

Is It Sinful For A Christian To Get Married To An Unbeliever?
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Some assert that it is 'foolish, unwise and sinful' for a Christian to marry an unbeliever. They predicate the position on several reasons, mainly the belief that **single Christians** are commanded to:

- I. Not mingle with unbelievers and assert that 1 Cor 7:12-16 ONLY applies to cases where a couple married as unbelievers and one later became a Christian.
- II. "Marry only in the Lord" and this means "only marry a fellow believer" in 1 Cor 7:39.
- III. "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers" and this means "Do not marry an unbeliever" in 2 Cor 6:14
- IV. "Lead about a sister" and this means "marry only a believer" in 1 Cor 9:5

We shall scrutinize the cited reasons/passages one after the other. This treatise is to investigate if such reasoning is warranted from the text. A proponent of the '*if it is foolish and unwise to make the choice of getting married to an unbeliever then it is sinful*' also wrote:

"...Just as Israel rejected God in demanding a king (1 Sam. 8:7) but could not undo their decision once it was granted (yet needed to seek God's forgiveness for their sin, which they eventually did, 1 Sam. 12:19-20), a believer who demands an unbelieving spouse rejects God's will concerning the matter. Once joined by God, no attempt is to be made to undo it (Mt. 19:6). The believer should seek God's forgiveness for violation of God's will and is to try to save the unbelieving spouse with the gospel."

His position will be thoroughly examined. Let me start by stating the following:

1. Today, nobody demands a spouse from God (the way Israel demanded a king). Each person looks for and finds a mate to marry. Best you can do is ask in prayer and let the word and providence guide you to make YOUR OWN choice -Prov 18:22, 1 Cor 7:2.
2. The case of Israel asking for and getting a king was foreknown and addressed in Deut 17:14-20. In 1 Samuel 8, the nation asked for a king out of vanity as prophesied but God still made the choice and installed the king whom he selected from their midst. God had also earlier stated that the spectre shall not depart from Judah (Genesis 49:10) and indeed planned to give them a king (Genesis 35:11) so their repentance after asking for a ruler was accepted without the need to dethrone or not enthrone the king.
3. No one has the right to judge a brother or sister in a matter of personal choice/liberty/opinion. Each person should be allowed to make and live with his or her choice -Rm 14:1-4. Something may appear foolish to people without it being necessarily so -1 Cor 1:18-25. The fact that something is apparently foolish does not mean it has to be sinful too.

I. AN EXAMINATION OF 1 COR 7:12-16 IN VIEW OF NO CO-MINGLING THEORY

1 Corinthians 7:12-16 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

It is an **assumption** that 1 Cor 7:12-16 & 1 Pet 3:1-2 are only addressing the case where both were unbelievers and married before one converted to Christ. People are simply **READING INTO** the text

what is not stated, that is pretext not context. The passage is applicable for every situation where the condition is met irrespective of its origin: "*IF a brother (or sister) hath a spouse that believeth not...*"

Under Mosaic law, God expressly prohibited Israel from inter-marrying with certain nations not only to preserve the Messianic blood-line/genealogies or to avoid the corrupting influence in life/worship but also to serve as punishment for those idolaters who confronted/hindered Israel from entering the promised land. There was no need for making inferences about the matter; He **clearly said** not to marry them or give your sons and daughters to them -Lev 18:6-18 & Deut 7:1-4. It is presumptuous to assert under the New Testament that one who marries an unbeliever 'rejects God's will concerning the matter' because God has not legislated that marrying outside church is forbidden/sinful. After the savior had come, the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles has been broken down; genealogies and nationality no longer matter, worship is no more shadowy rituals and geographical but is in spirit and in truth. That was initially difficult for the Jews to comprehend, even Peter an apostle: Acts 10:28 '*And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.*' It is a hang-over of the law of Moses that makes some presume that mixed-faith marriages are sinful today. Such would probably **abuse** the children of such marriage as seen in Nehemiah 13:23-29, based on Deut 23:2-4. If those old covenant passages are valid and effective today then the offspring of mixed-faith marriages would be unclean and could not be added to the Lord's body or even enter the assembly of the saints! The new covenant however teaches: "*For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy*" -1 Cor 7:14. Thus Peter says everyone is now acceptable to God and co-mingling is allowed socially while Paul says a Christian's unbelieving spouse and children are set apart as recognized too. **God recognizes a marital union today irrespective of the religion of the duo involved at any time.** It is ridiculous to think God accepts the marriage contracted by two unbelievers or by two believers but forbids a believer from marrying an unbeliever *while accepting it if* one of two married unbelievers should become a Christian or one of two married Christians should fall from the faith. Heb 13:4 is a universal and perpetual truth. **1 Cor 7:12-16 doesn't negate Christ's law to all validly married couples (vs10-11) but is an example of 'if s/he departs...'**

In 1 Cor 7:8-9, Paul wrote that it is good to be single but better to marry than to be consumed with passion. This is a matter of personal preference with one state being better than the other though BOTH are lawful. Similarly, it is good to marry any eligible member of the opposite sex and it could be better to marry someone who is a Christian. Marriage is for everyone who is free or not already involved with another living marital partner. We need to remember that the primary reason for marriage is companionship (Gen 2:18-22), secondarily procreation (Gen 1:27-28) and to avoid fornication (1 Cor 7:2). Every other reason is a bonus in the grand scheme of things. Marriage was not designed for mankind as a spiritual relationship to meet spiritual needs. Its foundation is physical, emotional and social; it is for this world only -Mt 22:30; 24:38, 1 Cor 7:1, 29-34. A couple becomes **one flesh not one spirit**. It is a pity some think that marriage was designed for mankind for spiritual harmony/growth or eternal purposes, the church (**Christ's one body**) is the family established for that purpose -Eph 3:10-21, 1 Cor 12:12-25; 6:17.

II. AN EXAMINATION OF THE PHRASE "MARRY ONLY IN THE LORD"

1 Corinthians 7:39 "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."

When some read or quote the verse above all they can see or recollect is "The **Christian must** ~~wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will;~~ only in the Lord." Thus some words were added near the beginning to make it apply to all while many words were subtracted in between to promote a premeditated notion. That is not a justified

paraphrase but is rather a mutilation of the scripture. We need to carefully examine the actual verse in its immediate context. The intent and declaration of the passage is specifically that **a widow** "*is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.*" There is no need for anyone to substitute or to skip some terms; resulting in the ambiguous phrase '*marry only in the Lord*' which could mean 'marry only a Christian' or 'marry only as the Lord wills/pleases, etc.' It is best to allow scripture to shed light on itself, for us to compare similar passages that speak on a subject and ensure any conclusion reached will not contradict related instructions from God.

Is there a parallel passage to 1 Cor 7:39? Yes!

1 Corinthians 7:39 "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."

Romans 7:2-3 "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

Several things become obvious:

- a. We can see from the Rm 7 rendition that there is no reason to insist the late or new suitor must necessarily be a Christian.
- b. In the old covenant, a widow could be **constrained** to marry her brother-in-law to give the family children in the late man's name or be inherited by a king. A priest could only marry a virgin or another priest's widow. Such provisions are not applicable in Christianity because the law of Moses has been abrogated (Rm 7:4-6, Eph 2:11-22, Heb 8-9) hence a widow can now marry whom she wills.
- c. Prior to 1 Cor 7:39 is *a consideration in vs 36-38 of the man who may be contemplating whether to allow his virgin [unmarried daughter/niece] marry her suitor*. One who is pondering whether she is getting over-aged and he should approve her marriage. Paul had already stated in vs 26-28 that given the prevailing distressful situation when he wrote, it was not expedient to go ahead with marriage plans even though it was not a sin if one did. So after addressing the man who would decide (authorize) the marital plan of the spinster, he now proceeds to vs 39. The widow's liberty is guided by the Lord's will e.g. as stated in 1 Tim 5:9-11 while the virgin is constrained by the one who will give her out in marriage.

Thus a, b and c indicate God is happy with a loyal wife who was not an adulteress and at widowhood, has given her permission to marry anew. In particular, under the new covenant, the widow is free to make her own choice of a suitor and does not necessarily require the approval of someone else, unlike the spinster. The common theme is the LIBERTY she enjoys "only in the Lord" to marry whom she wills. Recall that in verse 8-9 Paul had already encouraged the singles and widows to marry rather than burn with passion, that they would NOT BE SINNING IF THEY DO. There he did not limit either as per who they must marry or to only wed a fellow believer. In 1 Cor 7:39. the phrase "*only in the Lord*" **qualifies** '*liberty to marry*' NOT '*whom she wills.*' Thus the verse teaches that '***the wife is tied and restricted to her husband as long as he is alive, upon his death she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only this is well pleasing to the Lord.***' [Note that punctuation (e.g. comma, colon etc.) is not in the original manuscript but was introduced by translators to reflect how they understand the text. Versions that read 'he must be a Christian' are *Interpretations not Translations.*] The context determines what the phrase "in the Lord" refers to. Example 1 **Ephesians 6:1** 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.'

Those who deduce 1 Cor 7:39 means 'marry only a Christian, you must not marry an unbeliever' will have to interpret Eph 6:1 as 'Children, obey your *Christian* parents, do not obey your unbelieving parents, for this is right.'

Most people know that is not true and will not dare make such claim. The truth is the inspired apostle forecloses such anyway because the message in Eph 6:1 is alternatively rendered in a parallel passage thus:

Colossians 3:20 'Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.'

We can now clearly see that "in the Lord" as used in Eph 6:1 means "as pleasing unto the Lord," children are to 'obey your parents in all things.' In the Lord thus **qualifies** "obey" NOT "parents." The truth is children should obey their parents because that fits with the Lord's will, irrespective of whether the parents are believers or not, and ought not to be disobedient unless they are compelled to choose between obeying God's dictate and man's (Acts 4:19).

Example 2

Colossians 3:18 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.'

Paul could simply have written above: 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands in the Lord.'

Those who deduce 1 Cor 7:39 means 'marry only a Christian, you must not marry an unbeliever' will have to interpret Col 3:18 as 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own *Christian husbands*, you must not submit if your husband is an unbeliever.'

Again most people know that is not true and will not dare make such claim. The truth is the inspired apostle forecloses such anyway because the message in Col 3:18 is alternatively rendered in a parallel passage thus:

Ephesians 5:22 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.'

This clearly shows wives are to submit irrespective of the religion of the husband so long as they don't violate Acts 4:19. The phrase "in the Lord" **qualifies** "submit" not "husband." In fact, the Bible goes further to state in 1 Peter 3:1-2 "*Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.*"

The examples align with our analysis of 1 Cor 7:39 and Rm 7:2-3; the two passages on the same matter do not mean different things! The emphasis of both is not on the religion of whom a widow marries rather it is *only on her liberty in Christ* to choose whom to marry. **Against the backdrop of the regulations of the old covenant and other Gentile customs, liberty in the Lord is paramount in the new testament** - 2 Cor 3:17, Gal 2:14, Lk 4:18. If a Christian widow remains in bondage to the old covenant or contrary human customs, it will not be pleasing to the Lord (Gal 5:1). The very act itself may jeopardize her salvation whereas marriage to an unbeliever could lead to the spouse's salvation (1 Cor 7:16)

III. DOES 2 COR 6:14 PROHIBIT MARRYING AN UNBELIVER TODAY?

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. "

The passage is primarily to a collective group [the church] but was first prophesied unto ancient Israel. It is about being called out, SANCTIFIED; not partaking with idolaters in their unrighteousness. Jesus in John 17:15-20 prayed for THIS, entreating the Father to keep his followers in this world, as one, not take them out so as not to relate with sinners, see also 1 Cor 5:9-10. Simply do not participate in evil and idol

rites. Interestingly it is acknowledged by everyone that in marriage today, every eligible pair or couple is joined together by God. If so, does God partake in sin? -since it is alleged that a believer '*getting married to an unbeliever is sin.*' The truth is that when God joined the believer to the unbeliever in marriage, it was not a sin. This is a hard saying for many to process and I encourage such to read this paragraph over and over again. There is no ESCAPING it: if under the new covenant, 'getting married to an unbeliever is a sin,' God will not JOIN them together and it would amount to fornication and an illegitimate marriage. Such believer would IN REPENTANCE HAVE TO DIVORCE just as the Jews confessed and did in Ezra 10. We are to rightly divide the word of truth -2 Tim 2:15. It would be wrong for one to insist 2 Cor 6:14-16 forbids a Christian from marrying an unbeliever and not proceed to verse 17-18 to ***reach the logical implication*** of that line of reasoning that the believer will have to come out of the marital union or divorce, otherwise such loses the privilege to be a child of God! The wife is a co-heir of grace and even in her submissive role is not in bondage or subservient or inferior to the husband. Neither is the husband in his leadership and loving role. Marriage is inherently an equal-yoke union of *help-meets*. I find it curious that while some say 2 Cor 6:14 is generic, what they really want to do is to make it cover and specifically limit it to... marriage rather than alliances in which the believer would not be able to remain sanctified. Those who claim 'getting married to an unbeliever is a sin' DO NOT afterwards tell the believer to fully repent and put away the spouse as we see in Ezra 10. **In fact, if a believer should tell them** '*Since you said I sinned by marrying an unbeliever, I want to now repent, dissolve my marriage and marry a believer,*' they will likely kick against it and say that is not a scriptural ground for divorce, just have WORLDLY sorrow and pray. They will say "Once joined by God, no attempt is to be made to undo it (Mt. 19:6)." And BEGIN TO QUOTE 1 Cor 7:12-16 ('try to save the unbelieving spouse with the gospel') which they had initially claimed was not applicable to this fellow! Why? Because they sincerely know that God hates divorce and accepted the union which they frowned against and castigated as sinful.

IV. DOES 1 COR 9:5 REQUIRE A SINGLE CHRISTIAN TO ONLY MARRY A BELIEVER?

1 Corinthians 9:1 Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? 2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. 3 Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, 4 Have we not power to eat and to drink? 5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? 6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? 7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? 12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. 13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. 15 But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.

While some use 1 Cor 9:5 to aver that a brother has authority to only marry and lead a sister in the Lord, some others who are Greek scholars aver the text may not so indicate, saying it could refer to going on evangelism with a biological or spiritual sister. Paul alluded to Peter who we know was married unlike himself. We have the example of Aquila and Priscilla a believing couple but we also have that of Phoebe

and others who have assisted Paul in Rm 16. The scriptures require that one who aspires to be an overseer must among other things; *'rule his house well, be a good example, have faithful children and a wife who is faithful in all things.'* –Tit 1:5-9 & 1 Tim 3:1-11. All these suggest that his family be mainly of believers, that I will concede. However, does that necessarily require every single Christian to marry a believer and does it mean such have no authority to do otherwise?

The import of verse 5 is that a man has the right to marry and have his wife accompany him when he travels in the course of his duty. Pilate did that, Agrippa did, Peter did and Paul could have also done so but he did not exercise that right. That the other apostles had believing wives was great and exemplary. It was fitting if the church was going to financially support them as preachers (context/thrust of vs 1-15) and was necessary if any like Peter wanted to be an Elder/Overseer/Bishop (1 Pet 5:1). It is recommended for all but does not mean a Christian marrying an unbeliever is sin just as it is not a sin for one to not desire marriage or the office of an Overseer or Deacon. If that passage gives every single brother the right to only marry a sister THEN verses 4 & 6 also gives him "*authority to eat and drink, to forgo working and live at the congregation's expense!*" We know that is *not true* for a brother is commanded to work/earn his meal (2 Thess 3:10-12) and support his own household otherwise he is worse than an infidel (1 Tim 5:8). 1 Cor 9:12,14 shows Paul is talking of "apostolic/ministerial authority OVER THE CHURCH." See the trend from vs 1-2, he is talking about apostles/ministers and the fact that he is one. An inference that one can make here concerning marriage is that church officers if married, are to have believing wives. The possibility of a brother or sister having an unbelieving spouse is indicated in 1 Cor 7:12-16.

Not only did the Lord give Paul power to *'lead about a sister and to be financially supported for preaching,'* he was also empowered with the signs of an apostle *'in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds'* (2 Cor 12:11-12) which was not for everyone then (1 Cor 12:29-30) and isn't for anyone now having ceased (1 Cor 13:8-13). Every single brother isn't given power to eat, drink, marry a sister and live on the church without working for a living when he is not a minister. No-one should attempt to force-fit preconceived notions into 1 Cor 9:5. God in 1 Tim 3 makes it a requirement for a man who desires the work of an Elder to have a wife who is faithful. Granting that is about being a believer rather than being loyal at home does not create a problem. It is at the time of appointment that such criteria comes into consideration, to sift the brethren. It does not matter whether either of the couple was an unbeliever at the time they got married in their youth. The important thing is the listed qualities are now met. If a brother has an unbelieving wife (1 Cor 7:12) then such will not qualify as Elder or Deacon but may in future after the spouse's conversion -vs 16. Even someone with a believing wife may not qualify based on other criteria while few may seem to but not desire the office. There is no basis to generalize an authorization, permission or requirement on an apostle or minister upon every brother -such as the right or need to be the husband of a believing wife. At best a desirable scenario but neither compulsory nor always achievable.

CONCLUSION

The law of Christ is applicable to all men in every nation whether they obey him or not. That is why the scripture calls him the Lawgiver who shall judge the world. He has all authority hence they either repent or be punished for disobeying his gospel. In the new covenant, God is within the Christian and one that lives godly is more likely to convert outsiders and even an unbelieving spouse than the reverse being the case. Some object to this and claim to have seen the believer fall away in the cases witnessed in their church. To that I responded "*that is a possibility especially when a church labels the believer a sinner for marrying and do not show much love/encouragement to the couple. However, 1 Cor 7:16 remains and I have seen cases where unbelievers are won to Christ in fulfillment of 1 Pet 3:1-2. The discussion is really not about our experiences or personal preferences. It is about what the Bible says on who one may marry. My plea is that no one should bind what God has not bound.*" **It is advantageous to marry someone of**

like-precious faith [since having similar values, worldview & hope spend more time together in activities, enjoy more peace of mind] and I advocate that but need not in over-righteousness (Eccl 7:16) 'condemn the guiltless' for marrying a non-Christian. I advise Christians to marry believers but will not tell someone he is sinning if s/he disregards my advice. It is better to accept the reality and encourage such couple to draw close to God. The concept of condemning either drives both further away from the faith or lead to a baptism where the unbeliever joins the fold without deep conviction so that the wedding could proceed. Please ensure in good conscience and confidence that you can provide scriptural and/or logically consistent answers to the questions raised. If necessary jettison wrong long-held ideas and beliefs. After all, it is the doctrine of Christ that we should follow not the doctrine of men. I encourage each person to study the Bible for him or herself. Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith -2 Cor 13:5.

Please take the following quick review questions:

1. Today, is everyone ultimately subject to Christ's gospel whether or not they obey it?
2. In this age, are marriages between free and eligible persons recognized by God irrespective of their religion?
3. Is it stated in the texts that the mixed-faith marriages described by Paul and Peter took place before one converted?
4. Does God have a different marriage law for Christians and another marriage law for unbelievers?
5. Is it lawful but not expedient for a Christian to deliberately marry an unbeliever?
6. If getting married to an unbeliever is sin, how will a Christian repent and forsake such sin?
7. Does God require a repentant unbeliever to depart from an unbelieving lawful spouse before s/he obeys the gospel?
8. Is the exact phrase "marry only in the Lord" in the Bible?
9. Does the phrase "obey your parents in the Lord" mean one should only obey Christian parents but must not obey unbelieving parents at all?
10. Is every single brother authorized to 'eat, drink, not work, marry a sister and live at the church's expense' when he is not a minister of the gospel?
11. Since becoming a Christian, have you ever had contact with and related with an unbeliever in any way whether economically, socially, academically, professionally, or romantically, etc.?
12. If you answer 'Yes' to the prior question does that imply that you have been unequally yoked?
13. Have you ceased relating with and can you refrain totally from relating with unbelievers in this world?
14. Can one avoid partaking with unbelievers in their unrighteous acts and spiritual rebellion to God, come out of them into the body of Christ where one is sanctified by his word continually?
15. Do you personally have apostolic authority?
16. Do you believe it is always 'unwise and foolish' to choose to marry an unbeliever?
17. Does the Bible actually say that or is it your own opinion or the people determine the standard?
18. Is one not at liberty to make a choice for him or herself?
19. Do people not make personal choices based on their desire, perception and circumstances?
20. Even if it is unwise, does that necessarily constitute a sin?
21. Is one not supposed to live with the consequences of his or her choice e.g. is 'stuck' after marriage?
22. If it is a matter of CHOICE; liberty, personal preference, will or opinion, why judge your brother or sister?
23. Is anyone HOLIER AND SMARTER than God who joins and recognizes a believer and an unbeliever in marriage?
24. If you insist it is both foolish and sinful do you preach to the believer to repent and show fruit of repentance via divorce?
25. If you answer 'No' to the prior question do you agree that the marriage as it was contracted and exists 'was, is and will remain' sanctified since it is not a fornication or adultery situation?