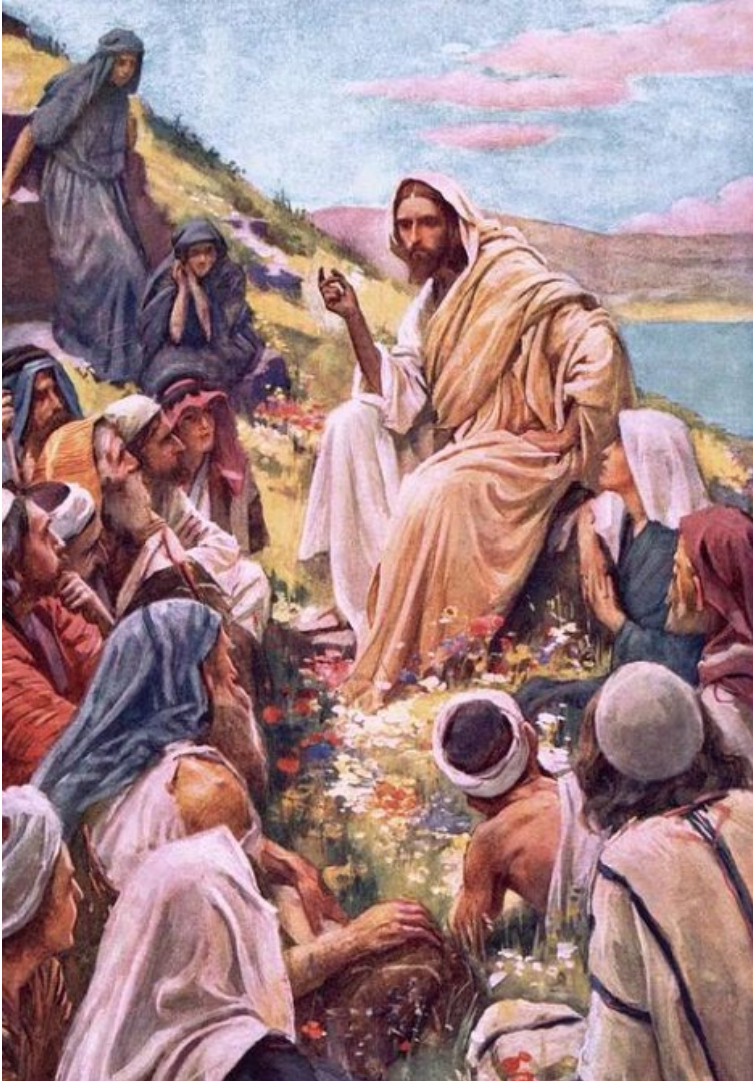


*You have heard that it was declared...  
but I say to you...*



**Week 3: Divorce and Remarriage**

## **Matthew 5:31-32**

And it has been declared that whoever shall send away his wife, let him give her a divorce. But I say to you, whoever shall send away his wife, outside of the reason of scortation, makes her commit adultery; and whoever shall wed her that is sent away commits adultery.

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## DAY ONE: THE LAW IN MOSES AND MATTHEW

### Genesis 1

26. And God said, Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the heavens, and over the beast, and over all the earth, and over every creeping [thing] that creeps on the earth.

27. And God created man in His [own] image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28. And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue her; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the heavens, and over every living thing that creeps on the earth.

### Genesis 2

18. And Jehovah God said, [It is] not good [that] man<sup>1</sup> should be alone; I will make for him a help as with him....

21. And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed the flesh instead of it.

22. And the rib which Jehovah God had taken from man, He built into a woman<sup>2</sup> and brought her to man.

23. And man said, This [one, this] time, [is] bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh; for this she shall be called a wife, for this was taken out of a man<sup>3</sup>.

24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

25. And the two of them were naked, man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

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<sup>1</sup> "Man" is a translation of the Hebrew word *adham* (Adam), usually translated in Latin as *homo*, *hominis*, usually meaning a human being but sometimes referring to a male. There is another Hebrew word, *ish*, translated in Latin as *vir*, which always means a male. To distinguish it from *adham* ("man"), we translate it "a man."

<sup>2</sup> AC 151-156 uses the Latin word for "woman" (*mulier*) here, but in the next verse the Latin word for "wife" (*uxor*) is used. Hebrew has one word for both "woman" and "wife." Here and elsewhere, we follow the Latin as to which way to translate this word.

<sup>3</sup> "A man" in Hebrew is *ish*, and the word for "woman" is *ishah*.

## DAY ONE: THE LAW IN MOSES AND MATTHEW

### **Deuteronomy 5** (also Exodus 20:14, 17)

18. And thou shalt not commit adultery.

21. And thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife. And thou shalt not lust after thy neighbor's house....

### **Deuteronomy 24**

1. When a man has taken a wife and married her, and it be that she does not find grace in his eyes, for he has found a matter of nakedness<sup>4</sup> in her; then let him write her a letter of divorce<sup>5</sup>, and give [it] into her hand, and send her out from his house.

2. And she goes out from his house, and she may go and be for another man.

3. And [if] the latter man hate her, and write her a letter of divorce and give it into her hand, and send her out from his house; or if the latter man die who took her to himself for a wife;

4. her former husband, who sent her out, may not take her again to be to him for a wife, after she is defiled; for it [is] an abomination before Jehovah; and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which Jehovah thy God gives thee as an inheritance.

### **Matthew 19**

3. And the Pharisees came to Him, tempting Him, and saying to Him, "Is it permitted for a man to send away his wife for every cause?"

4. And He answering said to them, "Have you not read that He who made [them] from the beginning made them male and female,

5. and said, 'On this account shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh'?

6. "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What, therefore, God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

7. They say to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a document of divorce, and to send her away?"

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<sup>4</sup> "Nakedness is taken in the Word for reproach and evil" (AC 213).

<sup>5</sup> Literally, "cutting-off"

## DAY ONE: THE LAW IN MOSES AND MATTHEW

8. He says to them, “Moses, because of your hard-heartedness, permitted you to send away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.

9. “And I say to you that whoever shall send away his wife, except over scortation<sup>6</sup>, and shall wed another, commits adultery; and he who weds her that is sent away commits adultery.”

10. His disciples say to Him, “If the case of the man be so with the wife, it is not expedient to wed.”

11. But He said to them, “All do not take in this word, but [they] to whom it is given.

12. “For there are eunuchs who were so born from the mother’s womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of the heavens. He that is able to take it in, let him take it in.”

See also Matthew 5:31-32 on Contents page.

### Questions and Comments

1. There are two parts of the law as given in Matthew 5 and 19. The first is that we may not divorce and remarry “except for scortation,” that is, adultery. (In Deuteronomy 24:1, perhaps scortation is meant by “a matter of nakedness.”) Otherwise, we should “cleave,” i.e., be firmly glued, to our marriage and our married partner.
2. The second is that we may not marry someone who has been divorced due to his or her infidelity/scortation (contrary to Deuteronomy).
3. How do we not covet our neighbor’s wife or husband?

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<sup>6</sup> Adulterous behavior; see page 7-8 for a fuller explanation.

## DAY TWO: MORE FROM THE GOSPELS, AND SEPARATION

### *The Law in Mark and Luke*

#### **Mark 10**

10. And in the house again His disciples asked Him of this [matter].

11. And He says to them, “Whoever shall send away his wife, and wed another, commits adultery against her.

12. “And if a wife sends away her husband and be wed to another, she commits adultery.”

#### **Luke 16**

18. Everyone who sends away his wife, and weds another, commits adultery; and everyone who weds her that is sent away from [her] husband commits adultery.

### *From the Christmas Story*

#### **Matthew 1**

18. And the birth of Jesus Christ was in this way: His mother Mary, being betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, was found with child from the Holy Spirit.

19. And Joseph her husband, being just, and not willing to expose her to public infamy, intended to send her away privately.

20. And while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, fear not to take to thee Mary thy wife, for that which is begotten in her is from the Holy Spirit.

21. “And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.”

### *Causes for Separation, not Divorce*

**CL 251.** *There are several reasons for separation.* Separations can be separations from the bed or separations from the house.

Reasons for separations from the bed are many, likewise for separations from the house. But here legitimate causes are treated of. As the causes of separation coincide with the causes of

## DAY TWO: MORE FROM THE GOSPELS, AND SEPARATION

concubinage<sup>7</sup>, to be treated in their own chapter in the following part of this work, the reader is referred to that, to the end that he may see the causes in their order. The legitimate causes of separation are those that follow.

**CL 252.** *The first reason for legitimate separation is an impairment of the mind.* The reason for this is that conjugal love is a union of minds. If the mind of one grows apart from that of the other, therefore, this union is broken, and love fades with it. It can be seen what sort of impairments lead to separation from an enumeration of them. They are, accordingly, in large part the following:

Psychosis. Organic psychosis. **Insanity. Actual idiocy or imbecility. Amnesia.** Severe neurosis.

Extreme simplemindedness so as to lack any perception of goodness and truth. **Utmost stubbornness in not complying with what is just and fair.**

Taking the greatest pleasure in prattling and talking only about inconsequential and trivial matters.

Having an uncontrollable urge to divulge secrets of the home. **Having an uncontrollable urge to argue; to strike blows; to take revenge; to act maliciously; to steal; to lie; to deceive; to blaspheme.**

**Neglect of the children.** Intemperance. High living. Excessive extravagance. **Drunkenness.** Lack of cleanliness. Shamelessness. Resorting to sorceries and witchcraft. **Impiety.**

Many other disorders could be listed as well.

By legitimate reasons here we do not mean judicial ones, but ones legitimate to the other partner. Only rarely are separations from the house decreed by a judge.

**CL 253.** *A second reason for legitimate separation is an impairment of the body.* By impairments of the body are not meant incidental illnesses which befall one or the other partner during

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<sup>7</sup> Rogers translates *concubinatus* as “taking a mistress.”

## DAY TWO: MORE FROM THE GOSPELS, AND SEPARATION

their marriage and pass away. What are meant are persistent conditions which do not pass away.

Pathology tells us what these are. Being of many types and kinds, some, for example, are diseases by which the whole body is so thoroughly infected as to raise the possibility of death by contagion. Conditions of this sort include: Malignant and pestilential fevers. Leprosies. Venereal diseases. Gangrenous infections. Cancerous sores. And other comparable conditions.

Other afflictions are conditions by which the whole body becomes so thoroughly burdened as to make close companionship impossible, or which are accompanied by unhealthy exhalations and noxious vapors, either from the body's surface or from its inner parts, particularly from the stomach and lungs... And especially if the face is disfigured by various afflictions.

**CL 254.** *The third cause of legitimate separation is impotence before marriage.* The reason why this is a cause of separation is that the end of marriage is the procreation of offspring, and by such it is impossible; and as they know this beforehand, they purposely deprive their married partner of the hope of it, the hope which yet should nurse and strengthen their conjugal love.

### Questions and Comments

1. What piece of the law does Mark make explicit that Matthew does not?
2. Why was Joseph acting justly, in intending to send Mary away privately?
3. CL 252 says that separations are rarely decreed by a judge, but is a PFA (Protection From Abuse) order a separation?
4. Notice how serious evils can be cause for separation but not for divorce.



## DAY THREE: THE ONLY CAUSE FOR DIVORCE

**Matthew 19:9.** “And I say to you that whoever shall send away his wife, except over scortation, and shall marry another, commits adultery; and he who marries her that is sent away commits adultery.”

**CL 423.** [W]hat is meant by scortatory love: The fornicatory love that precedes marriage is not meant... Nor are the mild kinds of adultery meant; nor the graver kinds of which a man actually repents... But here, by the scortatory love opposite to conjugal love is meant the love of adultery when it is such that it is not regarded as a sin, nor as evil, dishonorable, and against reason, but as permissible with reason. This scortatory love not only makes conjugal love the same as itself, but also ruins, destroys, and at length nauseates it.

**CL 255.** *That adultery is the cause of divorce.* For this there are many reasons, which are in rational light, and yet at this day are concealed. It may be seen from rational light that marriages are holy, and that adulteries are profane; and thus, that marriages and adulteries are diametrically opposite to each other, and that when opposite meets opposite one destroys the other, to the very last spark of its life. It is so with conjugal love when a married man with determination and thus with set purpose commits adultery. With those who know something of heaven and hell these considerations come into a clearer light of reason; for they know that marriages are in heaven and from heaven, and that adulteries are in hell and from hell; and that these two cannot be conjoined, just as heaven cannot be conjoined with hell, and that if they are brought together in a man, heaven instantly departs and hell enters.

This then is the reason why adultery is the cause of divorce. Therefore, the Lord says, “Whoever sends away his wife except for scortation, and marries another, commits adultery” (Mat. 19:9).

He says, if he sends away, except for scortation, and marries another he commits adultery, because sending away for this cause is the complete separation of minds, which is called divorce. But

## DAY THREE: THE ONLY CAUSE FOR DIVORCE

all other sendings away, for their causes, are the separations treated just above. If after these, another wife is married, adultery is committed, but not after divorce.

*Another passage that quotes Matthew 19*

**CL 482.** *That double adultery is that of a husband with the wife of another, or the converse.* This is called double adultery because it is committed by two, and by each of them the marriage covenant is violated; wherefore also it is twofold more grievous than [single adultery].

It was said just above at n. 480, that the conjugal love of one man with one wife, after the pact and covenant, unites the souls; and that this union is the love itself in its origin; and that by adultery this is closed and stopped up, like the spring and flow of a fountain. That the souls of two unite themselves when the love of the sex on the part of each is restricted to one of the sex, which takes place when the virgin pledges herself wholly to the young man, and on the other hand the young man pledges himself wholly to the virgin, is very plain from the fact that the lives of both unite themselves; consequently so do the souls, because these are the beginnings of life. There cannot be this union of souls except in monogamous marriages, or marriages of one man with one wife, but not in polygamous marriages, or of a man with more wives than one, because in these the love is divided, while in monogamous marriages it is united.

That in this, its highest seat, conjugal love is spiritual, holy, and pure, is from the cause that the soul of every man by virtue of its origin is heavenly, and therefore receives influx immediately from the Lord, for it receives from Him the marriage of love and wisdom, or of good and truth, and this influx makes him man, and distinguishes him from beasts.

[2] From this union of souls, conjugal love, which is there in its spiritual holiness and purity, flows down into the life of the whole body, and fills it with blessed delights so long as its flow remains

## DAY THREE: THE ONLY CAUSE FOR DIVORCE

open, which it does with those who from the Lord become spiritual.

That nothing else but adultery closes up and stops this seat and origin, or fountain of conjugal love and its flow, is plain from the Lord's words in Matthew 19:4-9...

When therefore this pure and holy fountain is stopped up, as was said before, it is encompassed with foulness, as a gem with excrement, or as bread with vomit, the very opposite to the purity and holiness of that fountain, or of conjugal love. From this opposition comes conjugal cold, and according to this the wanton pleasure of scortatory love, which spontaneously consumes itself. This is an evil of sin, because what is holy is covered up and its flow into the body is thus obstructed, and there succeeds in its place what is profane, and the flow of this into the body is opened. Thence from being heavenly, man becomes infernal.

### Questions and Comments

1. Does it make sense, that is, can you see in rational light, that the only evil that totally destroys a marriage is the love of adultery, not regarded as a sin and dishonorable, and committed with determination and set purpose? And that other evils, even serious evils, permit separation but not divorce?
2. CL 482 reminds us of how much is at stake in preserving and protecting marriage in ourselves from adultery and polygamy (presumably including serial polygamy, one wife after another). Why is adultery "an evil of sin," or in other words, what is so bad about it?
3. What is a way we can flee or turn our minds away from scortatory thoughts early on, before they start to get a grip on us?

## DAY FOUR: MATRIMONY IS FOR LIFE

**CL 271.** (3) *That the affections according to which matrimony is commonly contracted in the world are external....*

(4) *But that if there are not internal affections within that conjoin the minds, matrimony is loosened in the house....*

**CL 276.** (5) *That nevertheless matrimony in the world is to endure to the end of life.* This is stated, that there may be presented more manifestly to reason the necessity, the utility, and the truth, that where there is not genuine conjugal love it is yet to be feigned, or to have it appear as if there were. It would not be so if marriages entered into were not covenanted to the end of life, but were dissolvable at will, as they were with the Israelitish nation, which arrogated to itself the liberty to put away wives for whatever cause, as appears from these words in Matthew:

The Pharisees came to Jesus, saying, “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?” And when Jesus answered that it is not lawful to put away a wife and marry another except for scortation, they replied that yet Moses commanded to give her a bill of divorce and put her away. And the disciples said, “If the case of a man with a wife be so, it is not expedient to marry” (19:3-10).

[2] As the marriage covenant is therefore a covenant for life, it follows that appearances of love and friendship between married partners are necessities. That the matrimony contracted is to endure to the end of life in the world, is from Divine law; and because it is from this, it is also from rational law; and thence from civil law. It is from the Divine law that a man may not put away his wife and marry another except for scortation, as above. It is from rational law, because this is founded on the spiritual—for Divine law and rational law are one law. From the latter and the former, or through the latter from the former, one may see the great number of enormities and the destructions of societies that would come from the dissolutions of marriages or the sending away of wives before death at the pleasure of the husband. Those enormities, and the destructions of societies may be realized in some fulness from the discussion concerning the origin of conjugal love by those

## DAY FOUR: MATRIMONY IS FOR LIFE

gathered together from the nine kingdoms, in the Relation at n. 103-115, to which there is no need to add further reasons.

But these reasons do not prevent the permission of separations for their own causes, of which above at n. 252-254; and also of concubinage, of which in the Second Part.

**CL 105.** “[M]arriage... has been prescribed by law to restrain the inborn urges in people for adulterous relationships that destroy the soul, pollute the mind’s reason, corrupt morals, and waste the body with disease. For adulterous relationships are not human but beastlike, not rational but animal, and thus not at all Christian but barbarian.”

**CL 107.** “[A] love for the opposite sex is unrestricted, uninhibited, liberated, indiscriminate and fickle, while conjugal love is restricted, directed, contained, sure and constant. Married love has therefore been prescribed and established by the prudence of human wisdom, because otherwise there would be no empire, no kingdom, no commonwealth, indeed no society, but people would roam through the fields and forests in bands and troops with licentious and stolen women, and they would flee from place to place to escape bloody slaughter, rape and pillage, by which the whole human race would be wiped out of existence.”

**CL 109.** “We fellow countrymen in our party looked around for the causes of the origin of conjugal love, and we agreed on two. One of these is the proper upbringing of children, and the other, the clear claim of heirs to their inheritances.... [C]hildren conceived and born of married love become the proper and true offspring of both parents; and as objects of a parental love that is deepened by their being of legitimate descent, they are raised to become the heirs of all their parents’ possessions, both spiritual and natural. Reason sees that the public good is founded on a proper upbringing of children and on the clear claim of heirs to their inheritances.... [M]arried love has engraved on it the salvation of the whole human race, which is what we mean by the public good.”

## DAY FOUR: MATRIMONY IS FOR LIFE

**CL 332.** If one seeks the reason why polygamous marriages have been utterly condemned by the Christian world, no one, endowed with whatever gift of... genius, can clearly see the cause unless he is first instructed....

It is known that the institution of monogamous marriage is founded on the Lord's Word, that whoever shall send away his wife except for scortation and marry another, commits adultery; and that from the beginning, or from the first institution of marriages, it was ordained that two should become one flesh; and that man should not put asunder what God has joined together (Matt. 19:3-11).

But although the Lord dictated these words out of the Divine law inscribed on marriage, yet, if the understanding cannot support it with some reason of its own, it may even, by turns to which it is accustomed and by sinister interpretations, get around that Divine law and bring it into obscure ambiguity, and finally into an affirmative-negative, affirmative because it is according to the civil law also, and negative because it is not according to their own rational sight. Into this state will the human mind fall if it is not first instructed... that there is a love truly conjugal; that it can exist only between two; that it cannot exist between two except from the Lord alone; and that upon that love heaven is inscribed with all its felicities. *[See also CL 339-340.]*

### Comments and Questions

1. At the end of CL 332, we are instructed in the spiritual reasons why monogamy is essential. CL 276 and 105-109 remind us of the civil consequences of the rewards and punishments of committing or failing to commit to a lifelong monogamous marriage. Can you think of other consequences?
2. People often marry for external reasons and then hit cold patches. What does the Lord urge us to do then? What are some ways to weather a cold spell?

## DAY FIVE: THE LEGITIMATE CAUSES OF DIVORCE

**CL 462.** [B]y concubinage is here meant an agreed-upon conjunction of a married man with a woman.... But as there are two kinds of concubinage, and these are to be totally separated, therefore this chapter, like the former ones, is to be divided into its parts, which are as follows:

(1) That there are two kinds of concubinage, which differ very greatly from each other: one conjointly with a wife, the other apart from a wife.

(2) That concubinage conjointly with a wife is to Christians altogether unlawful and detestable.

(3) That it is polygamy, which by the Christian world is condemned, and ought to be condemned.

(4) That it is scortation, by which the conjugal, which is the precious jewel of Christian life, is destroyed.

(5) That concubinage apart from the wife, when engaged in for legitimate, just, and truly weighty causes, is not unlawful.

(6) That the legitimate causes for this concubinage are the legitimate causes for divorce, while the wife is nevertheless retained at home.

(7) That the just causes for this concubinage are just causes for separation from the bed.

(8) That weighty causes for this concubinage are real, and not real.

(9) That the weighty causes are real which are [the ones that are] from what is just.

(10) But that the weighty causes that are not real are such as are not from what is just, although from an appearance of what is just.

(11) That those who from legitimate, just, and really weighty causes are in this concubinage may at the same time be in conjugal love.

(12) That while this concubinage lasts actual conjunction with the wife is not lawful.

The exposition of these now follows.

## DAY FIVE: THE LEGITIMATE CAUSES OF DIVORCE

**CL 468. (6)** *That the legitimate causes of this concubinage are the legitimate causes of divorce, while the wife is nevertheless retained at home.* By divorce is meant the abolition of the conjugal covenant and thence complete separation, and entire liberty after that to take another wife. The only cause of this total separation or divorce is scortation, according to the Lord's precept in Matthew 19:9.

To the same cause belong also manifest obscenities, which dissolve modesty, and fill and infest the house with infamous intrigues, from which arises a scortatory shamelessness in which the whole mind is dissolved.

Add to these, malicious desertion which involves scortation and makes the wife commit adultery and thus to be put away (Matthew 5:32) [quoted on the Contents page].

These three, because they are the legitimate causes of divorce, the first and the third before a public judge, and the second before the man as judge, are also legitimate causes of concubinage, but when the adulterous wife is retained at home.

That scortation is the only cause of divorce, because it is diametrically opposite to the life of conjugal love and destroys it even to the point of extermination, may be seen above, n. 255.

**CL 485.** That circumstances and contingent factors vary every case is something people know. However, events are still regarded in one way by a person on the basis of his rational sight, in another way by a judge on the basis of the law, and in another way by the Lord on the basis of the state of the person's mind. Therefore attributions, convictions, and imputations after death are spoken of. For attributions are determined by a person in accordance with the light [*lumen*] of his reason; convictions by a judge in accordance with the law; and imputations by the Lord in accordance with the person's state of mind.

These three judgments are very different in nature, as can be seen without need for explanation. For a person may, from a rational evaluation in accordance with the circumstances and contingent factors, exonerate one whom a judge while sitting in



## DAY FIVE: THE LEGITIMATE CAUSES OF DIVORCE

judgment cannot exonerate on the basis of the law; and a judge, too, may exonerate one who after death is condemned. The reason is that a judge determines his verdict in accordance with a person's deeds, whereas everyone is judged after death in accordance with the intentions of his will and consequent intellect, and in accordance with the persuasions of his intellect and consequent will. Neither of these does a judge see. Yet each judgment is nevertheless just, the one looking to the good of civil society, the other to the good of heavenly society.

### Comments and Questions

1. Concubinage is permitted if a man's wife is too seriously ill in body or mind to act as his wife; or if she is involved in scortation/adultery but still is retained at home.
2. One reason she might be kept at home is because the man fears the damage she could do to his reputation by lies. Another reason is for the care of young children (CL 469).
3. Causes of concubinage that are not real include abstinence after childbirth, a wife's transitory illnesses, and other spurious and fallacious reasons (CL 474).
4. CL 468 gives two more cases of scortation, along with adultery itself. Manifest obscenity refers to a wife who obviously exhibits utter scortatory shamelessness, but whose infidelity may not be provable before a judge. Malicious desertion refers to a wife hatefully running out on her husband and later, being without income or without a companion, she enters into adultery.
5. In Matthew 5 (see Contents page), the husband, by sending her away unjustly, makes her commit adultery, or at least gives her cover to marry someone else as if legitimately. But in CL 468, it is the wife's desertion that makes her commit adultery.

## DAY SIX: THE SPIRITUAL SENSE OF MATTHEW 19

**AE 710:25.** [quotes Matt. 19:3-12, as on pages 2-3]

That this contains interior arcana can be seen from the Lord's saying that "all do not receive these words, but they to whom it is given." The interior arcanum contained in these words spoken by the Lord is but little apprehended by men, but it is apprehended by all angels in heaven, because they perceive these words of the Lord spiritually, and the arcana contained in them are spiritual....

**AE 710:27.** "*Moses for the hardness of their heart suffered them to put away a wife for every cause,*" because the Israelites and Jews were natural and not spiritual, and those who are purely natural are also hard in heart, since they are not in any conjugal love but in lascivious love, such as is the love of adultery.

That "*whoever shall put away a wife except for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery,*" is because fornication signifies falsity, and with a woman the *affection* of evil and falsity, thus an affection that does not at all agree with the understanding of truth and good. And... by such discord, conjugal love, which is of truth and good (and from it is heaven and the church with man), is entirely destroyed. For when the interior conjunction, which is of the minds and dispositions, is no more, marriage is dissolved.

"*Whoever marries her that is sent away commits adultery,*" because **one put away on account of fornication** means the affection of evil and falsity, as above, and this must not be joined with any understanding of truth and good, for thereby the understanding is perverted, and becomes an understanding of falsity and evil, and the conjunction of falsity and evil is spiritual adultery, as the conjunction of truth and good is spiritual marriage.

**AE 710:28.** The Lord afterwards spoke of eunuchs because the disciples said, "*If the case of the man is so with the wife, it is not expedient to contract matrimony;*" also because with the Jewish nation, which was a nation hard in heart because they were in falsities from evil, marriages were not marriages, but understood in the spiritual sense were adulteries, and therefore that nation was called by the Lord "an adulterous generation." This was why the Lord spoke of eunuchs.

## DAY SIX: THE SPIRITUAL SENSE OF MATTHEW 19

“Eunuchs” mean those who have no desire to enter into a marriage, that is, to be conjoined, with the affection of evil, because the understanding of truth and good would thus be perverted and dissipated. Thus “eunuchs” mean both the married and the unmarried in whom the understanding of truth and good is conjoined with the affection of truth and good. Such are called “eunuchs” because they have no lasciviousness, such as those have who, from the hardness of heart in which the Jews were, take several wives, and divorce them for every cause.

**AE 710:29.** It is to be known, in the first place, that the marriage of the understanding of truth and good with the affection of truth and good has in general a threefold origin, and thus is in a threefold degree. In the highest degree is the marriage of those who are called heavenly [or celestial], in a lower degree the marriage between those who are spiritual, and in the lowest degree between those who are natural. For there are three degrees of man’s interiors, and thence there are three heavens. Those in the highest heaven are called heavenly, those in the lower are called spiritual, and those in the lowest, natural.

The marriage of the understanding of truth and good with the affection of truth and good with those who are **heavenly** is meant by “*the eunuchs who are born eunuchs from the mother’s womb*,” because these, when they are becoming regenerate, receive truths immediately in the life through love of truths, consequently they know truths from truths themselves. The regeneration of these by the Lord through love to Him is signified by “*being made eunuchs in the womb*,” thus without the lasciviousness of adultery.

**AE 710:30.** The marriage of the understanding of truth and good with the affection of truth and good of those who are **spiritual** is meant by “*the eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men*,” for such do not become regenerate “in the womb,” that is, through love, but through truths first received in the memory, and afterwards intellectually in the thought, and so finally in the life through a certain spiritual affection. These are said to be “*made eunuchs by men*” because they are reformed through the understanding from

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the memory, and “man” signifies that understanding, as also above, where “man and wife” are mentioned.

But the marriage of truth and good with the affection of truth and good with those who are **natural** is meant by “*eunuchs who make themselves eunuchs*,” for those who are natural acquire for themselves a natural lumen by means of cognitions and knowledges, and through the good of life according to these knowledges they acquire affection and thence conscience. And as these know no otherwise than that they themselves do this—for the natural man does not enjoy the intelligence of the spiritual man, nor does he enjoy the perception of the celestial man—so these are meant by those who “*make themselves eunuchs*.” But this is said from the appearance, and from the obscure faith with them. This, therefore, is the meaning of “*becoming eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of God*.” And as there are but few who apprehend these things, the Lord says, “*He that is able to receive let him receive*.”

### Comments and Questions

1. AE 710:27 shows that when Jesus said, “And whoever marries her that is sent away commits adultery,” He was warning against marrying a woman who was unfaithful in her first marriage and was therefore sent away, “on account of fornication.” Jesus is not talking about a woman who has been unjustly divorced by her husband, while remaining faithful to him. Such a woman is free to remarry, if her first husband has been unfaithful to her.
2. “Fornication” (*Latin: fornicatio*) is a translation of the Greek word *porneia*, translated “scortation” in *Conjugal Love*, with a similarly broad meaning (see page 7 for the meaning of “scortation”).
3. Jesus said that not all are able to take in these words. Can we still be saved even if we cannot take in His words?