



# *The* Wonder Springs Chronicle

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## The Wonder Springs Chronicle

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## *Overdraft Divorce*

The church I visited last Sunday, had a special service. This occasion was the thirtieth wedding anniversary of a couple in the congregation. Way back when, they were married in a civil ceremony. After all these years they wanted to again commit the rest of their lives to this union, in the presence of friends, family, and their children.

I was struck throughout the ceremony, that many of the same scriptures that I used writing about deficit love last week were also used in the service. This served to remind me that God uses the human symbolism of marriage to describe not only God's deficit love for his people, but His relationship also. I purposely refrained from using marriage symbolism last week because of the emphasis I wanted to place directly on deficit love being a gift of God's grace towards fallen humanity.

As the service proceeded, the pastor commented about this couple's long commitment

to one another, compared to the prevalence of divorce in our culture. It struck me at a deeper level just how divorce from God and all things Godly really are the signs of our times. Much of the problems we now face in all aspects of society and culture not only stem from wanting a divorce from God, we want to make it plain that we also want to completely run that account into irreconcilable arrears, or overdraft.

Now to put this in some sort of Biblical marriage context, it must be pointed out that this marriage symbolism is not used in the context of all humanity, but only in God's covenant with His chosen people, or the Kingdom of God, or the elect. The Bible clearly makes a distinction between the New Testament church, Old Testament Israel, and the rest of the inhabitants of planet earth.

So then if we are to look at the concept of the overdraft divorce from God, we must first



look at the modern church to see if the term applies.

The concept of marriage as the covenant between God and mankind and man and woman, is most strikingly portrayed in Ephesians chapter five beginning in verse 22 through the end of the chapter:

*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.*

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Ephesians 5:22-33*

Contrasted with that temporal marriage however, is the most quoted discussion of marriage and Christ in American evangelicalism which is found in the Book of Revelation, Chapter 19. Traditional eschatology teaches that these passages refer to the second or final coming of Christ, while dispensationalism teaches that the marriage supper of the Lamb takes place during the Great Tribulation here on earth, where God's judgement is poured out on a rebellious and God forsaking human population. Traditionally, this feast begins with the dispensational Rapture of the church to heaven in Revelation chapter 4, at the start of the Great Tribulation, when the angel of the Lord speaks to John, saying "Come up here."

Humanity of all genre are interested in the end of time. As a consequence, Revelation is the most often taught book of the Bible. Therefore,

if you would like to see and increase in church attendance all you need to do is to teach through the Apocalypse of John and you will have an increased following for the duration of the series.

In teaching chapters two and three, all eschatological views point to the state of the church, during the present church age, both historically and as specific time related glimpses. The interesting part of that teaching, is while it is not in any means a scientific survey, all the pastors I have heard and have heard of, always refer to their own church as the church in Philadelphia. The one church that Jesus speaks no condemnation. Most commentators however, see the modern church more inline with lukewarm Laodicea than any other typology.

What I want to point out, is the tie between the language in Ephesians and marriage written by Paul cited above, and the Revelation comment of Jesus recorded by John at the beginning of the church discourse about this same Ephesian church based in Ephesus:

*Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place unless you repent. Revelation 2:4-5*

As we have pointed out for a number of weeks, the power to change society in a positive manner, not only in nations that are based upon the Judeo-Christian heritage, but throughout the world, is proportional to the teaching of the true gospel of the church, based upon the finished work on the cross, by the propitiatory death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the sins of each and every human being. That means you and I, singularly and in community.

Today pretty much around the world, and particularly in American evangelicalism, that message is not emphasized, if even taught at all. In the light of the words of admonition to the Ephesus church quoted above, it looks like it is the church that has asked for a divorce from her true first love. That being, spelled out plainly, Jesus Christ and His free gospel of human redemption.

Paul in Romans one, beginning in verse sixteen pretty much puts our current world in context:

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes,*

for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man and birds and four footed animals and creeping things.*

*Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

*For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.*

*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. Romans 1:16-32*

From this we see that man does not just want a divorce from God, including much of the church, mankind wants to overdraw the divorce account and allow us to do whatever, whenever,

forever, and have God pick up the tap for our arrogance.

If we put this in the environmental discourse that we have been discussing for a number of weeks, a number of observations can be drawn.

1. Contrary to human consensus, we bipedal humanoids are deeply afraid of God's creation. When given the choice we flee to cities, to therein live in the illusion that we are in charge of our own destiny. Our educational systems, under the lie of egalitarianism, fosters the concept that faith in the god within ourselves, will bring about peace and harmony on earth.

2. That desire to be god unto self, promotes the ambition to create a world of life to surround our sterile existence. Since we can not create life, and we are indoctrinated to believe that procreation is just a machine like response to an evolutionary urge, we create and work to secure machines that become substitutes for real life. Therefore, from microwave ovens, to computers, to big screen TVs, and automobiles we seek machine like obedience to life like functions. Microwaves cook our food, the internet becomes our family and community, plasma flat screens show us a one dimensional view of reality, the car's GPS tells us where to go, and on it goes.

3. All this signifies a overdraft sense of need. That ultimately is the perceived need to cut all strings to God and God's creation. To do that requires increasing amounts of energy. That overdraft energy desire is not only required to produce more and more stuff, it is required to make the devices come to life and function.

4. The "inconvenient truth" is that all the pieces don't and can't add up. Al Gore's prophecies related to green house gas emissions, even if they do directly relate to global warming, have no chance of stemming the tide, because it's really not at all about carbon dioxide emissions, but the total depravity of humanity and its desire for all of us to become god of our own sick delusions.

The overriding problem with dispensationalism is not that Jesus Christ could return at any moment for His church. Orthodox Christianity of all eschatologies have taught a believe that the return of Jesus Christ is eminent and could happen at any

time. The problem with dispensationalism is that, they believe they can hasten that event through evangelism and they are continually getting ready to leave in some fashion, being so heavenly minded they are of no earthly good.

Christianity in general and American evangelicalism in particular do not understand the difference between imperative and the indicative sense in which most of the Bible was written. In that logic the indicative states basically the truth of absolutes, the imperative is the application to change one's behavior towards some objective.

In the light of this revelation, the church strives to obtain the indicative qualities of God through teaching of Bible indicative statements as imperative applications, and pretty much ignores imperatives as a philosophy of individual choice.

However, the true gospel is not "what would Jesus do?" but "what Jesus did!" By accepting what Jesus did as the indicative for the life of the individual, like you and me, is the power by which a whole host of God centered imperatives can be accomplished. This is true not only in the light of Christian ministry, but in the broader sense of worldly vocation and advocacy. This gospel of personal justification before God is the power by which deficit love can be understood and even in the crudest sense lived in personal and community life.

Our fondest desire is to be powerful. The subtle difference is for us to try to be God through our own efforts, or to emulate the true God through His efforts, already accomplished in time and reality for this age, that may end at any moment. In the language of this week's article it is the difference between our desire for an overdraft divorce and a eternal covenant.

The overdraft divorce from God seeks to overcome absolute reality by utilization of material stuff and limitless empowerment energy. This, regardless of all the best imperative statements by throngs of well meaning men and women, will literally lead to the collapse of the civilization they so desire to establish or maintain.

In the indicative sense, God has created the world and it's resources as a good thing. However, in our sin fallen age, both material resources

and energy are limited, along with our capacity to wisely utilize them within the concept of the God given vocation of mankind as the world's gardener. The proper word is stewardship. In the application of the stewardship imperative, function and form must be based upon the indicative reality of God and His creation. That is the true absolute of natural law within the world in which we live. To think or to attempt otherwise is folly, that will in due course lead to failure, through our overdraft divorced attempts at personal sainthood and pietistic perfection.