

Clough Deuteronomy Session 52

Deuteronomy 24:1-7 - The Rights of Marriage, Basic Assets, and Personal Freedom

Fellowship Chapel; 26 April 2011

We'll move on in chapter 24 because we have just two more sessions and then we're going to kind of call it quits for the summer. Hopefully I can get into chapter 25 because that would give us almost all of that "loving Yahweh with all your soul." So I hope that we can get into 25. And then in the fall, it'll be short in the sense that we can finish up that last section. On the handout we're looking, chapter 23:19-24:7, and this seems to be this whole section seems to be an exposition of the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt steal."

And what we've seen is that, again on your outline, we're expositing the implications of the eighth commandment, and what we've noticed as we've gone through this whole section of Deuteronomy is that the same statutes and judgment and case law occurs in different sections. And you wonder why is it so scattered like that. And I'm coming to the conclusion that the reason is that those statutes and judgments as Moses is expounding them, he's telling us that those are supported by different commandments out of the Ten. So you could have a statute that's supported by the seventh commandment and also simultaneously supported by the eighth. So when Moses goes to talk about that statute and that judgment or that case law, he does it in these groups.

Again, if you look at the handout, the concept of ownership in this section, the concept of ownership is enlarged beyond what one normally thinks of. And we've seen that. And this is why that section is in Deuteronomy and it has so much detail to it, because if you just know the eighth commandment you might have a very narrow idea of what theft means. But suddenly when you get into these case laws and you begin to see the statutes and the judgment, suddenly you realize, wait a minute, theft is respect of ownership and ownership is a lot more comprehensive than I ever thought about.

And so I have you three illustrations that we've gone through so far, the right of a theocratic redeemed citizen to own an existence free from debt bondage, and for a redeemed theocratic citizen to be put back into debt bondage is in some sense a theft of his redemption. And remember, all this physical, sociological, political structure is to teach theology, the theology of the coming Kingdom, and what redeemed life looks like.

Number two, the right of a promisee, this is one that really expands our idea of ownership, the right of a promisee to "own" an expectation of performance by the promisor. And that's that business if you make an oath to God you owe God something. Well, if you owe Him something, then in one sense you've created a property right. And this is kind of an interesting idea of contractual promises that I don't think our legal theory in our culture even thinks about this aspect, that when you promise something you've created a debt on your side to someone else who now owns the right to see that that is performed. And this again is a large view of what God means when He says, "Thou shalt not steal."

The third one that we saw last time, the derivative nature of ownership under God," in other words, our ownership is genuine ownership but it's the ownership of a creature living in God's world that the world of which is owned by God, not by the creature. And so that makes all private ownership derivative. Now what is important about this concept, as we said last time, and it's very modern, it's very contemporary, and that is that man has sensed that there's got to be a higher ownership than just individuals, because there's got to be a coordination. So what happens is that man, in his fallenness, thinks of the State as the final and ultimate owner. And we have, then, in Daniel 2 God says to Nebuchadnezzar, I've given you the land, the animals and everything. And so it seems that in that sense we have ownership, the absolute ownership that really is true, only of God, comes somehow to be sucked into the idea of the State, with the civil powers. And that's why tyranny is being built on the idea that a tyrannical government, ultimately, is the absolute owner of everything. That's why they can take your property.

And so we're dealing here with legal ideas, ideas of justice, because you remember we started this whole series in response to some college students asking about social justice that they were getting in the classroom. Well, as you can begin to see, we worked through these statutes and judgment, social justice is a lot more sophisticated and a lot more detailed and a lot deeper than the average discussion that's going on out there.

And again, following the outline here, And so "stealing" is a sin, remember the Law, Paul says, was given that we might see our sin, and stealing is a sin that also is more pervasive]than one normally thinks of. And so it enlarges our concept of the sin of theft, and it makes us more sensitive to ownership issues.

Now we're going to be in Deuteronomy 24 tonight but if you'll turn to Psalm 15, I was looking at some devotional literature this week and I noticed the reading was in Psalm 15 and here's an example of a psalm that is praising God, and if you didn't know Deuteronomy you wouldn't have a clue what this psalm is about. So now with the background that you all have from our classes in Deuteronomy, watch what happens in Psalm 15.

Psalm 15 starts out, "LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?" And the question is, it's an ethical issue, God is a God of justice. So who is qualified to live with You. And now the rest of the psalm answers that. Here's the kind of creature that is qualified to live in Your presence. [2] "He who walks uprightly, and works in righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; [3] He who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor. Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend: [4] In whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honors those who fear the LORD;" and then watch this, "He who swears to his own hurt and does not change," the Hebrew structure there is "He who makes an oath, that commits himself and sticks with it," it's kind of a bad translation in the New King James that I have, but that's that oath passage that we just covered a week or two ago, and that's a sign of righteousness. In other words he swears, even to his hurt, because God did too, and that means that he is going to perform that which he swears.

Then it says that's righteousness. [5] "He who does not put out his money at usury," now you say gee, is that prohibiting bank loans? No, that's just repeating the Deuteronomic law, that's just saying to the charitable, to the people who need money, that are in a jam, "He who does not put out his money at usury, nor does he take a bribe against the innocent." And we've seen that one, remember when we were dealing with the judicial offices, we said that they can't take bribes, that's part of justice. "He who does these things shall never be moved." So there is a very quick, just a verse and a half in a psalm that clearly shows you that the psalmist had very well known the Deuteronomic Law code. And he was articulating a lifestyle of holiness that involved details like money, not just ethical things. Anyway, I thought that was kind of an interesting point in this praise psalm.

We're going to go back to Deuteronomy 24 and we're on the last section of this; we're going to finish this section tonight, this is again all on basic rights, but mostly connected with the concept of ownership. Now in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 clearly it's marriage and divorce that's involved here, but isn't it interesting, this isn't the only place in the Deuteronomic Law code that marriage and divorce is discussed, but why does it occur under theft? Because apparently these four verses, in Moses' mind have to do with the fact that within the marriage institution there is ownership, there are, as it were, property rights; except it's hard to call it property, but there are rights and those rights can be infringed upon and stolen.

Now I have on the slide the thing that we've gone through time and time again and that is the structure of society and how here on the godly side you have heart allegiance, you have integrity of communication, and we're right here, labor and property that is respected and productive, but this concept of labor and property now kind of mixes up into the idea of marriage and family as this passage is showing us. So I want to look at the institution of marriage and we're going to look at its structure biblically. In your handout I've listed six different characteristics of the institution of marriage. And then I want to show you what's going on today culturally; it's very serious because it cuts into the structure of how God has designed marriage.

Marriage is a divine institution; there's a discussion about how many divine institutions, four or five, but for our purposes the first divine institution, the structure is responsibility. God had given volition to man and it's a responsibility to due, a responsibility to do something in God's universe. And we're held accountable, and economically it's priced, and we don't know the free market will try to price our good works or bad works, socialist government will say no, we don't trust the free market to price something, the elite will price it, but the answer the Bible gives is God is going to ultimately price it, the Bema Seat and then the Great White Throne, that's when the price of our works and our production actually are set truly, so the price meets the value.

But there are six different things here; divine institution #2 is marriage; divine institution #3 is family, and divine institution #4 is the civil state. Those are all divine institutions, and by that we mean that God has designed those, those are not things generated by man. They are structurally related to how we are built psychologically, anatomically, physically, in all ways. And they are common to the human

race. The fourth divine institution is the only one of the four that's post-fall. That should tell you something about the limitations of the fourth divine institution.

Now let's look at the six things; First, it is a creation design for creatures made in God's image; lower life-forms usually have sexual distinction for reproductive purpose, but mankind has sexual distinction for glorification purpose. That's why we're not just animals here, animals reproduce, animals have sex, people have sex but there's a higher level of the sexual distinction in the divine institution and it has to do with glorifying God. That's the difference between men and animals.

Number 2, both male and female humans share God's image. Now yes, men are given a role, women are given a role, but if you look carefully at Genesis 1:27, both the man and the woman are part of the image of God, notice what it says, in the image of God He created him," Adam, but then, "male and female He created them" plural, because in Adam you have Adam and Eve. God reveals Himself as a Father but He also as a "helper" and "nourisher" etzer, which is the word used for the woman in her role as helper is used of God in the Old Testament And one of the names here is "Eleazer," and that means God is my helper. So clearly etzer-ing isn't some peripheral duty, it's something that is revelatory of what God does. And this is why in Matthew 23:37, at the culmination, just before He was to be arrested and crucified, look what Jesus says: "How often I wanted to gather your children together," He's talking about Jerusalem, "as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings." That is a feminine view of life and it's coming from the mouth of the Lord. So it shows you that God has what He has divided, so to speak, He divided us into a maleness and a femaleness, but both the maleness and the femaleness are revelatory of who God is.

3. Marriage acts as a divine metaphor for the relationship between Yahweh and Israel, you see that over and over again in the Old Testament, "and between Jesus Christ and the resurrected Church" because the bride isn't married until after the resurrection, so we make that little distinction.

4. And this is important, another aspect, people don't think about it at all because today we just think individually. Marriage generates family which subsumes each generation under the previous one and renders redemption possible, here's what we mean by that. When God created angels He created them as individuals; when the angels that fell, fell, and the angels that did not fall remained and chose loyalty to God, the Creator, there's no redemption. Either they can't be redeemed or God has so designed them so they won't be redeemed, but there's not a shred of evidence of any redemption of fallen angels, and they're said to be individuals.

Now it's striking that in Romans 5 we're introduced to the federal headship of Adam, and that means, and people say... we hear the downside, the complaining side about that, oh gee, you know, Adam and Eve fell and now we are all, so to speak damned, we're all cursed, we're all suffering death and sorrow, gee, that's unfair. But if you continue to read Romans 5:12 it's precisely the federal headship of Adam that renders us redeemable, because now the second Adam, Christ, can redeem us. It's that

headship that keeps us redeemable. So this is not just a peripheral little casual little theology on the side here. And the idea is angels don't reproduce, humans do. There's a lineage in time and space history, so that we are the sons and daughters of our parents who are the sons and daughters of their parents, all the way back to Adam and Eve. And so when we generate children, and then they will generate children, there's a continuity of descent from Adam and Eve. And that's important structurally.

5. Therefore, marriage is rooted, now this is key because of what's coming up, marriage is rooted in the physical, psychological, and spiritual nature of man;" what I am trying to say in point five is that marriage, as the Bible looks at it, is related to how you and I are designed; it's related to how women are designed and how men are designed. It is not an institution added on because somebody in society thought gee, that's a great idea. No, it's there from the start because of the way we are made and it's not just physically, it is also psychologically. It is also spiritually.

6. Therefore, marriage encompasses both believer and unbeliever-it is not only for believers. So that's why we say again, it's a divine institution for all.

Now the problem comes, so now we want to look at what unbelief does, and we have to think back to Romans 1 and those other passages. What, fundamentally, is unbelief? It's defiance of known revelation. Don't ever let yourself be seduced by someone who tries to get you to agree that they really don't believe in God. Once you are sucker-punched and you think that here's a guy that doesn't believe in God, in his heart of hearts, you've lost the case. Every person knows deep down that God exists. The reason we say that is not only because of Romans 1, it's because of Revelation 20 and 21. If that were not true God could not hold people accountable eternally. So ALL men at bottom know God exists. And if the Holy Spirit grants you opportunity you can see that. One of the Christian professors at the University of Texas wrote a book, Things We Can't Not Know, and he has a wonderful illustration of this. He says, "imagine yourself sitting in a hot bathtub and in the tub there are twenty corks. Now try, with ten fingers, to hold all twenty corks under the water. Can you do that? No, because the corks keep popping up and you have to grab this one and grab that one, you can't be in the tub and suppress all twenty corks at the same time. And Dr. Budziszewski's point is that no matter how hard someone tries to disbelieve, their knowledge of God pops up. Who do they curse by when they're mad? Who do they blame for a disaster? If God doesn't exist what are they doing that for? It's because the knowledge, like that cork, pops up and if you're around people like this you want to be sensitive to that because if you sit back and be quiet and just think and watch, you'll see the corks pop up. And it's almost embarrassing to the atheist and they're a bunch of others, we could go into the philosophy of how you know and ethical basis and moral authority and so forth.

But paganism, as the product of unregenerate human nature, despises all revelation of God, the problem here isn't man needing an education; education is good, don't get me wrong, it's part of dominion, but man's fundamental problem is not ignorance. Man's fundamental problem is

ethical rebellion, sin. That's the primary problem and that affects everything else. And you've heard me say this before, I'll say it again, if we were there with a video cassette at the fall of man, within minutes Adam and Eve are trying to hide from God. Question: how is it possible to hide from an omnipresent deity. The very fact that Adam and Eve are trying to hide tells you that sin and their known guilt has affected their theology. They actually think they can hide from God. They've convinced themselves that God really isn't omnipresent, and if we can hide behind the bushes He won't see us. See, that's theology being perverted instantly by sin. We all do versions of that every time we get out of fellowship. So, we can't be naïve, the intellect does precede the heart choice; the heart choice drives the intellect.

So now we have the despising of the revelation of God and part of the revelation of God is the maleness and femaleness, and the institution of marriage. That is part of common revelation, or general revelation. So obviously we have to think, of course that's going to come under attack because it's very existence is one of those courts, it keeps reminding people of their design. So let's see what happens.

The institution of marriage that "reminds" mankind of their Creator and Judge. Polygamy, homosexuality, and religious prostitution were common violations of God's design for marriage. All through the ancient world, this isn't news, this was just common stuff, this is the things of life. And all three of those are perversions of DI#2.

The contemporary scene:

(1) Homosexual "marriage" violates the design," and here's why, "because it denies the psychological physical unity of sexual identity (i.e. homosexuality expresses the psychological "male"/"female" nature," you see that in 1 Corinthians 6 where Paul uses, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, two nouns, one referring to the masculine homosexual and the other one the feminine homosexual, homosexuals have a maleness and a femaleness in their relationship; everybody knows this, this is what male homosexuals do and that's what female homosexuals do, they act as though there's a male sort of type and female type, one is dominant and the other is passive, and this characterizes this. Now where does this come from? It's the cork popping up, the fact they can't deny that this sort of a relationship somehow has a maleness to it and a femaleness to it, and it's not coming from physically because they're physically violating the design, but they can't violate the psychological side of it. So in effect a homosexual is a split existence, he's sort of schizophrenic, on one hand he or she is engaging in a relationship as a male or female, affirming psychologically, yeah, the design is there, but then they're denying it in their physical behavior. So there's a dysfunction going on and it leads to the next problem. Once we've screwed up the male and female distinction in marriage, now the next price we pay is the next divine institution dependent on that, which is the family.

Now watch what's happening, family diversity, that's one of the new buzzwords, proponents now are trying to convince us that it is socially beneficial to redefine "family" using the terminology "intentional family," this is one of the new buzz words going on, "intentional family," I'll explain what that is in a moment. What they're talking about is that adults are free to intend to form a family in any manner of their

choosing. One of them is an organization, this is the SMBC, Single Mothers By Choice. SMBC ranks include women who became unexpectedly pregnant and, deciding against adoption, abortion, or marriage, choose to raise their babies alone, we've heard that before; women who adopt alone; those, and this is interesting, those who intentionally stop using birth control in order to become 'accidentally' pregnant in a causal relationship; but mostly (and getting most of the headlines) women who choose their baby's absent father from a sperm bank. Chapters of SMBC around the country have grown from 12 to 24 in just the last three years. Of late the movement has adopted a new, edgier, and decidedly American moniker: the 'choice mom.'

So again, instead of being shocked about this we just have to see that this is the unraveling of a structure and it's just going to keep unraveling and get weirder and weirder because it has to. It is an expression of a hatred. Now if you'll look at the bibliography, the note there, you'll notice that again this is a research result from Institute for American Values. This is the same group, you can go on the internet and download this stuff yourself, that's the outfit that you can go on the internet and get the report, the cost to American taxpayers of divorce and unwed childbirth, a study they spent years doing and they've got documentation for every state. And I've been encouraging my fellow men in the ministry and pastors, let's grab hold of this information and use it because we're showing people the economic cost of pagan lifestyle. Which is cheaper, the biblical lifestyle or the pagan lifestyle?

And so she goes on, and in the publication, this is a newsletter that I got, listen to this, in her 2006 book, *Single by Chance, Mothers by Choice, How Women are Choosing Parenthood without Marriage and Creating the New American Family*, Rosanna Hertz shares the story of Lily, "a committed Christian from the Midwest who is a teacher in Boston, realized her dream was to have a baby alone through artificial insemination. Hertz writes, bubbly and outgoing, she never lost her Midwestern friendliness and directness, but even she hesitated before she approached the pastor of her church with her crazy question, should she become a mom on her own. She fully expected her pastor to reprimand her for defying church traditions but she was stunned by his reaction. I walked out of there and my eyes were just wide, I thought oh, no, he didn't just shut down this road I'm on, he said it's completely natural that you want to be a mother, of course you want to be a mother, and of course it would be more perfect if you had a husband but you would be a great mom. And this church community loves you and I know they will support you in this. Lily's pastor then recommended she bring her question to the church elders. As I went to talk to them about it, when I was more sure I was going to do it, and I was thinking the same thing, they're not going to approve of this, I was crying as I was talking about it because it was bittersweet, I was really torn. I wanted to be a mom but I didn't want to do it this way," you know, see, the cork popping up. "...and I finished telling them what I was thinking about and there was silence. And then the woman, who hired me ten years earlier, she reached over and grabbed my arm and said, 'well bless your heart, that is so brave.' And then there was silence and she said, 'I'm getting goose bumps thinking we might get to support you in this.' She checked with the principal with the middle school where she taught. The principle asked Lily to think about how she would tell her students. This gave her pause, she decided if she went forward with the

plan and she became pregnant she would tell the students that she's been inseminated in a doctor's office. She especially wanted to convey to the students that this was no sexual misconduct on her part. She had not made a mistake, but instead has chosen that sex was root to motherhood. In today's topsy-turvy," this is the author now, "In today's topsy-turvy world of motherhood the problem your pastor and church leaders and the boss might have with your decisions seems to be intentionally to conceive a fatherless child is not the impact such a decision will have on the child but rather you choose the word dirty sex or clean insemination." See, we're not even thinking about the children involved in all of this, they're just casual products to make us feel good.

So this is where things are going. So we move to the next slide, "Browse the newspapers of the world and you can read reports of the proud new single father by choice" so now we have "(SFBC). . . .In California," you know it would be in California, of course, "In California a destination of choice for would-be fathers from around the world," notice, people come from other countries, they can't do it in other countries, they can come to California and do it because anything goes in California. "In California a destination of choice for would-be fathers from around the world anything goes. A man can purchase his eggs, pick his surrogate, and head home with his three babies. . . .In the UK Ian Mucklejohn became the father of triplets conceived with an egg donor and a separate 'gestational' surrogate mother, both living in the US. . . .[The] only remaining and sometimes significant legal struggle is to convince the local authorities to provide the children citizenship and birth certificates with a blank in the space for 'mother.'"

So this is where we go as we start to unravel, and this is why, when we come back to Deuteronomy it's so important that we understand and we don't try to defend marriage as just some sort of social consensus. That's not why we're for it; we are for it because of God's design and His revelatory information that He has told us about it. And we refuse... we refuse to discuss this question in any other framework. So we reject the idea that we're discussing a social issue to be decided by society, it is not a social issue to be decided by society, it is an issue to be decided by the information given to us by our Creator.

Now the author goes on and this is the last slide I wanted to show from this publication, "So long as the absence of a mother (or a father) is intentional, such a family structure is seen as being fine for children. And the only reason this change has occurred is because-increasingly in the eyes of society's leaders-an adult's right to children outweighs children's hardwired need for their mother and father." Look at the last clause, when she's talking about the child's hardwired she means his design. An adult right to do all this stuff, well, I want a child and I don't want a husband, I don't want a wife, I want to do it myself. "an adult's right to children outweighs children's hardwired need for their mother and father." You see how screwed up this is? You see how selfish this is? We don't care about the children, they're just an egg.

So now we come to Deuteronomy 24 and we get into this passage where Moses is talking about an instance of divorce. Now there presumably were other cases of divorce, but at least in this case we have one where he's

illustrating the principle but even here he is protecting marriage by limiting this sort of activity. "When a man takes a wife and marries here, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, [2] when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife, [3] if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, [4] then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you will not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance."

So here we have a case where he's giving this and I want to show you why this is included under commandment eight. If you look at the first verse, the word "take" is the Hebrew word to take possession of, and this would be taking possession of a piece of property, it's the same verb as taking a wife. Now this is not trying to be demeaning to women here, it's just the way that the institution is looked at through Mosaic eyes under God. A man takes a wife. And then in verse 4, where it says "her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife" and so on, "for that is an abomination..." that former husband there is the word baal, which is the lord and possessor. So at the beginning, and verse 4 of this passage we have the concept of ownership. And I think that's probably why this particular instance is categorized under commandment number eight here.

So the view of the Bible is that man takes and is lord of the woman. So this section on marriage occurs under the eighth commandment as well as other passages on marriage that occurred under the seventh commandment. This passage limits ownership, just as verse 24-25 did. Remember, the idea that you can't do anything you want to do with ownership because it's derivative of God's absolute ownership. So this is restricted.

What is it that the man finds the uncleanness? Unfortunately the text doesn't tell us what it is so we have to do a word study to find out. It's not, apparently, an adultery that was discovered because we already know that's a capital offense. So it probably is what is referred to in Numbers 5, which we don't have time to go to but you could note that, in Numbers 5 there's the issue there of whether a person has conceived or not, there's a test there. It could also be used of lesbianism and homosexuality which occurred in the ancient world. So there was something going on here that is considered to be unclean; it is not just a trivial argument that's going on here, it's something more profound than that.

And verse 2, "becomes another man's wife," notice again the divorce in verse 1, oh by the way, notice it says, "write a certificate of divorce," that shows you that the marriage in the Old Testament was not common law. Marriage in the Old Testament was a formal contractual marriage. And I made that point a couple lessons back. So it's not... people have this idea that people just went and shacked up in the Bible; they don't read the Bible very carefully because here's a case, they're writing a certificate of divorce. That's a contract, there's something being written here, there's a record of this. So clearly there's record keeping going

on. "...and becomes another man's wife," so the divorce here allows her to go get married again. Now the problem comes, this guy writes her a letter of divorce, or he dies, and he dies, you'd think well, isn't that the end of the second marriage. But in verse 4, "the former husband ... must not take her back ... after she has been defiled."

Now the idea of her being defiled casts aspersion on the whole issue of divorce because what's going on here is that even though she was married the second time, that second marriage is considered from the first marriage as a defilement. It's not a complimentary word, in other words. So embedded in the text, not only is there a restriction on ownership rights, the man who was her first husband has lost his claim and he cannot reclaim her. So in this case, once he divorces her that's it. He can't... and she's remarried, he can't bring her back; the ownership has terminated at that point.

There's also another reason given for this and that is that it prevented serial polygamy and using this woman to pass around from man to man. It prevents her from being sort of a sexual toy here, with these guys. But the main Bible passage for a divorce is Malachi 2:13-16, where God says I hate divorce. Now why does God hate divorce? Because of the design of marriage, it gets back to the fundamental idea behind marriage. God hates divorce because a divorce is breaking down the revelatory power and design of that marriage.

Now, Moses, interestingly, and I don't think we have time tonight to do this, but I list you the verses there, Exodus 2, Exodus 4, Exodus 18 and Numbers 12, let me just describe what's going on there. Moses was a divorced man, and he remarried, and it's interesting in his life because apparently after he left Egypt, the first time, when he was 40, he was maintaining flocks, and that's how he met Zipporah, who was the daughter of the priest of Midian. So the priest of Midian, apparently he's maybe a matchmaker or something, he has all daughters, no boys apparently, so he decides hmm, there's a guy here, let's have him over for supper, and so one thing leads to the next and so Moses gets interested in Zipporah, and so he marries her. But apparently he didn't consult the Lord too well when he made that choice because in Exodus 4 God is about to kill Moses because Moses did not circumcise his son like God said. And we quickly understand from the text why he didn't circumcise because his was saying I'm not going to do it.

And so here's this guy, Moses, who is locked into this contractual arrangement with God, God tells him to circumcise his son, I mean, after all, Abraham did it, all the Jews are doing it, and here he marries this pagan woman, she's a pagan woman, not a Jewish woman, and she says no this is wrong, I'm not going to do that to our boy. And so he says you will do it, finally. And she throws the rock down that she was using, a sharp stone, and she says you're a bloody husband to me. And that's the last time you see Moses in a relationship with Zipporah, because by Exodus 18 all of a sudden now Jethro comes into the picture again, and he brings Zipporah. And so there's a big meeting and there's not one word about Zipporah. Moses is all nice and he accepts the advice of Jethro, his father-in-law, but there's absolutely not a peep in the text about Zipporah. So that's where we're left in Exodus 4.

Now comes Exodus 18; now in Exodus 18 Moses is married to an Ethiopian, a black lady. So all of a sudden now Miriam and his brother Aaron, they get in a hassle over the fact that he married this black lady, this Ethiopian lady, and they're fussing about that. So God has a sense of humor and so he calls Miriam and Aaron up there, and He says you're worried about the black lady? Well, I'm going to give you leprosy and you're going to be white, and so he gives them discipline for messing around with telling Moses what to do. So there's a whole intriguing story here about Moses himself involved in a divorce situation. So we know, you know, fallen world, and this sort of thing happens; it's not God's intent.

So our point there is marriage involves rights of ownership like vows and derivative ownership. See, a marriage ceremony is a vow, and we've already seen a vow obligates, it creates a property right. So it's involved with that. Marriage involves rights of ownership like vows and derivative ownership of property. Messing with it is a form of theft.

Now in verse 5 we have a passage, we've seen this before, exactly the same kind of thing over in another section, in Deuteronomy 20, if you remember, and in Deuteronomy 20 we were talking about "Thou shalt not kill," lethal power of the State, and it was full of these protocols that before you execute somebody you want to be sure of the rules of evidence, if you go into war here's how you do just war, here's how you do holy war and all of that. But involved in that was where do you get your soldiers from. And remember, they didn't have a draft, it was voluntary and there was an exception. If a man had married a woman he was free from military service for a year to get his marriage grounded. And there's wisdom in that and this is why there's suicides and divorces like crazy in the U. S. military right now, you can't have a marriage and be deployed to Afghanistan every other year; it doesn't work; it doesn't work in Iraq, and the military has been under tremendous stress and they keep getting obligated to do this mission, do this mission, do this mission, in the military we call that mission creep because it keeps enlarging. And they overtax the soldiers, and worst of all they are destroying men's families by doing this sort of activity.

Well, the Bible doesn't have that, so here's another verse, here's the same thing, now not under military policy in chapter 20, but lo and behold it recurs in this passage. So this if this passage is talking about theft then we have to look at what's going on here. Verse 5, "When a man has taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war or be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, and bring happiness to his wife whom he has taken." Now there's the verb "taken," there's the ownership issue coming up. And so the point is that he has a family he has a marriage, it's got to be solid, it's taking care of his property which in this case is his wife. And what that is and what that implies is that, as I point out in the handout, though exercise of lethal force in just war was important it was not as important as marriage and family since the latter generate positive culture whereas the former merely restrains evil. In the grand scope of things, sound solid marriages and family is what a civilization survives on and progresses. It doesn't survive because it's army was victorious, that just lays the basis, that keeps away the bad guys, but if you don't have any positive culture then the civilization falls apart. So here in verse 5 we have again care for

property, in this case the marriage and the family, positive culture where as the State war just restrains evil.

Now we come, we're coming down to our last two verses in this section, now in verse 6, "No man shall take the lower or the upper millstone in pledge, for he takes one's living in pledge." Now let's think about what's going on here. First of all, "millstone." What was the millstone all about, the upper and lower millstone? That was how a family ground bread, it was the essential tool of making meals, of preparing foods, it's like taking somebody's oven away. So the millstone, what's the millstone all about? The millstone is equipment essential for that families survival.

The second thing, well, why would you be wanting to take it in the pledge? Because it was acting as collateral on a loan. So the issue here is it's all right to demand collateral for a loan, we'll see later there's even rules about what kind of collateral and how you can take it, and you can take some pretty important stuff for collateral. But what you can't take as collateral for a loan is something that is necessary to the family's life support. See again, it's the protection of the basic rights of survival of the theocratic redeemed citizen. See how God's kingdom respects that. And He doesn't allow business deals or none, and that's why on the outline I have "collateral was legitimate," it was all right as for collateral and a loan, this is obviously some sort of business loan, not a charitable loan, "but the asses used for collateral was limited. Intruding into the basic life-support assets by a banker or loaner is a form of 'theft'" in God's eyes. So once again we encounter the idea of ownership is bigger, wider, more expansive than what we think.

Deuteronomy 24:7, says, "If a man is found kidnapping any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and mistreats him or sells him, then that kidnapper shall die; and you shall put away the evil from among you." Now what is going on here. Well, verse 7 says, "If a man is found kidnapping," my translation correctly has translated that as though he was found out in the very act, I don't know how some of you translations have it, but this says, "If a man is found kidnapping," in other words, this is going on, it's a present action, and that's expressed in the original language as a Hebrew participle, and the idea there is that this was always going on with this guy, this is a business, this is slavery, this is an enslavement, gathering of property, now here's property, see, a slave is considered to be property. So the idea here is they're capturing Jews, they're not selling them back to Israel, you couldn't do that in Israel so they obviously were selling the slaves to Gentiles. So this is a little business that was illegal, and it was interesting how it's described, it says, "found kidnapping any... of the children... mistreats him or sell shim, then the kidnapper shall die; and you shall put away the evil from among you."

Now the point there is that mistreating or selling, there's three things going on, stealing, which is illegitimate ownership, and then the selling, you profit on it. So it's confiscation of property you have no title to in the first place, and secondly you're trying to operate as a business, you're not selling it just for the kicks, you're selling it as part of business. And it was a capital crime. And a parallel verse that I quote you on the handout is Exodus 21:16, "He who kidnaps a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, shall surely be put to death." Now that

little phrase, "or found in his hand" means any of the business associates that were involved in the business are equally punishable by capital punishment. So not only the guy that steals or the guy that's selling or the guy that's holding the slave, all of these guys can be held for capital punishment.

Now if you just think about this command, how would this have changed history. And let's think about what God, why He hates slavery. Were and what was the status of His people prior to the Exodus? They were slaves. And when the Exodus happened, remember the incident where the Egyptians were so glad to get rid of these people they took their jewelry and just gave it to them. Well, the jewelry wasn't tin, the jewelry was gold and silver, and when Israel walked out of Egypt they carried, apparently, enormous amounts of gold and silver. Do you know what happened there? The Jews were getting paid for all their work on the pyramids for 400 years. That was their back wages, and that money, that gold and that silver was how Israel initialized her economy. Where did they get their wealth from to get the businesses started? They got it from their wages as slaves for probably the pyramids or whatever other building projects the Jewish slaves were involved in.

Now this involves something that has gone on down through history, and it's a sad plight on the Christian church that the church engaged in unjustified slavery. How can slavery be justified in the light of this passage? It can't be. These passages are very clear. Now there's a slavery in the Bible, people say oh well, there's slavery in the Bible. It's not this kind, the slavery in the Bible, now that we see ownership and the eighth commandment, the slavery in the Bible is debt slavery and it was limited and controlled. And you see cases where even in the debt slavery you couldn't charge interest, the person could just pay back things but he didn't have to pay an interest on what he had borrowed in order to get out of a jam. And then in the sixth year that went away. And then if they had to compromise their property, their family inheritance, that came back to them in the fiftieth year. So the debt slavery is not slavery as it has been known in the world.

And this is a little dirty secret; a Christian friend of ours, Carol and I supported many years ago in Campus Crusade and this gal's mother is in the State Department and she went on to get her job with the United States State Department and while she was working her way up to get her job in the government she worked for a government contractor. And the fascinating thing was that while she was working as a government contractor for the State Department, the job of that contractor was to write the legislation against human trafficking, so this gal that we knew who was a Christian, who also, by the way, had several other Christians under the Bush administration, actually set up the legislation that is now monitoring the nations of the world and every 365 days every nation on earth is rated for it's trafficking.

And the trafficking is still going on. And you would be surprised in which nations it's going on, and you would also be surprised and shocked that when you have the Super Bowl and whatever it is in January, that probably as close to as many as 10,000 girls are recruited as basically sex slaves, to be used by guys in the parties with the Super Bowl. And the surprise to see 10,000 of them, probably they said each girl probably

services six or seven customers a night. That gives you an idea what goes on in the Super Bowl. And this is in our country. Now this is going on in our country. Jeek tells me though, in Iran, the parents selling their daughters to the bordellos along the Persian Sea, because they need cash, and this has always gone on in history, sell your girls and make them earn money.

So the brute nature of human society in a fallen world exists, and when you see a passage like verse 7, understand that this is God reaching down into history and saying this is sin and I want it stopped and this is My law, and we just thumb our nose at it and go about our business. So here we see the impact of the Mosaic legislation. And it was passages like this that led in England to the Christians, who sat up, Wilberforce and others, who for years pleaded with the English Parliament to do away with slavery, it's immoral on the basis of the Word of God. We're not talking about whether you like it, whether you don't, whether you profit from it or you don't profit from it, what says the Word of God. But when we look now in this section we see the rationale behind the Word, this is not arbitrary, it's connected with who we are as human beings created in God's image. Of those 10,000 girls in Florida during January, they're all made in God's image, they're somebody's daughters, they're somebody's baby that's grown up to be a teenager, and Christ has died for them, and these people are valuable. And so God reaches down and He says you can't own a person, I own the person, you are ineligible to own anybody.

This is the end verse, this is the last section now that we've covered on this thing. Next time we'll start in with verse 8, the next cluster seems to have to do more with the ninth commandment.

Father, we thank You....

If anybody has any questions on that we'll try to address it. [question asked, can't hear] Well, it's clear in the book of Revelation that the church is the Bride of Christ but the marriage feast isn't until the end of the history. I do that because I wanted to distinguish the relationship between Christ and the church and distinguish between that relationship and the relationship in the Old Testament between Jehovah and Israel, that it's ongoing marriage, and that's because of the covenant structure. [more said] Yeah, you could say that, you could say the church is engaged, as we would say. But this basically, I think has been a challenge for me to understand how God looks at ownership, it's a lot more sophisticated than I ever thought and I think each one of these commandments, when you start looking at the details and how God works them out, they really a lot more, it's like little tentacles that work all through life, so when He gives us a complete little summary of ten, we have to watch out that we don't truncate our little understanding of what each little commandment means; they have implications, vast implications.

[question asked] The thing you want to also remember as you move from the Old Testament to the New Testament in the epistles, for the Gospels are still under Israel, when you're dealing with the epistles and you're dealing with the community of believers, when you're dealing with the Old Testament you're dealing with a mixed multitude, you're dealing with the fact you have Law that is applying to both the believer and unbeliever, and probably, frankly speaking, in the Old Testament the vast majority was

probably unbelievers I never forget, the sobering thing when I was in seminary and we were discussing the law code of Moses versus the Ancient Near Eastern neighbors of Israel, and I remember the professor telling us that, he says if we were to take a time machine back to Israel we probably wouldn't recognize it, and that's because we look back at Old Testament Israel through the eyes of the prophets, and so we're seeing what was the ideal picture, because God had spoken, and the prophets were faithfully telling what you should do, what should not happen, but if we were actually there we'd be appalled at the corruption, sin and so on, because as you dig down into some of the layers, and I've brought it in here before, the little picture of Baal, or the cow that was used by Aaron at the base of Sinai, I mean, these little statutes of these gods are found in the Jewish levels. So it's clear that they were not all nice kosher people like we would love to see. The prophets had to battle for centuries with this issue. The Law was too difficult unless you were a saved individual and you had the Lord on your side.

[question asked] It's very difficult, the question is the strategy of working with self-proclaimed atheists, that probably could pass a lie detector test that he doesn't believe. The problem is that he has deceived himself and self-deception is extremely powerful. Dr. Bahnsen who did his PhD, Dr. Bahnsen, Presuppositional Apologetics has probably the clearest notion of this problem of self-deception, and he tells a story of Mrs. Jones, and this was part of his doctrinal dissertation, it stuck with me because it makes it clear to me what self-deception looks like, if you want to look at it, and that is the Mrs. Jones has a son who is a kleptomaniac, and the school authorities are constantly disciplining her son for stealing things in the classroom. And his friends all laugh at her son because everybody in class knows he's a crook, and so the teachers discipline her son, they son notes home, and Mrs. Jones gets very indignant and she comes down there and she denies that her son is a kleptomaniac and she goes to the principle and she's rejecting the notes from the teachers and she thinks all the other kids are just ganging up on her darling little boy. But however, when Mrs. Jones goes home she always puts her purse in a locked drawer. See, that's one of those quirks in that Mrs. Jones probably, honestly has convinced herself that her son is not a thief. But on the other hand, there's something deeper down inside her that says well, yes he is, and I've got to protect my pocket book.

So that's the problem you have with an atheist, you're not able to deal with the person who's truly honest about himself, and that's very difficult and that's why, particularly the smarter the atheist is he'll lead you on a game all over the place because he's spent years convincing himself. The problem he has is that deep down he knows, you could put it this way, deep down he's fleeing the presence of God, and oftentimes, and it's remarkable because I've heard testimonies about this, some of the most hardened atheists that have become Christians don't come because of an argument, some of the hardest atheists become Christians because of some innocent little Christian that lived their life and was gracious and they saw the changed life and it spoke to their heart. And so there wasn't really an apologetic line of reasoning. The only thing I can think of is that we just have to be careful that we don't get swept off of standing on the certainty of the infallibility of the Word of God. And that come what may...,

This is why I think if you read 1 Corinthians 2, remember, the epistle to the Corinthians was written just after Athens, and what happened in Athens. In Acts 17 Paul was accused by the society in Athens to come in a public forum and explain what these two words were, because in the Greek city states, it was illegal, we forget this because we get this little propaganda idea that oh, the Greeks were all democracy and so forth, well not quite, each city state had designated deities and if you happened to come to town and you started teaching using another deity, you had to get registered, you had to get approval to come in there and teach about a new god. Now here comes Paul and he's in the market place and he keeps using the word Jesus and resurrection, and if you look at the Acts 17 passage, just before he's called on the carpet, the guys say hey, we want to see what Paul has to say about these two gods, Jesus and resurrection. So they don't even understand, though they've heard, because they're so screwed up mentally it comes through that they think what Paul is saying is there are two deities here. And it's striking that if you analyze the logic of Paul in Acts 17 he never raises Jesus and resurrection until at the last; he starts out with God as Creator, he starts out dealing with one race, one blood of people, he talks about God's sovereignty, he looks over from Mars Hill, you can look at the Parthenon, he says God doesn't dwell in temples made with man's hands, and he just draws, like a Grand Canyon between his message and the Greeks. It's not common ground at all, it's a total collision that he has.

And then he gets down at the end and that's when he says, and God who is sovereign, who is our Creator, and sovereign judge, shall bring into condemnation all men by a man whom He has certified by raising Him from the dead. And it's Jesus, and they mock him. So clearly Paul did not convince most of the people, but there were some who believed, and that's always the case, I mean, did Jesus win everybody? Think about it, Jesus was truth incarnate, He goes in front of Pontius Pilate and Pilate says ha, what is truth? It was standing about 18 inches in front of his face and he couldn't see it. So you can't get discouraged because your argument doesn't convince. Persuasion is not always possible, the Holy Spirit has to do the persuasion, but what we have to do is we have to be sure that our message is rooted on the authority of God's revelation. And I keep going back to Mount Sinai and I keep thinking to myself, look, if God ever revealed Himself in history, doesn't that make that revelation authoritative? Doesn't that make revelation more authoritative than any man, no matter how brilliant? If you have the omniscient God speaking to men in human history in language we can understand, then that automatically is the authority. That decides the discussion. I don't have the mental equipment, you don't either, nor does the atheist to process information that God can process. So we're at loggerheads, the depth of our disagreement, and one of the things I think we can do to help some of these people is that we refuse to engage in an argument up here, at the level of the fruit on the tree. We move the argument down to the root of the tree, the basis of how you know anything at all. How do you have any moral authority whatsoever, those are the fundamental questions. Otherwise you just endlessly chase your tail wandering around the field, they've got some hot thing over here, they've got a new thing over here, and it's usually empirical data and empirical data can be interpreted 15 different ways. So we're just playing games here. But as long as you allow them to dictate which field you're working in you'll never get to home

base because they don't want to get to home base, they want to divert you from home base. Our time up.