?" So that we are bound together in a unity within the relationship that we have in Israel. I think also what he is saying here too is that marriage is looked upon as a divine institution. Now that's evident from some things that he will say here in just a moment. Verse 12 says, "As for the man who does

this, may the Lord cut off from the tents of Jacob everyone who awakes and answers."

Well, I read that, I'm sorry.

Verse 13, "And this is the second thing you do: you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand."

Now what does he mean when he says, "You cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand."? Some interpreters have said that what is referred to here is the wives who have been wronged by their husbands. And they are the ones who are covering the altar with their tears, with their weeping and their groaning. Well, I am sure that that was the case in the experience of many of the women. But you'll notice he goes on to say, "Because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand."

Now if the wives who are wronged in this were covering the altar with tears, and with weeping and with groaning, there would be no reason why God would not accept the offerings of them. But if on the other hand, it is the husbands who have wronged their wives, who have put away the wives of their youth, and who now in hypocrisy are seeking to bring offerings to the altar in their hypocrisy, not willing to acknowledge their sin, not willing to repent and confess, but rather to bring offerings and then turn around and say: Well the Lord is not paying me any attention. I'm bringing the offerings that are supposed to be brought. Then I think I can understand this statement.

So I'm inclined to think this is a reference to the husbands. And it is they who in hypocrisy are covering "the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from their hand." They have the sense of their guilt and because they have the sense of their guilt, they are before the Lord with weeping and groaning, but since they have sinned against him, he does not regard the offering. He does not accept it with favor from their hand.

Now then, he goes on to say in verse 14, "Yet you say, 'For what reason?' 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."

Now this text, it seems to me in verse 14, expresses almost all of the biblical principles concerning marriage. Notice, "Because the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth." What does that mean? Why, that means God was present when you married. He was a witness.

So when we do stand before someone who is performing a marriage and this person says, 'Now we are here in the presence of God and in the presence of this company in order to unite these two people in holy matrimony,' we are saying nothing more than the word of God says. And so God has been a witness, he said, to these marriages that were performed.

Furthermore, he speaks of the wife as a wife by covenant. Notice that, "a wife by covenant."

Now there are passages in the Old Testament that make it very plain that marriage is to be regarded as a covenant between two people. And these two people do with the enablement of the Holy Spirit and the recognition of him, make certain promises to each other which are in the sight of God important promises.

Now I think you can see from this, that marriage in the Old Testament is regarded as a divine institution. And just as in the first book of the Bible in the Book of Genesis that is set forth, so here in the last book of our English Old Testament it is set forth again. So, "The Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth."

I think I can understand now why the Jews did say that the very altar weeps when a man puts away the wife of his youth. What a terrible thing that really is.

Now it's a terrible thing for many reasons. It's a terrible thing from the standpoint of the people involved. It's a terrible thing from the standpoint of the family involved.

It's a terrible thing from the standpoint of the wife. But most of all it's a horrible thing in the sight of God.

"Against whom you have dealt treacherously though she is your companion and your wife by covenant." Are you listening men? This is a word that is addressed to you. A very important word that is addressed to you. It's not a very pleasant thing in the sight of God for a man to put away the wife of his youth.

Now he states, " But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit." Incidentally, this could be rendered and translated with a little "s" instead of a capital "S" in the word spirit. But I think the rendering of the New American Standard Version is correct. "Not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit." Not one who has any spiritual sense at all has performed this. In other words, you cannot put away the wife of your youth and have your senses at the same time.

But what about Abraham? What about the experience of Abraham? Isn't that exactly what he did? Well, we all know the story of Abraham in Genesis chapter 16. That really is hardly a parallel. A person has to cast around for straws to find justification from Abraham for marriage and divorce because, in the first place, Abraham took Hagar to himself with the suggestion of Sarah his wife. And furthermore, Abraham didn't put away Hagar. It was God who put away Hagar.

So the illustration of Hagar, of Abraham and Hagar and Sarah does not really suit at all. But you can see that they are casting around for straws and looking for some justification for putting away a wife. Abraham did it, the father of the nation, then perhaps we can do it too. Alright, you can do it, if you're a spiritual man like Abraham. But there're not any around like that.

"Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth." Again he repeats that, "Let no one deal treacherously with the wife of your youth."

And finally in verse 16, the prophet giving the words of God says, "For I hate divorce." You couldn't find stronger words from the Lord. "I hate divorce," says the Lord 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."

Well now, let's turn over again, some of you may not have been here Sunday, and let's take a look again at our passage in Matthew chapter 19. Just read down a few of the verses and see how our Lord's statements in Matthew chapter 19, in which he seeks to lead the Pharisees back to the Book of Genesis, is in beautiful harmony with everything that is stated in Malachi chapter 2.

"And some Pharisees came to him, testing Him (We read in the 3rd verse) and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?" And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said."

We pointed out or tried to point out Sunday that in this statement which is now quoted in the 5th verse, that in this statement we have a quotation from Adam and not from the Lord. And yet in verse 4 we read "Have you not read, (the Lord Jesus said) that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said."

So the one who created is the one who said. The one who created is God. Therefore he's the one who said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother." But Moses says in Genesis that he's the one that said it. And I tried to point out to you that this is our Lord's doctrine of holy Scripture, that is, that the Old Testament is the word of God and that he feels perfectly free to say that a passage written by Moses is really written by God.

Now this is not the only case, so it's not just a peculiarity of the 19th chapter of the Book of Matthew. We have a number of such cases in the 1st chapter of the Epistle

to the Hebrews and other places as well. So you can see the doctrine of Scripture that the Lord Jesus had. He regarded the whole of Scripture as the word of God. True, it came to us through men, but it was the word of God. It was God-breathed, breathed out by God. So the Scriptures, it is clear, are the word of God.

And for the Lord Jesus, I fully believe if we had had him here with us and we were able to ask him, Now Lord what is your axiom? There would be no question whatsoever but that he would say, My axiom is the Scriptures are the word of God. And I think that is the basis upon which we as Christians confront the world. We confront the world with the conviction wrought by the Holy Spirit in regeneration that the Scriptures are the word of God.

There're all kinds of presuppositions that people might have. Scientists have some. Psychologists have some. Philosophers have their presuppositions. We Christians have our presupposition. And our fundamental axiom is the Bible is the word of God.

The other night in one of the, or morning, I've forgotten which. In one of the question and answer sessions, one of the men got up or I think it was a lady, I believe maybe it came up twice, and asked: What is there that makes the Christian think that his presupposition is preferable to the others?

By what standard do we choose our presuppositions? Well of course, in the very nature of a case, a presupposition is a presupposition. It's not argued. If it's argued then you have some other presupposition. This is our fundamental axiom with which we begin. There is no argument about it. It is our fundamental presupposition. If we accept that because of something else, then that other thing is our presupposition.

Well now we have a series of presuppositions. How do we know that ours is right? We cannot say it's right "because", because then it's not our presupposition. Why do we know it's right? Why, we know it's right because God in regeneration has given us who were dead in trespasses and sins new life. And with that regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, there is wrought within us the conviction that the Bible is the word of God.

There can be only one ultimate convincing reason why we think the Scriptures are the word of God. And that convincing reason comes from the Holy Spirit. Our faith is in God. Remember the apostle said that he came to the Corinthians and he did not preach to them with flowery speech and rational arguments because he wanted their faith to be not in the wisdom of men, reasons why we accept this particular presupposition, but in the power of God.

So a Christian doesn't have to be argued into conviction that his fundamental presupposition is the word of God. When he becomes a Christian he has that. It's given him by God. After all, what's the highest authority? The professor of theology at the theological institution? No, he's not the highest authority. Well, a kind of general consensus of what biblical Christians believe? No, that's not the highest authority.

What is the highest authority? Well the highest authority is God. The highest authority is the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. That's why Christians are certain that what they believe is divine truth. And every Christian knows it and no Christian can ever know it because that conviction comes from God in regeneration. The Bible is the word of God. So it has come to us from God, and therefore we look at the Scriptures and say: This is my axiom. It has been given me by God on the highest authority from God himself.

Now it's evident the Lord Jesus believed that. He looked at the Old Testament and he said, Whether Moses spoke it or whether Malachi spoke it.

(Are you ladies a little chilly? You look kind of wan and white, and we were afraid it might be a little too warm in here. It's alright. Go ahead and tough it out. I'm just about through. I know you're happy over that.)

But it's evident our Lord Jesus believed this, that whether it was Malachi's word or whether it was Moses' word or whether it was David's word, that the fundamental thing about it is that it is God's word. And how important that it.

Now we read on,

"Consequently they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." (Let him not put away the wife of his youth. He deals treacherously when he does it.) They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate and divorce her?" He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

It doesn't say a word about incompatibility. It doesn't say a word about mental cruelty. It doesn't say a word about what I so frequently hear, We just cannot get along together.

Well, let me sum up. What's God's attitude to mixed marriages? Well, I think we can best answer that question by turning to that New Testament passage in 2 Corinthians chapter 6 again. Remember he had said, "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness?"

And then after he finishes the 18th verse, the apostle says in the 1st verse of 2 Corinthians chapter 7, "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." I like the rendering of Authorized Version, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit." That's God's attitude to mixed marriages. In his sight, it is filthiness. It is defilement on the part of the believer to marry an unbeliever. Or to put it in plain language, it is sin.

Now then, what is his attitude toward divorce? Well he has already said he has hated divorce. He has said furthermore that the only reason he permitted it in the case of Deuteronomy chapter 24 was because of the hardness of the human heart. So it is evident that his attitude toward divorce is the same. It is sin in the sight of God.

So mixed marriages, divorce, they are sin in the sight of God, and he does not like them. It is sad that so much of our modern society has forgotten these simple words from the Lord.

You know I had some notes on Malachi which were about twenty years old. And this past week I took out some of the notes. And I looked at a clipping that I had clipped out of Time Magazine in October 5, 1953, almost twenty-five years ago. It is entitled "The Unfrumptions Wedding." And it was an account of the fourth marriage of two people, each their fourth marriage.

And it was just an accident, I guess, [Laughter] (Does that sufficiently harm anyone with language for you to not think that I'm trying to rub it in.) I read in this week's Dallas Morning News, one of these parties, an actress, has been granted permission to leave California after being confined to a Newport Beach California hospital over a month. Ms. So-and-so, now fifty-eight years of age, was described as "disabled by mental disorder or chronic alcoholism in a suit filed last month by the Orange County counsel's office. She has been hospitalized since then by court order."

Who am I to say that the reason for that is five or six marriages, for I think she's been married at least twice since then. But surely it could not have helped.

When we constantly disobey the word of God, you can be sure that we shall suffer from it. There is no way to escape. God hates divorce. He hates mixed marriages. He regards these as sin. They're violations of the teaching of the word of God. May God help us to give attention to our principium, our axiom. The Bible is the word of God.

Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, again we thank Thee for these words from holy Scripture. And, Lord, we pray that by the grace of our great God, the enablement of the Holy Spirit, we may be able to fulfill the obligations that rest upon us. And we know, Lord, that we have spoken very sharply and very harshly but we know that this is the way of blessing. And

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Thou dost bless those that by Thy grace are enabled to follow the word of God. For  
Jesus' sake. Amen.