

LESSON 4 - MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE "IS THE ALIEN SINNER AMENABLE TO MATTHEW 19:9"

(Jerry Fite)

INTRODUCTION:

"Worldly people are judged solely by the law of the world." "Baptism is the dividing line between the World and the Church (I Cor. 12:13). Up till then, Civil laws control. After baptism, Christ law takes over." (E.C. Fuqua, The Vindicator, Dec. 1951, p.2; quoted by Thomas B. Warren, The Warren - Fugua Debate, p.10).

"The alien is **not** under the covenant law of Christ until he brings himself under it by obedience to its terms." (Homer Hailey, THE DIVORCED AND REMARRIED WHO WOULD COME TO GOD, p.52).

Were Jesus' laws concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage only applied to those in His Kingdom? Are people in the world guilty of sin solely because they have violated Civil Law? Is the person only amenable to Christ's teachings of Matthew 19:9, 5:32, etc. when he or she agrees to enter covenant relationship with the Lord?

These questions we seek to answer by examining the Scriptures.

I. WHAT DOES "AMENABLE" MEAN?

- A. "AMENABLE" means "answerable" or "responsible."
- B. Because "the mind of the flesh" "is NOT SUBJECT to the law of God" (Rom. 8:7), does not mean the person is NOT RESPONSIBLE or ANSWERABLE to the same law (cf. Rom.13:1-7).

II. UNDER WHAT LAW ARE MEN TODAY?

- A. Men have always lived under law to God - otherwise no sin could exist (Rom.4:15, 5:13) - yet all have sinned (Rom.3:23, 5:12).
- B. Some say the world is "under the law on the heart" - an innate standard within each individual.
 - 1. The Bible rejects the idea of an inborn law (Jer.10:23, Prov.16:25).
 - 2. The context of Romans 2:15 points to the "things" or "work" "of the law" as being the law of Moses, not some innate law originating from the heart.
 - 3. Though the law of Moses was not given to the Gentiles, they had adopted some of the moral principles contained in that law.
- C. All men today are amenable to Christ and His Word (Matt.28:18-20, John 12:48, 16:13, Gal.1:6-8, Acts 17:30-32).
 - 1. Jesus has authority over "all flesh" (Jn.17:2).
 - 2. The world will be judged by "the word that I spake" (Jn.12:48) - "and I say..." (Matthew 19:9).

3. Till the words of Christ came, the Jews were under the Law of Moses and the Gentiles were under moral law revealed through man and handed down through generations. But now all men are amenable to Christ's law.

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- a) Christ's word condemns every conceivable sin of the alien today (I Tim. 1:9-11, I Cor. 5:10-11, 6:9-10, Eph. 4:17-5:21).
 - (1) The laws are directed to both aliens and Christians:
 - (a) Gospel (Mk.16:15, Rom.1:7,15; Gal.2:14)
 - (b) Doctrine (Acts 5:28, Jn.6:44-45; 2 Jn.9)
 - (c) Word (Acts 13:5-7, 2 Tim.4:2)
 - (d) The Faith (Acts 6:7, Jude 3)
 - (e) The Truth (Jn.8:32, Gal.2:5).
- b) Christ's word regulates all current human relationships (I Tim. 1:9-11).
 - (1) Man/God
 - (2) Man/man
 - (3) Man/things
 - (4) Man/government
 - (5) Marriage
 - (6) Family
 - (7) Church
4. All people are not answerable to all parts of the law.
 - a) Those who are not parents are not answerable to laws applying to parents.
 - b) Examples: Elders, deacons, husbands, wives, children, servants, masters.
 - c) Though a persons is not amenable to EVERY law in the law of Christ, does not mean he is NO WAY amenable to the Law of Christ.

D. Aliens are not under Civil Law ONLY:

1. People in Athens were guilty of sin of idolatry - not a violation of civil law but is violation of the law of Christ (Acts 17, Gal.5:20).
2. Aliens guilty of "covetousness" - not a violation of civil law (I Cor. 6:9-11).

III. WHAT CONSTITUTES A 'COVENANT'?

- A. "Diatheke primarily signifies a disposition of property by will or otherwise...in contradistinction to the English word 'covenant' (lit. a coming together), which signifies a mutual undertaking between two parties or more, each binding himself to fulfill obligations, it does not in itself contain the idea of joint obligation, it mostly signifies an obligation undertaken by a single person..." (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, p. 242)
 1. Example given Gal.3:17 - word used in connection with "promise" (v.16,17, and 18).

2. "God enjoined upon Abraham the rite of circumcision, but His promise to Abraham, here called a covenant, was not conditional upon the observance of circumcision, though a penalty attached to its non-observance" (ibid., p.242).
 3. Other examples
- B. God sets the terms, man has choice or accepting or rejecting. Man sins when he goes contrary to the set rules (cf. Ex.19:5, Joshua 23:16, 24:25).

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IV. ALL MEN TODAY ARE AMENABLE TO MATTHEW 19:9

- A. Addressed to "great multitudes" not just Christians.
- B. Jesus applied law on divorce and remarriage to "whosoever" (cf. Matt. 5:32, Rom.10:11, 13; Rev.22:17).
- C. The law of which Matt.19:9 is part is addressed to every creature (Matt. 28, Mk.16).
- D. The context of Matt. 5 lists a number of sins that are just as wrong for the non-Christian as the Christian (murder, anger, adultery, etc.).

QUESTIONS:

1. What does the word, "amenable" mean?
2. If you are not "subject" to a law, then you are not amenable to the law. (T) (F)
3. Have men always been under law?
4. What is the "law in the heart"?
5. How do you know all men (Christians and aliens) are amenable to the law of Christ?
6. What does "covenant" mean?

7. A covenant (a) is always an agreement between two parties, (b) can be a command or a promise, (c) is only for those who are Christians.

8. Give evidence that Matt. 19:9 applies to all.