

Emphasis and EGW quotations by Sami Wilberforce

Marriage Permanence

There is a movement or doctrine getting prominent that once married you cannot divorce and be remarried again for that would be committing adultery. The doctrine is getting its roots into Seventh Day Adventism and I would like to address the issue not though exhaustively but to the extend that God gives me grace. God hates divorce and so do I and I have put on our websites some documents that will help many who are struggling with marriage issues. Here are the links:

<https://gospelsoundersministry.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Marriage-Separation-Divorce-and-Remarriage.pdf>

<https://gospelsoundersministry.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Should-Seventh-day-Adventists-be-Signing-Separation-or-Divorce-Papers.pdf>

<https://gospelsoundersministry.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Married-to-Unbelieving-Spouse-1.pdf>

First of all the following 49 points are Neal Doster's defence against that doctrine. I will add more information from the inspired data we have so far.

An argument from Silence by Neal Doster

1) If false supposition introduces false ideas into our thinking, then our thinking is errant. If false supposition creates an argument otherwise not argued in scripture, we should be able to see who created the extra-biblical argument. This is the issue I have with the **Permanence of Marriage Movement** (PoMM).

2) To understand the divorce conundrum one must understand that the confusion is actually created by those who's teaching undermines the reality of divorce in the bible. **Divorce in the bible effectively separates wife from husband. While some biblical realities are not desirable, they still were real events that changed the status of the individuals who experienced them. Divorce is such a reality.** Divorce and remarriage are effective events that changed the marital status of those who experienced it. What happens when certain Christians begin to treat divorce and remarriage as pretense? The answer, a conundrum is born. You may be surprised at who's responsible for the confusion on this issue.

3) If divorce and remarriage are effective events, **then marital status and obligations have changed from one spouse to another. If they are not effective events then marital status has not changed, see the difference?** The Permanence of Marriage Movement (PoMM) is an organization of men and women who purport to explain the divorce dilemma with suppositional beliefs and remedies. These beliefs create a whole new dimension not found in the bible but are found in most discussion on this topic. Thus the tension among believers.

4) The issue I have with the PoMM is not about their effort to keep marriages together, but rather their exacerbating of divorce and their remedial belief that

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more families must be dissolved based on their deductive reasoning. If you struggle with this issue, then understanding the difference between their suppositions and Jesus' contextual teaching on this issue will give you the information to differentiate between the two. To understand that Jesus' teaching is based on an effective divorce and remarriage can begin to dispel all the false suppositions derived from not understanding that.

5) While all Christians believe marriage is a sacred institution created by God to last a lifetime, **most believe it can prematurely end. On the other hand the PoMM believes it cannot, they actually purport that marriage survives divorce.** I hope you immediately see the self-contradiction of that phrase, thus the conundrum that arises from it. So the conundrum revolves around their suppositions about the realness of divorce and remarriage in the bible. We may all agree on the maladies caused by divorce, but we do not agree on the solution.

6) I hope to show what Jesus actually taught on this issue over against those who see more in His teachings than is there. If you are able to identify supposition, you should be able to determine what Jesus said without that supposition. **You then have a choice of two views, what's actually there or what's supposed.** Thus you should be able to differentiate between the views, knowing which view exaggerates God's Word. Remove false suppositions from the debate on this issue and you will eliminate the hypothetical argument that's the source of the confusion. Here is a critique of someone in the PoMM and his suppositional beliefs.

7) Stephen W. Wilcox in reference to Jesus in Matthew 5:31,32 says "He has in this passage of Scripture, **abrogated the Moses allowance for divorce and remarriage,** which allowed the woman to remarry after divorce if she wished to do so (Deut. 24:1-4)."

8) What is the supposition here? Why is the supposition imagined? Is the supposition necessary? In other words can the adultery of that text be explained without the supposition? If so, then the supposition is not only unnecessary, it generates the false idea that Jesus did something He didn't actually do. **What are the consequences of believing Jesus did something He didn't do?** Do you realize that Stephen imagines the supposition because he cannot explain the ensuing adultery in that text without it?

9) If a bible Teacher imagines Jesus abrogating the law of Moses, he then has to contrive additional suppositions to defend it. False supposition generates false suppositions. You end up with a lengthy argument that misconstrues God's Word and intent for this issue. You end up changing the effectiveness of divorce and remarriage from one Testament to the other. As you shall see (or already know) **you end up calling for families to be dissolved for salvation sake because of the deductive reasoning of believing Jesus abolished divorce.** This deception needs addressing.

10) The **abrogation supposition imagines Moses as the villain for divorce (another supposition) by allowing it against God's will.** That's why it's referred to as **"Moses allowance for divorce and remarriage."** Stephen imagines Jesus

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opposing and reversing this concession thereby abrogating it. Then in this, make believe world divorce and remarriage becomes ineffective at that point. The imagination takes you anywhere you want to go with this issue, unlike scripture, it has no bounds. This way of interpreting scripture is called eisegesis - the interpretation of a text (as of the Bible) by reading into it one's own ideas. By claiming Jesus abrogated the divorce concession Stephen believes that marriages no longer end. See how one supposition leads to another and another and so on?

11) "Indissoluble marriage" advocates are so bent on defining the adultery (of divorce and remarriage) with its most well-known meaning **they fail to see the simple reality that Jesus taught that adultery can occur another way.** For them Jesus is not describing an adultery that results from divorce and remarriage but rather **an adultery that's caused by the absence of these events.** Can you see the difference abrogation makes? Can you see how the Word of God can be altered by adding information to it? Can you see how Jesus' teaching on divorce is changed by ignoring His very words? Words have meaning, when you mentally discard them as Stephen does you have changed "the means to an end." You have altered the very factors that resulted in the conclusion Jesus made.

12) Stephen's propositional statement (above) contains an important fact that most views on this issue acknowledge, **the divorced were allowed to remarry** (Deut. 24:2). This acknowledgement allows us to begin from biblical precedents and a mutual understanding of biblical history. **Remarriage was a binding marriage and divorce actually dissolved the first marriage.** These realities must be deconstructed in order to postulate the idea of "indissoluble marriage." Stephen's way of doing that is by convincing us that Jesus "abrogated the Moses allowance for divorce and remarriage." Abrogation is added to scripture and the sequence of events that resulted in the adultery Jesus described is altered by mentally eliminating them. Divorce and remarriage from Stephen's perspective are no longer real realities. Consequently Stephen is putting forth the argument that unlike the Old Testament, **divorce and remarriage no longer occurs and therefore no longer changes the marital status of those involved.**

13) To affirm this let's look at some propositional statements advocated by Stephen. Let's look at where supposition leads. By contrast remember that Jesus' teaching doesn't advocate the following convictions if understood within its historic context. We would then have every reason to oppose the following illusions masquerading as Truth. **The "abrogation supposition" is the theory that Jesus abolished the Old Testament divorce concession which in turn made divorce and remarriage impossible.** Consequently Stephen describes the adultery as if it occurs within the first marriage.

14) Stephen Wilcox, a prominent pastor in the Permanence of Marriage Movement reiterates these propositional statements by believing the "abrogation supposition." He is summarizing the position of some early Church leaders in his message, "Restoration of Christian Marriage." So these propositions represents what he believes also. **"Death alone terminates the marriage covenant"**. **"Marriage survives remarriage and precludes it."** **"Marriage is a lifelong covenant that will never be invalidated by God while both parties live"**. **"A marriage is for life. No matter what a spouse turns out to be, or how they may**

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act, what they do or don't do, or the sins they commit, the covenant remains fully in effect. A remarriage while a former spouse lives is not marriage at all, but sinful adultery. God does not divide the one flesh relationship except by physical death”.

“It is necessary therefore to warn those who have remarried while a former spouse lives that they are in a continuing state of adultery according to the scriptures, and must repent of it by confessing that sin and vacating that relationship”* .

15) While Stephen should be admired for defending the sacredness of marriage, it is imperative that you understand the difference between what he is postulating and what Jesus actually said. Stephen has changed the “the means to an end” from that of Christ. All because he imagines Jesus doing something He didn't do.

It is imperative that you remain objective when interpreting scripture. There are ramifications for altering the words of Christ. Stephen's conclusions will cause an imagined conflict between Jesus and Moses, between Old Testament and New. **This should be a hint that something is amiss.**

16) In contrast to Jesus, Stephen creates the illusion that the adultery of divorce and remarriage is not the adultery of divorce and remarriage, it's that simple. He doesn't differentiate between the adultery Jesus describes and the adultery of being unfaithful while married. If you actually end up concluding differently from Jesus, you'll pervert the text and His intent. If you believe Jesus abolished divorce in your explanation of the adultery that ensues, you thereby have been programmed to believe the other conclusions advocated by Stephen. It sets you on a trajectory of claiming all the propositions stated by Stephen as if they were true. **The bottom line is, Stephen and all who think like him have come to their conclusions by adding to God's Word.**

17) I'm writing in hope you the reader will gain an understanding of the issue of divorce and remarriage from its chronological unfolding. This way of interpreting this issue will be different from those who pick out a New Testament verse and build a new starting point. The new starting point often causes the interpreter to dismiss relevant factors in biblical history that wouldn't support their new conclusion. This is why “abrogation” becomes necessary. If you're going to make claims the bible doesn't make, you'll have to convince others that former factors found in the bible have changed. Factors like that acknowledged by Stephen in the first quote which **“allowed the woman to remarry after divorce if she wished to do so.”** Factors like divorce and remarriage being real events that changed the marital status and obligations from the former spouse to the present. This is my concern with this issue. If divorce and remarriage actually changes marital obligations, then Stephen (and those who think like him) is **engaged in a campaign of destroying both marriage and families.**

18) Simply put a right interpretation on this issue must maintain biblical truth as it flowed from Moses to Jesus to Paul. To have an understanding of this issue as it historically unfolded is paramount. To understand Paul's teaching on this issue we must properly understand Jesus who spoke before him. To understand Jesus we must maintain Old Testament truth set forth by the Prophets. **We should never believe they contradicted each other. The right interpretation will maintain truth from Moses to Jesus to Paul.**

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19) Stephen's suppositions create a conflict with biblical precedents, that's because remarriage was a marriage to whom one was obligated. Therefore a harmonious interpretation of all the biblical writers on this issue cannot be achieved if one is allowed to add false suppositions to what Jesus said. These suppositions come from rewording the words of the Lord so that there is no difference between the adultery Jesus described and the adultery that was punished in scripture. While adultery speaks of unfaithfulness, it does not always transpire the same way. **Nor was the culpability for this unfaithfulness placed on the women who were divorced by their husbands (Matthew 5:32).** This verse proves that this manner of adultery was an inadvertent consequence of women put away by their husbands and that it ensued because their marriage prematurely ended. Both of these facts are important to a right understanding of this issue because they are deconstructed by false supposition. Therefore you must be open to a view that defends what Jesus actually said over against false supposition. Please note...

20) I'm not arguing against the fact that adultery ensues, although I do believe there are extenuating circumstances given by Jesus and Paul. I'm arguing for HOW Jesus describes the adultery and the PROPER response. I'm arguing for a congruous view of Old and New Testament, no need to make them contradict. No need to try to convince others that Old Testament truths are not relevant to New Testament understanding. I believe if you follow a chronological unfolding of this issue you will properly understand Paul's New Testament instruction in 1 Corinthians 7. If you don't then others will tell you what Paul meant in the vacuum of biblical history and the introduction of extra-biblical supposition. If we understand scripture in a congruous manner we would see that the consequence of divorce and remarriage does not prevent divorce and remarriage. In other words, being married to another following divorce, carried all the obligations of the previous marriage, as it did before the introduction of the false idea of "abrogation."

21) Stephen's "abrogation supposition" reveals he did not understand Jesus. Jesus was revealing to Israel that adultery entailed more than being unfaithful while married. Like many Christians, Stephen believes that adultery only occurs when one spouse is sexually unfaithful to whom they are married. Therefore Stephen interjects "abrogation" into the text because he cannot otherwise reconcile Jesus' conclusion with that fixed definition. That definition does not allow him (and others) to grasp that Jesus revealed adultery can follow a terminated marriage. **Should we believe Jesus changed divorce and remarriage reality or should we believe adultery can follow these realities?** Understanding the relevancy to whom Jesus spoke answers that question. We'll speak more to this later.

22) To secure their fixed definition for adultery in regard to those who are divorced they further advocate such ideas as, "still married in God's eyes" or "a marriage covenant can't be broken" or "the one-flesh union can't be separated except by death" in order to bolster their belief that the first marriage was not actually dissolved or the idea of "indissoluble marriage." None of these theoretical phrases follow the actual words of the Lord for He is describing the premature end of a

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marriage, the separating of the one-flesh union, and the consequence of covenant breaking, all which are true in God's eyes. **In God's eyes scripture is true the way it reads. Don't let anyone fool you by saying that scripture reads one way but "in God's eyes" it's another.**

23) These phrases are ways some expositors get their adherents to believe "indissoluble marriage." Indissoluble marriage would be a hard sale from scripture alone. It is imperative that you (the reader) realize that once you embrace a supposition, particularly a false one, that supposition will have deceptive ramifications for your conclusions. It makes you vulnerable to accept such phrases because they corroborate what you think to be true. False suppositions change biblical perception and takes the mind into ideas that are a figment of the imagination. **The whole conflict among Christians is an argument for or against figments of the imagination created by those (like Stephen) who believe Jesus did something He didn't do.**

24) For example, if anyone can convince a divorced and remarried individual they are not actually divorce and remarried, their mind will automatically default to the idea of "indissoluble marriage." **This will create the illusion that they are still married to their first spouse and therefore they are "in God's eyes" merely having an affair to which they should end.** Corroborating a supposition masquerading as truth positioned them to accept the suppositional remedy, one must "divorce to repent" (DTR) of the affair. The point I'm making for the reader is, it's easy to get you to believe the remedial conclusion if you believe from God's perspective divorced and remarriage is not possible. Conversely it's imperative to understand that the adultery that follows divorce and remarriage can be explained by the actual words of Christ, without false supposition, and in harmony with and flowing from the Old Testament.

25) You may be one who follows the theory that "in God's eyes" marriages no longer end. If so, you need to understand the opposite view of believing that divorce and remarriage are effective events that actually change the marital status of those who experience it. You need to understand that Christ's conclusions are based in a real and effective divorce and remarriage. Conversely Stephen's conclusions (above) are based in the belief that divorce and remarriage is now ineffective, see the difference. One interpretation flows out of the Old Testament and is in harmony with it, and the other puts you on a collision course with the Old Testament.

26) The DTR camp teaches that Jesus "abrogated/abolished" the Old Testament divorce concession. They interject abrogation into the text because they need some way to defend their belief that adultery only occurs within marriage (their fixed definition for adultery). Following that SUPPOSITION they teach that divorce is no longer possible (another supposition). Most of them will qualify that belief by saying "in God's eyes" (another supposition) divorce is no longer possible. Consequently they have created the mental illusion that marriage is indissoluble or the false belief of "indissoluble marriage".

27) But the truth is, that was not Jesus' argument at all. Jesus specifically spoke of an adultery that was the result of divorce and remarriage, not the imaginary

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absence of those realities. It is imperative that you realize the distinction between the views and HOW they draw their conclusions. This article is to help you discriminate between the two. So the relevant question for you to consider is, is Jesus speaking to the historic reality of this manner of adultery? In other words did this manner of adultery already exist in the Old Testament? If so, then the theory of “abrogation” is proven false because abrogation theorist are claiming that this adultery occurs because Jesus abolished divorce. If Jesus did not abolish divorce then this adultery does not transpire within the first marriage as they claim. If “abrogation” does not account for this adultery (as they claim) then there is no difference between Old and New Testament divorce and remarriage.

28) If we can see that Stephen and the like-minded (in their zeal) misconstrued Jesus’ words, we can see that the reality of divorce and remarriage did not change from one Testament to the other. We should be able to see that the conclusions drawn from “abrogation” are themselves deception. If divorce and remarriage changes the marital status and obligations of those who experience it, then they are obligated to their present spouse. **If so, we should conclude (in harmony with the Old Testament) that divorce and remarriage produced both a transgression and a transference of marital obligation.** Therefore the PoMM’s remedial supposition of calling for second marriages to end is a deceptive lie.

29) DTR advocates are actually changing the very facts in which Jesus describes this manner of adultery. They miss a very important detail in Christ debate with the Pharisees (Matt.19, Mark 10). In that dialogue Jesus makes a retrospective indictment against Israel for causing this manner of adultery. **By insisting on the right to divorce Jesus revealed to them that they were violating God’s lifelong design for marriage. That violation is the key to understanding the ensuing adultery to which Jesus spoke.** I will speak more on this later.

30) If you overlook the fact that Israel had been committing this adultery (since their insistence on divorce), you will miss the fact that this adultery was caused hundreds of years before the theory of “abrogation.” The theory of abrogation actually alters the retrospective relevancy of Jesus’ teaching to whom He was speaking. If one overlooks the adultery’s historic relevance to Israel they will then try to explain the adultery some other way. This is what Stephen and the like-minded do. Defaulting to their preconceived meaning for adultery they continue to formulate suppositions around that meaning, **which ultimately alters the fact that a binding marriage followed divorce.** “Abrogation” theorist **fail to understand that an effective divorce is the primal cause for this manner of adultery.**

31) Explaining the adultery other than Jesus’ description is the origin of the conflict in Church history. Don’t read any further until you process that. The conflict arose in Church history by those who adhered to a restrictive definition for adultery. **Many Christians assumed that adultery only occurs within marriage.** That absolute meaning produced the historic conundrum. It produces the false suppositions, the corroborative phrases for those suppositions, and the false remedy that flow from those suppositions, etc. etc. **Jesus on the other hand is describing a manner of adultery that is the consequence of terminating a marriage, or to put it another way, a transgression that ensues because a**

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marriage prematurely ends. Jesus makes a direct reference to divorce (conceded because of hard hearts) as the origin of this manner of adultery. Consequently the obligation of lifelong fidelity is transgressed when remarried, it's that simple. Thus the manner of adultery Jesus describes.

32) Because this manner of adultery correlates with Israel's history, the theory of "abrogation" is proven false. Again that's because this adultery predates the theory of abrogation. Abrogation theorists are postulating that this adultery was caused by Jesus abolishing the Old Testament divorce concession. If you want to understand why Christians have multiple interpretations about the Lord's teaching, you must understand the difference between those who add "abrogation" to Jesus' teaching (because they define adultery solely as infidelity within marriage), from those who understand that it entails an effective divorce and remarriage (as described by Jesus). **The historic sequential details matter. Jesus said nothing that should be construed as "abrogation" or that this adultery results from such.**

33) **If adultery can occur because the first marriage was terminated (divorce), then adultery is not limited to infidelity within marriage.** The relevant question for all is, is the adultery as described by Jesus something new because He abolished the divorce concession, or was Jesus describing an age old problem caused by Israel's insistence on the right to put away their wives? One view (abrogation) is describing the adultery as something new. **The other view (historical context) is describing this adultery as something retrospective in origin.** You must realize the difference "abrogation" makes in drawing conclusions about Jesus' teaching. By understanding the relevancy of Jesus' teaching to WHOM He was speaking, we absolutely see His retrospective indictment against Israel. Therefore nothing changed about the effectiveness of divorce and remarriage from one Testament to the other, nor the binding obligations that followed.

34) Remember I said earlier there are consequences to believing false supposition. **"Abrogation" is defining the adultery as if the first marriage was not terminated.** CONSEQUENTLY "abrogation" is actually redefining how this manner of adultery occurs. As a result some Christians have produced a remedy for this adultery that is not only extra-biblical, it is anti-biblical. **No one in all of scripture taught those remarried to repent of their marriage, no one. The "divorce to repent" supposition is derived from the false supposition of "abrogation." The consequence of that mental deception has exacerbated divorce and destroyed established families.**

35) Let me pause to say that I know I'm not going to change the mind of the hard line theorist. But for those who are striving to objectively understand and explain this issue, understanding "abrogation" and "indissoluble marriage" as false will eliminate the need to postulate other suppositions that are based upon them. Once false suppositions are exposed there will be no reason to advocate that established families should be dissolved or the "divorce to repent" supposition itself. So the best way to keep from following false suppositions is to realize that **Jesus was addressing an age old problem. He reveal to His covenant people Israel that they caused this manner of adultery by insisting on the right to**

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discard their wives. This manner of adultery is not something new, nor was there a new remedy issued by Christ or any other New Testament Author. There was no actual conflict between Jesus and Moses (another false supposition). These representatives of God should be interpreted congruously.

36) Here is a summary understanding of Jesus' teaching (on this issue) and its historic relevancy. In the dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees, Jesus uses the phrase **"from the beginning it was not so"** (Matthew 19:8b) to explain the WHY of the adultery He describes, **it had nothing to do with the abolishment of divorce. It had everything to do with the reality of divorce in regard to Israel's history. In context Jesus was explaining to Israel that their hard hearts (by insisting on divorce) yielded this manner of adultery.** Do you understand if you remove an effective divorce from Jesus' description you are changing what He described? Are you seeing what false supposition (if believed) does to this issue?

37) In context Jesus used the phrase "from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:8b) to explain to the Pharisees that divorce is foreign to God's idea for marriage. The DTR camp instead claims that Jesus by using that phrase took us back to the time before divorce and then and there abolished it. From supposing on that phrase they claim Jesus abrogated the Old Testament divorce concession. Do you (the reader) understand that false suppositions are figments of the imagination being defended as TRUTH? Do you understand that these suppositions are foundational to the "divorce to repent" deception? Do you understand there is no abrogation of the law of Moses in Jesus' teaching?

38) Jesus' counter argument against those who were defending divorce for every reason (Matt. 19:3) was an appeal to their calloused conscience (harden heart). **He revealed to them that divorce staged one to commit adultery by default, defaulting on God's creative design for marriage** (Matthew 19:4-6,8b). Jesus explained that marriage sets forth the obligation to CLEAVE (v.5), therefore having an inherent obligation of lifetime fidelity. In other words when a man and woman enter into marriage **they are inherently obligated to a lifetime of fidelity to one another. What would happen if the obligation of fidelity is inadvertently violated by divorce and remarriage? The answer, the adultery Jesus described.**

39) The simple truth Jesus revealed to Israel was that an **obligation inherent in marriage (exclusive intimacy) is violated by divorce and remarriage.** The catch 22 is that **divorce and remarriage formed another husband wife relationship which transgressed in principle the exclusivity set forth by the first marriage, thereby causing the adultery in the manner Jesus described.** Divorce and remarriage produced both a transgression and a transference of marital obligation. **This is the dilemma it caused Israel then and the Church today.** It is the very dilemma Jesus described. But the dilemma turns into an enigma when biblical precedents are dismissed. **Or to put it another way, by believing this adultery occurs because the first marriage was not terminated.**

40) In the Patriarchal society of Israel men were causing their wives to commit adultery by **defaulting on the principle of cleaving as explained by Jesus and**

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“the law of her husband” as explained by Paul (Romans 7:2b). These women consequently but inadvertently violated these obligations inherent in marriage. **Jesus makes no indictment against the innocent party whatsoever.** There was an innocent party and they inadvertently were defiled because of unloving husbands (Deut.24:4).

41) Unlike DTR advocates, Jesus’ criticism focused on divorce not remarriage. **Remarriage was graciously allowed for women put away by their husbands** (Deut. 24:2). Unfortunately there is an **unintentional consequence even for the innocent party.** But we have every reason for practical purposes to discriminate between the innocent and guilty party!! That’s because Jesus does exactly that. Jesus indicts the men of this Patriarchal society in Matthew 5:32 with the culpability of their former wives transgression. **“causeth her to commit adultery”** (KJV) or **“makes her the victim of adultery”** (NIV) is an **indictment against** the former husband.

42) Instead of focusing on Christ criticism of divorce, DTR advocates instead choose **to focus on remarriage causing the adultery, so therefore “remarriage is adultery” as they so often state it.** But the origin of the problem according to Jesus was hard hearts insisting on divorce (Matt.19:8) and according to the text **divorce is what Jesus rebuke the Pharisees for** (Matt.19:6). Conversely by adding their suppositions DTR has built **a case against remarriage.** There is no prohibition (another supposition) for remarriage in Jesus teachings. God’s covenant people were not required to remain companionless because of the inadvertent defilement and adultery. One must maintain the chronological facts in order to properly understand Paul’s divorce and remarriage restriction later (1 Cor. 7:10,11). **While there is a New Testament circumstance where remarriage is prohibited, that restriction is proven unique and not uniform when understood within context as well as the biblical truth that remarriage had been graciously allowed** (Deut. 24:2). Remarriage allowed is something even Stephen admits (refer to his first quote in the seventh paragraph, first post).

43) Historically women, particularly Jewish women had little to no divorce rights but were not forced to endure life without a husband. If you do not start from the biblical base point that remarriage was allowed, 1 Cor. 7:11 will be understood as some uniform rule for every circumstance (even though Paul addresses different ones). Reading that verse void of biblical history and other textual factors will only produce an absolute prohibition not sustainable by knowing all the biblical facts.

44) It is imperative that Christians do not overlook the fact that **Jesus described an adultery specifically caused by divorce, not the imaginary absent of it. An effective divorce is the primal factor to the adultery Jesus described.** It is also imperative to see this adultery’s Old Testament origin **caused by hard hearts insisting on divorce,** why? Because “abrogation” and “indissoluble marriage” is false suppositions that create the illusion that this adultery is something new for the New Testament.

45) **Do you understand if one omits the retrospective indictment against Israel for causing this manner of adultery they will then account for the**

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adultery some other way? The DTR camp does exactly that and consequently creates a whole new dimension (and thereby an enigma) for this issue not even in the bible. Can you be convinced from supposition that repentance requires more for this adultery than it did in the Old Testament? Do you understand that no one in scripture but Moses speaks to an “after remarriage” solution? Do you realize there is no New Testament instruction to “divorce to repent?” Do you now understand that the DTR supposition is predicated on false suppositions itself?

46) **When we understand Moses and Jesus without these false suppositions we have every reason to believe that divorce and remarriage produced both a transgression and a transference of marital obligation. That would be the harmonious conclusion of believing both representatives of God.**

47) Questions for the reader, *How do you account for this manner of adultery?* How do you explain the adultery caused by divorce and remarriage? Why are these two questions important? Because if your premise is false your conclusion will be also. If you do not understand that adultery is not limited to **“infidelity within marriage”** you will not differentiate and you will end up opposing the Lord on this issue. ***Does your explanation affirm or deny the retrospective indictment against Israel?*** Do you understand that Jesus was telling Israel they had been **committing this manner of adultery ever since they insisted on divorce?** Why are these questions relevant? Because if we understand that the adultery Jesus describes is not something new we have no ground to change biblical precedents. Precedents where remarriage was a binding marriage. Precedents where remarriage was graciously allowed even though it inadvertently caused a shameful consequence. ***Are you able to differentiate between this way of committing adultery from that of infidelity within marriage?*** Do you understand that the abrogation/abolishment supposition changes what Jesus actually said? ***Do you understand that the abrogation/abolishment supposition changes when this adultery began?*** Do you understand that the abrogation/abolishment supposition changes how Jesus describes this adultery? ***Do you understand that the abrogation/abolishment supposition changes why this adultery occurs?*** **Do you realize the abrogation/abolishment supposition is a deceptive lie (even if unintentional)?**

48) All Christians believe that divorce is nothing to be cavalier about it. But divorce is a reality in God’s eyes today just like it was for Moses, Jesus and Paul. We cannot make up suppositions to fix it or explain it away, we will only become more legalistic than Christ. **We will then impose on others a repentance no one in scripture required.**

49) Any supposition can be defended from the Bible if the text is isolated from biblical history or it’s context. **This is why you must maintain a chronological understanding of the facts as they unfold.** Anyone can refer to a passage of scripture to defend their supposition, but few people actually harmonize it with biblical precedents. “divorce to repent” fabricates a burden on the mind that exceeds the Bible. **It destroys existing families and exacerbates divorce.** That’s where and why I disagree with it. Their conviction is built around false supposition and deductive reasoning as I’ve proved, not a chronological unfolding of biblical history and truth. **Adding transgression to transgression is not the**

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answer. We must maintain the Biblical truth that once remarried individuals are in a binding marriage in God's eyes to which they should honor. Any supposition to the contrary is just that.

NB

That brings to an end Neal Doster's defence against Marriage Permanence doctrine.

More Inspired Data on this Subject

Jesus appointed Israel and says he were married to them but Israel turned unfaithful and Paul says in Romans they were cut off and the Gentiles appointed. **If Jesus did this himself and we insist on the permanence of marriage, then Jesus himself in cutting off Israel who are still a nation and appointing the Gentiles committed adultery himself. That may sound gross but that is how it stands if marriage Permanence has to be taken to its logical conclusion. If am stretching this then forgive me.** The biggest problem has always been eisegesis and higher criticism of the text. It's argument from silence insisting on what has not been said in the text based on what has been said. This is how Ignatius Loyola founded his higher criticism programming of minds.

There has been a haste in marrying which has filled heaven with woes untold:

Few have correct views of the marriage relation. Many seem to think that it is the attainment of perfect bliss; but if they could know one quarter of the heart-aches of men and women that are bound by the marriage vow in chains that they cannot and dare not break, they would not be surprised that I trace these lines. Marriage, in a majority of cases, is a most galling yoke. There are thousands that are mated but not matched. The books of heaven are burdened with the woes, the wickedness, and the abuse, that lie hidden under the marriage mantle. This is why I would warn the young who are of a marriageable age, to make haste slowly in the choice of a companion. The path of married life may appear beautiful and full of happiness; but why may not you be disappointed as thousands of others have been? {RH, February 2, 1886 par. 1}

Similar counsel concerning unwise marriages has been given to the church by the servant of the Lord:

*“There are many unhappy marriages because of so much haste. Two unite their interest at the marriage altar, by most solemn vows before God, without previously weighing the matter, and devoting time to sober reflection and earnest prayer. Many move from impulse. They have no thorough acquaintance with the dispositions of each other.... **If they move wrong in this matter, and their marriage life proves unhappy, it cannot be taken back. If they find they are not calculated to make each other happy, they must endure it the best they can.**”* Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 3, Page 120.

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*“Is it the will of the Lord that this sister should be in this state and God be robbed of her service? **No. Her marriage was a deception of the devil. Yet now she should make the best of it, treat her husband with tenderness, and make him as happy as she can without violating her conscience; for if he remains in his rebellion, this world is all the heaven he will have.**”* Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 2, Page 100.

Some may say that there are many ways that a husband or a wife may treat each other that may be even worse than adultery. Should not these give a person the right to divorce and remarry? We can only reply that our all-wise God gave only one reason for divorce and remarriage. We may wonder why He did not give others. We may think He should have. But as good as our judgment may be, we must admit that it is human judgment. Man has not been given the privilege of making moral law or exceptions to God’s laws. God’s word does permit separation or divorce in severe cases of incompatibility.

God’s plan for marriage is found in Genesis 2:22-24.

- *“And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. **Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.**”*

In Matthew 19:6 Jesus makes it very clear that this unity or oneness is not to be broken:

- *“Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. **What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**”*

Like every other one of God’s good gifts entrusted to the keeping of humanity, marriage has been perverted by sin; but it is the purpose of the gospel to restore its purity and beauty. We don’t even have to leave the Old Testament to learn how God really feels about divorce. Notice Malachi 2:13-17 RSV:

- *“And this again you do. You cover the Lord’s altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor at your hand. You ask, ‘Why does he not?’ Because the Lord was witness to the covenant between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Has not the one God made and sustained for us the spirit of life? And what does he desire? **Godly offspring.** So take heed to yourselves, and let **none be faithless to the wife of his youth. For I hate divorce, says the Lord the God of Israel, and covering one’s garment with violence, says the Lord of hosts. So take heed to yourselves and do not be faithless.**”*

We know that John the Baptist lost his life because of preaching that divorce and remarriage was sin. John was a fearless man. He was the herald of Christ. He called for repentance, a forsaking of sin in no uncertain terms. Position or wealth

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of the sinner did not cause John to change or soften his rebuke of sin. In Matthew 14:3, 4 we read:

- **“For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias’ sake, his brother Philip’s wife. For John said unto him, ‘It is not lawful for thee to have her.’”**

Herod and Herodias didn’t like having their marriage called adultery. People still don’t. The truth isn’t any more popular today than in the days of John the Baptist and Jesus. The attitude of many in the church today is described in *Prophets and Kings*, pages 140, 141:

- *“There are many professed Christians who, if they should express their real feelings, would say, What need is there of speaking so plainly? They might as well ask, Why need John the Baptist have said to the Pharisees, ‘O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?’* **Why need he have provoked the anger of Herodias by telling Herod that it was unlawful for him to live with his brother’s wife? The forerunner of Christ lost his life by his plain speaking. Why could he not have moved along without incurring the displeasure of those who were living in sin?”**

Jesus well knew how people in general felt about divorce and remarriage but He, like John the Baptist, clearly and forcibly defined it as adultery and sin. Notice Matthew 5:32.

- **“But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.”**

A case of adultery but still no divorce:

- *2Samuel 16:21 And Ahithophel said unto* **Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines,** *which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong. 22* **So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.**

When David heard of this, his next step is so intriguing when he returned:

- *2Samuel 20:3* **And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten women his concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in ward, and fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were shut up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood.**

First of all, Ahithophel is nothing but a son of Belial no wonder **his end was suicide [2Samuel 17:23]**. David tells us that whoso devices evil, evil shall return on his head [Psalms 7:16]. Jewish writers say that the widowed queens of Hebrew monarchs were not allowed to marry again but were obliged to pass the rest of their lives in strict seclusion. David treated his concubines in the same manner after the outrage committed on them by Absalom. They were not divorced, for they

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were “guiltless;” but they were no longer publicly recognized as his wives; nor was their confinement to a sequestered life a very heavy doom, in a region where women have never been accustomed to go much abroad. He could not well divorce them; he could not punish them, as they were “not” in the transgression; he could no more be familiar with them, because they had been **defiled by his son 2Samuel 20:3**; and to have married them to other men might have been dangerous to the state: therefore he shut them up and fed them; made them quite comfortable, and they continued as widows to their death. Their imprisonment was for life, and he himself was forced to put them under a confinement, because of the defilement. David had multiplied wives, contrary to the law and they proved a grief and shame to him. Those whom he had sinfully taken pleasure in he was now: -

- 1. Obligated, in duty, to put away, they being rendered unclean to him by the vile uncleanness his son had committed with them. Those whom he had loved must now be loathed.*
- 2. Obligated, in prudence, to shut up in privacy, not to be seen abroad for shame, lest the sight of them should give occasion to people to speak of what Absalom had done to them, which ought not to be so much as named, 1Corintians 5:1. That that villainy might be buried in oblivion, they must be buried in obscurity.*
- 3. Obligated, in justice to shut up in prison, to “punish them for their easy submission” to Absalom's lust, despairing perhaps of David's return, and giving him up for gone. Let none expect to do ill and fare well.*

The reason to be put away also was because they had not “vigorously” opposed Absalom's lustful desire, as they should have done, even with the hazard of their lives; and partly, lest the sight of them should renew the memory of Absalom's filthiness, and of their own and David's reproach, which it was fit to bury in perpetual oblivion; and partly, because it might appear incestuous to have to do with those who had been defiled by his own son; and partly, because as David would not, so it was not now convenient that any other man should have any conjugal conversation with them. **The confinement and retired maintenance of these women was the only measure which could be adopted, in justice or prudence, unless they had been found deserving of severer punishment.** The less they were seen or heard of the better; and perhaps their seclusion might be a benefit to their souls. If this case of Absalom could have been followed to the letter, **the following would have been inevitable:**

- Leviticus 18:8 The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.*
- Leviticus 20:11 **And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.***
- Deuteronomy 27:20 **Cursed be he that lieth with his father's wife; because he uncovereth his father's skirt. And all the people shall say, Amen.***

Another reason why David could not go unto them is the following

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- Deuteronomy 24:1 When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her **a bill of divorcement**, and give [it] in her hand, and send her out of his house. 2 And when she is departed out of his house, **she may go and be another man's [wife]**. 3 And [if] the latter husband hate her, and write her **a bill of divorcement**, and giveth [it] in her hand, and **sendeth her out** of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her [to be] his wife; 4 Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her **again to be his wife**, after that she is **defiled**; for that [is] **abomination** before the LORD: and thou shalt not **cause the land to sin**, which the LORD thy God giveth thee [for] an inheritance.

There is the following case which violates the above and I will let the reader decide for himself what should have been done:

- 2Samuel 3:12 And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose [is] the land? saying [also], Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand [shall be] with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee. 13 And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, that is, Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first **bring Michal Saul's daughter**, when thou comest to see my face. 14 And David sent messengers to Ishbosheth Saul's son, saying, **Deliver [me] my wife Michal**, which I espoused to me for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines. 15 And Ishbosheth sent, and **took her from [her] husband**, [even] from Phaltiel the son of Laish. 16 And **her husband** went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.

Nothing but the violation of the marriage bed can break or annul the marriage vow. Divorce laws of our society are so liberal today that a man can divorce his wife for over-serving food, and a woman can divorce her husband because he doesn't answer or reply her calls immediately. But notice what the servant of the Lord has said in Adventist Home, page 344:

- **“A woman may be legally divorced from her husband by the laws of the land and yet not divorced in the sight of God and according to the higher law. There is only one sin, which is adultery, which can place the husband or wife in a position where they can be free from the marriage vow in the sight of God. Although the laws of the land may grant a divorce, yet they are husband and wife still in the Bible light, according to the laws of God.”**

Also we are admonished

- **Though difficulties, perplexities, and discouragements may arise, let neither husband nor wife harbor the thought that their union is a mistake or a disappointment. Determine to be all that it is possible to be to each** other. Continue the early attentions. In every way encourage each

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other in fighting the battles of life. Study to advance the happiness of each other. Let there be mutual love, mutual forbearance. Then marriage, instead of being the end of love, will be as it were the very beginning of love. The warmth of true friendship, the love that binds heart to heart, is a foretaste of the joys of heaven. {AH 106.1}

- **Do not dwell on the imperfections or the mistakes of the past. Press forward, looking to the glorious things that are before.** *Let your conversation be in heaven, "from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Put away all discontent, all murmuring, all disagreeable words. We do not honor Christ when we dispute and quarrel one with another. **No one will enter heaven with a spirit of fault-finding, and we desire to have a foretaste of the principles of heaven manifested here below.** {7MR 49.3}*

Jesus came to our world to rectify [man's] mistakes and to restore the moral image of God in man. **WRONG SENTIMENTS IN REGARD TO MARRIAGE HAD FOUND A PLACE IN THE MINDS OF THE TEACHERS OF ISRAEL. THEY WERE MAKING OF NONE EFFECT THE SACRED INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE. MAN WAS BECOMING SO HARDHEARTED THAT HE WOULD FOR THE MOST TRIVIAL EXCUSE SEPARATE FROM HIS WIFE**, or if he chose, he would separate her from the children and send her away. This was considered a great disgrace, and was often accompanied by the most acute suffering on the part of the discarded one. {10MR 198.3}

If you inquire about all these separations and divorces, 90% is not because of adultery but trivial things. And when men and women fail in their duties, the children choose sides and the one that is strong wins the affection of children.

Never for a moment suppose that God has given you a work that will necessitate a separation from your precious little flock. Do not leave them to become demoralized by improper associations and to **harden their hearts against their mother.** This is letting your light shine in a wrong way altogether. You are making it more difficult for your children to become what God would have them and win heaven at last. God cares for them, and so must you if you claim to be His child. {TSB 42.1}

When we give ourselves unreservedly to the Lord, the simple, commonplace duties of home life will be seen in their true importance, and we shall perform them in accordance with the will of God. **Oh, my sister, you may be bound about with poverty, your lot in life may be humble, but Jesus does not forsake you because of this, neither does He lead you to forsake your family for this or for any other cause.** God has made you a trustee, a steward, in your home. Seek to educate yourself for this work, and He will be by your side to bless all your endeavors, that by and by, when the reckoning time for the administration of your trust shall come, He may say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." {TSB 42.3}

Your husband has rights; your children have rights; and these must not be ignored by you. Whether you have one talent or three or five, God has given you your work. Parents are fearfully neglectful of their home duties. They do not meet

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the Bible standard. **But to those who forsake their homes, their companions, and children, God will not entrust the work of saving souls, for they have proved unfaithful to their holy vows. They have proved unfaithful to sacred responsibilities. God will not entrust to them eternal riches.** {TSB 43.1}

Letters have come from mothers, relating their trials at home and asking my counsel. One of these cases will serve to represent many. **The husband and father is not a believer, and everything is made hard for the mother in the training of her children.** The husband is a profane man, vulgar and abusive in his language to herself, and he teaches the children to disregard her authority. When she is trying to pray with them he will come in and make all the noise he can, and break out into cursing God and heaping vile epithets upon the Bible. She is so discouraged that life is a burden to her. **What good can she do? What benefit is it to her children for her to remain at home? She has felt an earnest desire to do some work in the Lord's vineyard, and has thought that it might be best to leave her family, rather than to remain while the husband and father is constantly teaching the children to disrespect and disobey her.** {TSB 43.2}

Now these are serious matters mentioned above if a woman would get herself in them. This woman has light and she feels she needs to go and do some service away from home and provide an environment for the children that is apt for heavenward. What is the counsel then?

In such cases my advice would be, Mothers, whatever trials you may be called to endure through poverty, through wounds and bruises of the soul, from the harsh, overbearing assumption of the husband and father, do not leave your children; do not give them up to the influence of a godless father. Your work is to counteract the work of the father, who is apparently under the control of Satan. --Letter 28, 1890. {TSB 43.3}

Counsel to the Wife of an Unbelieving Husband and the struggle between EGW and James White marriage

We receive many letters soliciting advice. One mother says her husband is an unbeliever. She has children, but they are taught by the father to disrespect the mother. She is deeply burdened for her children. She does not know what course she can pursue. She then expresses her anxiety to do something in the cause of God, and inquires if **I think she has a duty to leave her family, if she is convinced she can do no good to them.** {TSB 44.1}

I would answer: My sister, I cannot see how you could be clear before the Lord and leave your husband and your children. I cannot think you would feel that you could do this yourself. The trials you may have may be of a very trying character. You may be often pained to the heart because disrespect is shown you, but I am sure that it must be your duty to care for your own children. This is your field where you have your appointed work. It may be rocky and discouraging soil to work, but you have a Companion in all your efforts to do your duty

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unflinchingly, conscientiously, notwithstanding all the discouraging circumstances. Jesus is your helper. Jesus came into our world to save lost and perishing souls, and you are to consider that in this work you are a laborer together with God. {TSB 44.2}

I will pause here and say something. Many women just see Ellen White as a prophetess and not a lady, woman, spouse and a wife. She was these things apart from a prophetess. If you haven't studied her biography, her poverty, struggle with James White on family issues and struggle with her children more so Henry and Edson, please take time and read it. She could have simply walked out of marriage but she didn't. Here are excerpts of her marriage but she never walked away from it:

*Dear husband, I believe that God is at work. It is a special and important time. I have been shown that there was a great and prosperous field of labor all around through Illinois and Wisconsin, but the brethren are not awake. They do not see the wants for this time. We have felt like urging this home upon them. I have testimonies to bear to Brethren Thurston, Pratt, Olds, and some others. I shall, before I leave, bear this testimony to them. **There is no hard spirit to resist my testimony, and all manifest so much thankfulness that God had sent me to them. I never felt greater necessity of God's working with our efforts. We have no time to rest, no time to yield to temptation. We must work while the day lasts.***

*I hope that you will receive special help of God. Do not afflict your soul in looking at the things which are seen. Do not allow your mind to dwell upon unpleasant things. "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; ... think on these things." Philippians 4:8. We may be miserable or we may be at peace with God and be happy. **We have no need to afflict and distress our souls over many things. In doing this our usefulness is lessened one-third.** The enemy knows how to manage to dishearten and discourage by presenting before us sad pictures which we should not allow our eyes to rest upon, for it only makes us miserable and does no soul a particle of good. **Every particle of selfishness must be separated from us, and we must have the spirit of Christ. I mean to trust in God.***

*I feel sorry for you and feel deep sympathy for you in your affliction. I mean to help you what I can, **but don't let the enemy make you think only of my deficiencies which are, you think, so apparent, for in trying to fix me over you may destroy my usefulness, my freedom, and bring me into a position of restraint, of embarrassment, that will unfit me for the work of God.** 2LtMs, Lt 34, 1874.*

*When you are free from dark and gloomy, discouraging feelings, no one can speak or write words that will sway so powerful an influence as yourself, and gladness, hope, and courage are put into all hearts. But when you feel depressed, and write and talk under the cloud, no shadow can be darker than the one you cast. In this matter Satan is striving for the mastery. **You blame others for your state of mind.** Just as long as you do this, just so*

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long will enough arise to keep you in this state of turmoil and darkness. The course which others pursue will not excuse you from trusting in God and hoping and believing in His power to hold you up.

You must not accuse me of causing the trials of your life, because in this you deceive your own soul. It is your brooding over troubles, magnifying them and making them real, which has caused the sadness of your life. Am I to blame for this?

I must be free from the censures you have felt free to express to me. But if I have to bear them, I shall try to do it without retaliation. I never mean to make you sad. Your life is very precious to me and to the cause of God. And it is not so much that I am afflicted with your distrust and suspicions of me that troubles me, but that you let it afflict you. It wears upon your health, and I am unable to remove the cause because it does not exist in reality.

*I am trying to seek strength and grace from God to serve Him irrespective of circumstances. He has given me great light for His people, and I must be free to follow the leadings of the Spirit of God and go at His bidding, relying upon the light and sense of duty I feel, and leave you the same privilege. When we can work the best together we will do so. **If God says it is for His glory we work apart occasionally, we will do that.** But God is willing to show me my work and my duty and I shall look to Him in faith and trust Him fully to lead me.*

I do not have a feeling of resentment in my heart against you, but the Lord helping me, I will not allow anything to come between you and me. I will not be depressed, neither will I allow feelings of guilt and distress to destroy my usefulness when I know that I have tried to do my duty to the best of knowledge in the fear of God. *The help from God and special freedom in speaking to the people for the last four weeks have been a great strength to me, and while I cling firmly to God He will cling to me. 2LtMs, Lt 38, 1874.*

I found great comfort in these promises of God. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7. Precious indeed is this promise. The Word of God is pledged on the condition of obedience and prayer. I am daily seeking for fresh evidences of the love and power of God. I earnestly desire my will to be swallowed up in His will. God will not leave me to walk in darkness when I try to follow the course He has marked out, and do those things which are pleasing in His sight. I feel more and more every day that I have no time to lose. I must bear my testimony to others and work earnestly to get before others the light which God has given me. I do not feel that I am my own, but bought with a price.

*The claims that God has upon me I feel deeply, and I mean to answer them as far as possible. I will not allow feelings of sadness and depression to destroy my usefulness. **I do not forget you. I feel deeply sorry that you***

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have things in your mind just as they are in regard to me. I can say I know you view things in a perverted light. I have in the past felt so depressed and saddened with the thought that it might be so, that life has seemed a burden. But I don't feel so now. Whatever you may feel and whatever thoughts you may have shall not swerve me from believing and trusting in God. Things seem an unexplainable mystery that you cannot find rest and peace unless you succeed in bringing me into positions I cannot see and cannot possibly submit to be placed in. I see no consistency or generosity in this, only a feeling prompted by selfishness in persistently dwelling upon things that tend to alienate our hearts rather than to unite them.

I long for perfect union, but I cannot purchase it at the expense of my conscience; but if you feel that God is leading you in dwelling upon the things you have dwelt upon in your letters, I will try to feel all right towards you.

Of course I cannot feel that thorough satisfaction and confidence that you are being led of the Lord. I can but feel that the enemy is making you miserable by keeping your mind upon matters that are of no profit, but only an injury. I want you to be happy. Your health and life depend upon your being happy and cheerful. No matter what course others pursue, this need not have such all-controlling power over your mind. **Just as long as you will let the wrongs or supposed wrongs of others depress and dishearten you, you will have enough of this business to attend to.**

God wants you to live. I want you to live and **I want that our last days shall be our very best days. My heart is sad many times; yes, every time I think of you. How can I be otherwise?**

I have no desire to go on any pleasure excursion without you. I do not care to go anywhere only where duty seems to call; but I do not mean that Satan shall succeed in destroying my usefulness because **I know that my husband has so erroneous a view of me.** I have work enough to do in writing and in visiting those who are sick and afflicted, who are in sorrow and distress. I have a testimony also to bear to God's people, and I shall go forward clinging to the hand of my dear Saviour, for He is exceedingly precious to me.

I shall not walk alone or in darkness. I have perfect confidence in God, for I have had my trust and faith greatly strengthened upon this journey. **If we have to walk apart the rest of the way, do let us not seek to pull each other down. I do believe it is best for our labors to be disconnected and we each lean upon God for ourselves.** I am writing some every day, doing all I can.

In much love, **I remain, Your Ellen.** 2LtMs, Lt 40, 1874.

If you could come east and let all the difficulties and perplexities of the past entirely alone, we might unite our efforts and great good might be done here and at the camp meetings. **But I think if your mind is so constituted**

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that it will dwell upon things that are unpleasant, it would be better for the cause and better for you to remain where you are. If your testimony could be borne upon the precious truth and the advancement of the cause, and you could advise in regard to tracts and various matters in connection with the work, your efforts would be blessed of God. **But if you are coming to discourage and weaken yourself and me by censure and suspicion and jealousy, I fear we should do great injury to the cause of God.**

I long to see you and would be so glad to bury the past as I know God would have us, without making reference to it, and to take hold in faith and courage with you to do our duty and work to help the people of God; but I must be left free to follow the convictions of my own conscience. I will not blame or censure you, and I cannot have you take the life and soul out of me by your blaming and censuring me. May the Lord bless, heal, and lead you is my daily prayer. **I must be free in God.** He wants me to be free and not suffering under a load of depressing discouragements that unfit me for any position. 2LtMs, Lt 40a, 1874

Have no fears that I will give another person preference in my mind to yourself. That is simply impossible. Think not I think others' minds superior to yours. I know better. I have the highest estimate of your ability, and with the power of God to work with your efforts you can do a great and efficient work. God can mend the broken and worn machinery and make it of essential use to do His work still. Only believe, only be cheerful, only be of good courage. Let the disagreeables go. Turn from these things which cause sadness and which dishearten you. **I will ever be true to you, and I want you to have no suspicion or distrust of me that I would say or do the least thing to hurt you or lessen the confidence of your brethren in you. Never, never will I do this. I will sustain and help you all I can. In love,**
Your Ellen. 2LtMs, Lt 41, 1874.

My heart is drawn out after God. I long for His Spirit and I cannot feel at rest until I have the witness day by day that Jesus is mine and I am His.

In regard to my writings, I know that they have been an annoyance to you and I am glad that help has come that you need not have any more perplexing care of them.

In regard to my independence, I have had no more than I should have in the matter under the circumstances. I do not receive your views or interpretation of my feelings on this matter. I understand myself much better than you understand me. But so it must be and I will say no more in reference to the matter. I am glad you are free and happy and I rejoice that God has blessed me with freedom, with peace, and cheerfulness and courage.

I love the Lord, I trust in Him, and I know that He helps me. I shall look to God for guidance and shall try to move as He shall lead the way.

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In love 3LtMs, Lt 25, 1876

A humble spirit [wife] even when the one wronged. This is when James White was pressing EGW to go to the East but she didn't get any revelation to do that.

It grieves me that I have said or written anything to grieve you. Forgive me and I will be cautious not to start any subject to annoy and distress you. We are living in a most solemn time and we cannot afford to have in our old age **differences to separate our feelings.** I may not view all things as you do, but I do not think it would be my place or duty to try to make you see as I see and feel as I feel. **Wherein I have done this, I am sorry.**

I want an humble heart, a meek and quiet spirit. Wherein my feelings have been permitted to arise in any instance, it was wrong. Jesus has said, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:29.

I wish that self should be hid in Jesus. **I wish self to be crucified. I do not claim infallibility, or even perfection of Christian character. I am not free from mistakes and errors in my life. Had I followed my Saviour more closely, I should not have to mourn so much my unlikeness to His dear image.**

Time is short, very short. Life is uncertain. We know not when our probation may close. **If we walk humbly before God, He will let us end our labors with joy. No more shall a line be traced by me or expression made in my letters to distress you. Again, I say forgive me, every word or act that has grieved you.**

I have earnestly prayed for light in reference to going east and I have now decided **my work is here,** to write and do those things that the Spirit of God shall dictate. I am seeking earnestly for the higher life. Mary and myself are at work as hard as we can. God in His providence has given me my work. I dare not leave it. **We will pray that God may sustain you, but I see no light for me East.** 3LtMs, Lt 27, 1876.

Many may have never gone through the above life Ellen White endured and they take her life to be rosy and incompetent to qualify her advice them in their marriage difficulties. But now you know better.

Home Trials for Jesus' Ear Only.

Do not shirk your responsibilities. Be a daily home missionary. Not only teach your children from their babyhood, but train them. Keep a steady, firm hold upon your children. You must not only tell them what to do, but, to the very best of your ability, make their surroundings favorable and sow your precious seed in the love and spirit of Jesus. **Because Satan uses the father of your children to counteract your work, do not be discouraged; do not give up the conflict. Do as you wish them to do. Treat your husband with kindness at all times**

Emphasis and EGW quotations by Sami Wilberforce

and on all occasions, and bind your children to your heart with the cords of love. This is your work; this is the burden you have to bear. Talk not your home trials to anyone but Jesus; pour them into His ear. {TSB 44.3}

Dealing With Those Overtaken in the Sin of Adultery March 24, 1868

A Statement by Ellen and James White [INASMUCH AS THIS STATEMENT WAS ISSUED JOINTLY BY JAMES AND ELLEN WHITE, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE VIEWS EXPRESSED HAD THE FULL SANCTION OF ELLEN WHITE.]

*In regard to the case of the injured sister A. G., we would say in reply to the questions of J. H. W., **that it is a feature in the cases of most who have been overtaken in sin, as her husband has, that they have no real sense of their villainy. Some, however, do, and are restored to the church; but not till they have merited the confidence of the people of God by unqualified confessions, and a period of sincere repentance.** This case presents difficulties not found in some, and we would add only the following:* {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 1}

1. **In cases of the violation of the seventh commandment, where the guilty party does not manifest true repentance, if the injured party can obtain a divorce without making their own cases and that of their children, if they have them, worse by so doing, they should be free.** {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 2}

2. **If they would be liable to place themselves and their children in worse condition by a divorce, we know of no scripture that would make the innocent party guilty by remaining.** {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 3}

3. **Time, and labor, and prayer, and patience, and faith, and a godly life, might work a reform. To live with one who has broken the marriage vows, and is covered all over with the disgrace and shame of guilty love, realizes it not, is an eating canker to the soul; and yet, a divorce is a life-long, heart-felt sore. God pity the innocent party. Marriage should be considered well before contracted.** {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 4}

4. *Why! oh, why! will men and women who might be respectable, and good, and reach Heaven at last, sell themselves to the Devil so cheap, wound their bosom friends, disgrace their families, bring a reproach upon the cause, and go to hell at last? God have mercy. **Why will not those who are overtaken in crime manifest repentance proportionate to the enormity of their crime, and fly to Christ for mercy, and heal, as far as possible, the wounds they have made?*** {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 5}

5. **But, if they will not do as they should, and if the innocent have forfeited the legal right to a divorce, by living with the guilty after his guilt is known, we do not see that sin rests upon the innocent in remaining, and her moral right in departing seems questionable, if her health and life be not greatly endangered in so remaining.** {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 6}

Emphasis and EGW quotations by Sami Wilberforce

6. **As in the days of Noah, one of the signs of these times is a passion for injudicious and hasty marriages. Satan is in this. If Paul could remain single, and recommend the same to others, that he and they might be wholly the Lord's, why not those who would be wholly his, and wish to make a sure thing of avoiding the cares, trials, and bitter anguish, so frequent in the experiences of those who choose the married life, remain as he was? And more, if he chose to remain so, and could recommend it to others, eighteen centuries since, would not to remain as he was, be a commendable course for those who are waiting for the coming of the Son of man, unless evidences were unquestionable that they were bettering their condition, and making Heaven more sure by so doing? When so much is at stake, why not be on the sure side every time?**

*James White,
Ellen G. White. {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 7}*

Divorce to Repent [DTR] deception

Section VIII - Unscriptural Marriages 31. Respect for Unbiblical Marriages

Separation Not Recommended.

Dear Brother [C. H. Bliss]: Your letter has been received and read. I have had **acquaintance with several such cases** and have found those who felt conscientious to do something in similar cases to the one you mention. **After having stirred things up generally, and torn things to pieces, they had no wisdom to put things together to make matters better. I found that those who were so zealous to tear things down did nothing to build them up in right order.** They had the faculty to confuse, distress, and create a most deplorable condition of things, **but not the faculty to make them better.** {TSB 218.1}

You have asked my counsel in regard to this case. I would say that **unless those who are burdened in reference to the matter have carefully studied a better arrangement, and can find places for these where they can be comfortable, they better not carry out their ideas of a separation.** I hope to learn that this matter is not pressed, and that sympathy **will not be withdrawn from the two whose interests have been united.** {TSB 218.2}

No Hasty Movements.

I write this because I have seen so many cases of the kind, and persons would have great burden till everything was unsettled and uprooted, and then their interest and burden went no further. **We should individually know that we have a zeal that is according to knowledge.** We should not move hastily in such matters, but look on every side of the question. We should move very cautiously and with pitying tenderness, **because we do not know all the circumstances which led to this course of action.** {TSB 218.3}

Emphasis and EGW quotations by Sami Wilberforce

I advise that these unfortunate ones be left to God and their own consciences, and that the **church shall not treat them as sinners until they have evidence that they are such in the sight of the holy God**. He reads hearts as an open book. He will not judge as man judgeth.--Letter 5, 1891. [JUST TWENTY YEARS LATER W. C. WHITE WROTE ANOTHER CORRESPONDENT:

"MOTHER HAS RECEIVED DURING THE LAST TWENTY YEARS MANY LETTERS MAKING INQUIRY REGARDING THE MATTERS ABOUT WHICH YOU WRITE, AND SHE HAS MANY TIMES WRITTEN IN REPLY THAT **SHE HAD NO ADVICE TO GIVE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE APOSTLE PAUL**. RECENTLY SHE HAS **REFUSED TO DEAL WITH LETTERS OF THIS CHARACTER, AND TELLS US NOT TO BRING THEM TO HER ATTENTION**.

"MY OWN VIEWS REGARDING THIS MATTER, WHICH I BELIEVE TO BE IN **HARMONY** WITH THE COUNSEL THAT I HAVE HEARD MOTHER GIVE TO INDIVIDUALS YEARS AGO, AND WHICH I BELIEVE TO BE IN HARMONY WITH VIEWS OF THE LEADING BRETHERN AND WITH THE **TEACHING OF THE SCRIPTURE**, IS THAT THERE IS NO BLESSING TO COME BY OUR **BREAKING UP FAMILIES WHO MAY HAVE SINNED OR BEEN SINNED AGAINST BEFORE OR SINCE THEY EMBRACED PRESENT TRUTH**."--W. C. WHITE LETTER TO ELDER G. W. ANGLEBARGER, OCTOBER 6, 1911.] {TSB 219.1}

[W. C. WHITE STATEMENT: "REGARDING BROTHER G, I CAN SPEAK QUITE FREELY. ABOUT 1875 **HE MARRIED** A VERY BRILLIANT SCHOOLTEACHER. SHE WAS VERY TALENTED, BUT AFTER A NUMBER OF YEARS **SHE BECAME QUARRELSOME AND MADE HIS LIFE MISERABLE**. AT THAT TIME HE WAS **ASSOCIATED** WITH A VERY BRILLIANT YOUNG WOMAN WHO WAS AN ACCOUNTANT AT X COLLEGE, AND **FORMED A FONDNESS FOR HER**. SISTER WHITE WROTE HIM A VERY PLAIN WARNING, WHICH HE PROMISED TO HEED. SHORTLY AFTER SISTER WHITE HAD GONE TO EUROPE, BROTHER G RESIGNED HIS POSITION AT X COLLEGE, WENT TO MICHIGAN TO VISIT HIS SISTER, AND **OFFERED NO OBSTRUCTION TO HIS WIFE IN GETTING A DIVORCE**. {TSB 219.2}

"THUS FAR, THOSE WHO KNEW THE CASE APPROVED, BUT SHORTLY AFTER THIS **HE MARRIED THE BOOKKEEPER BEFORE MENTIONED**; THEN ALL HIS FRIENDS WERE GREATLY GRIEVED. HE TAUGHT A WHILE AT__, THEN SETTLED NEAR_, AND FOR MANY YEARS WORKED VERY HARD, **HIS WIFE** HELPING HIM TO MAKE A LIVING ON A LITTLE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE FARM. **THEY CAME TO SEE THE WICKEDNESS OF THE COURSE THEY HAD TAKEN. THEY REPENTED OF IT VERY BITTERLY, AND THEIR BRETHERN AND SISTERS WERE SATISFIED THAT THEIR REPENTANCE WAS GENUINE**. THEY HAD THREE BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN GROWING UP, AND NO ONE, AS FAR AS I KNOW, **ENCOURAGED THEM TO SEPARATE**. WHEN THE MATTER WAS PUT BEFORE SISTER WHITE, **SHE DID NOT ENCOURAGE A SEPARATION, NOR COULD SHE ENCOURAGE ANY MOVEMENT TO EXCLUDE HIM FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OF THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE**. IN HIS LATER LIFE HE LABORED IN A HUMBLE WAY IN **SELF-SUPPORTING WORK** IN THE SOUTH. {TSB 220.1}

Emphasis and EGW quotations by Sami Wilberforce

"IF PERSONS LIVING IN THE LIGHT OF THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE PURPOSE TO LEAVE ONE COMPANION FOR THE SAKE OF UNITING WITH SOMEONE ELSE, IT IS OUR DUTY TO WARN AND REPROVE AND DISCIPLINE. {TSB 220.2}

"IF PERSONS BEFORE EMBRACING THE MESSAGE HAVE ENTANGLED THEMSELVES, AND AFTERWARD HAVE REPENTED, CONFESSED THEIR SINS, RECEIVED FORGIVENESS OF GOD, AND WON THE CONFIDENCE OF THEIR BRETHREN, IT IS BETTER FOR BOTH MINISTERS AND LAYMEN TO LEAVE THEM ALONE, ENJOYING THE FORGIVENESS AND JUSTIFICATION WHICH HAVE BEEN WROUGHT THROUGH CHRIST, WITHOUT UNDERTAKING TO TEAR UP EXISTING RELATIONS."--FEBRUARY 21, 1927. {TSB 220.3}

ELDER WHITE LATER ADDED, "IT HAS BEEN MY BELIEF FOR A LONG TIME THAT OUR BRETHREN MAKE **A SERIOUS MISTAKE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO BREAK UP FAMILIES BY ARGUING THAT IN THE FULFILLMENT OF THEIR VOWS, MADE UNWISELY IN MOST CASES, THAT THEY ARE CONTINUALLY, DAY BY DAY, COMMITTING ADULTERY.**"--W. C. WHITE LETTER, JANUARY 6, 1931. {TSB 221.1}

In the above quotation, James White is opposing exactly what the Permanence of Marriage Movement advocates.

ELLEN WHITE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD BROTHER G IS REVEALED IN THE LETTERS THAT FOLLOW.] {TSB 221.2}

Oh, for Wisdom From on High! Dear Brother Haskell: We consider the opening [of the Bible School at Melbourne] was good. All are pleased with the buildings and location for the school. This is rather remarkable, for generally some have criticisms to make, but we have not heard one word of dissatisfaction expressed or even intimated. {TSB 221.3}

We had conversation after the meeting with Elder Starr. **The question was in reference to a teacher of grammar for the advanced classes.** There is no perplexity in regard to the first classes of grammar, but we need well-qualified teachers in all branches, and we hope Elder Olsen will find either a man or woman that can come to Australia as a thorough teacher. **If only G had kept himself straight, he would be just the one to come.** But the question is **whether his record will not follow him.** We scarcely dare venture the matter and run the risk. **That the man has sincerely repented I have not a doubt, and I believe the Lord has forgiven him.** But if obliged to make explanations it would not be an easy matter to do; so what shall we do with G? Leave him where he is, a prey to remorse, and to be useless the remainder of his life? I cannot see what can be done. Oh, for wisdom from on high! Oh, for the counsel of One who reads the heart as an open book! How Satan watches for souls to bind them with his hellish cords that they become lost to the work and almost helpless in his hands. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."--Letter 13, 1892. (Written five years after Brother G's unscriptural marriage.) {TSB 221.4}

Emphasis and EGW quotations by Sami Wilberforce

Invitation of Brother G to another Country

Dear Brother G: **I have had my mind drawn out for you time and again.** Had I felt at liberty to exercise my judgment, I should have given my counsel a long time ago **for you to change your location.** I had hoped my brethren **would have had wisdom from above** to give counsel to you that **you should not be where you are today.** If you have anything to do, **it must be soon.** Were you in this country [Australia], **I fully believe you would see doors opening where you could be at work to be a lightbearer to those who are in the darkness of error.** {TSB 222.1}

How would it be should you come to this country? Like Abraham, going out not knowing whither he went, and humbly seeking guidance, I plead that you make a break. **Come here to Australia, while we are here. Come on your own responsibility. You will have means, if you sell your farm, to bring you here. Then I believe the way will open for you to work, and may the Lord direct you, is my earnest wish and sincere prayer.** {TSB 222.2}

There is work in abundance for you to do in the great harvest field. Here are fields all ripe for the harvest, work to be entered upon in Sydney, of about a million people, and Melbourne numbering still more. There is Queensland to be entered. There are thirty Sabbathkeepers in one place in Queensland that have never seen nor heard the living preacher, and others are scattered all through that region, waiting for the message of truth. {TSB 222.3}

Will you please consider this matter, and write us what you think? What are your finances? What are you thinking of doing? How is the Lord leading your mind? Please consider the matter, and may the Lord give you wisdom to move somewhere at once. In much love. --Letter 7a, 1894. {TSB 223.1}

Following the Lord's Leading. Dear Brother and Sister G: I am pleased to hear from you, and to learn that **you are endeavoring to be of still greater service to the cause of God.** It is your privilege to receive a rich blessing in helping others. You may be "diligent in business," and also "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." You may help your associates in the exercise of your judgment, and by inculcating the principles of economy. We must spend money judiciously, and I believe that you will endeavor to do this. {TSB 223.2}

Be ever hopeful, and increase in the grace and wisdom of Christ. **I am more than pleased that you can engage in school work and unite your influence with other workers in opening the Scriptures to those who do not understand the Word of God. I believe that the Lord has been leading you.** --Letter 56, 1910. {TSB 223.3}

It is of great wonder that we may suppose in line of thinking with the Permanence of marriage Movement that God would allow the prophetess to request a man living in adultery to be a teacher of the Third Angel's Message and God just keep silent.

Emphasis and EGW quotations by Sami Wilberforce

Sympathy or no Sympathy

[W. C. WHITE STATEMENT: "SISTER WHITE **DID NOT SYMPATHIZE** WITH THOSE WHO TOOK THE GROUND THAT A PERSON WHO HAD SEPARATED FROM A COMPANION ON OTHER THAN SCRIPTURAL GROUND, AND MARRIED AGAIN, **THAT THIS SECOND MARRIAGE MUST BE BROKEN UP IF THEY WERE TO BE ACCEPTED OR RETAINED IN AN SDA CHURCH.** {TSB 223.4}

"SISTER WHITE FULLY RECOGNIZED THAT THESE PEOPLE IN MOST CASES **HAD SINNED, THAT SOME HAD SINNED GRIEVOUSLY, AND THAT THEY SHOULD NOT BE ACCEPTED INTO FELLOWSHIP OF OUR CHURCHES UNLESS THAT SIN WAS REPENTED OF.** SISTER WHITE DID NOT ACCEPT THE CONTENTION THAT **SUCH REPENTANCE COULD NOT BE GENUINE WITHOUT BREAKING THE NEW BOND, AND MAKING AN EARNEST EFFORT TO RETURN TO FORMER COMPANIONS.** SHE RECOGNIZED THE FACT THAT IN MOST INSTANCES **A REUNION WITH THE PARTIES FORMERLY CONNECTED WITH IN MARRIAGE WOULD BE EITHER IMPOSSIBLE OR EXCEEDINGLY UNPROFITABLE. SHE ALSO RECOGNIZED THAT THE VOWS ENTERED INTO IN THE SECOND MARRIAGE CALLED FOR SUCH AN ACTION AS WAS MOST MERCIFUL AND KIND TO THE CONTRACTING PARTIES.** {TSB 223.5}

"SHE SOMETIMES REFERRED TO THE TEACHING OF PAUL, WHO HAVING REACHED A CERTAIN POINT IN HIS EXPERIENCE, SAID, **'BUT I SPARE YOU.'** HE KNEW THERE WERE EXISTING CONDITIONS THAT PEOPLE WERE LIVING IN **RELATIONS RESULTING FROM SIN.** HE ALSO KNEW THAT CHRIST WOULD **ACCEPT THEIR GENUINE REPENTANCE, AND THAT IN MANY CASES IT WOULD MAKE MATTERS WORSE IF EXISTING RELATIONS WERE TORN UP TO PREPARE A WAY FOR A REUNION WITH THE PARTIES WHO WERE INCOMPANIONABLE,** SO SISTER WHITE USED TO SAY, **'BUT I SPARE YOU.'** {TSB 224.1}

I have tried to bring all the evidence available to me on this matter and am rest assured that the spirit of God has attended to such a short research. Though not exhaustive, I have as it were scratched the surface and the studious and pious student of the word has been provoked to look into these things if they are so. Whether this paper receives commendation or condemnation, the reader is still obliged to make decisions based on the leading of God and not my opinions.

God's Blessings.
Sami Wilberforce