



MARRIAGE, DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE

March 6, 2010. NLBC

INTRODUCTION

- Marriage is an important topic in Scripture, but it not the primary focus.



- The Primary focus is the work of God in Salvation history in His Son.



IN THE BEGINNINGS: GENESIS 1 - 3

- God's intended pattern for Christian Marriage is rooted in Creation – in His creative act of making humanity in his image as male and female.



THREE IMPORTANT CLUSTERS OF PRINCIPLES

- Created to Rule the earth.
- Man created first and woman is given as his *suitable helper*.
- The Fall of humans have negative consequences for both man and woman.



IN THE OT...

- Marriage is seen as a covenant
- Called to love and cherish
- Treat one another with respect and dignity
- Man ultimately responsible to provide the spiritual, emotional and material needs in the marriage relationship.



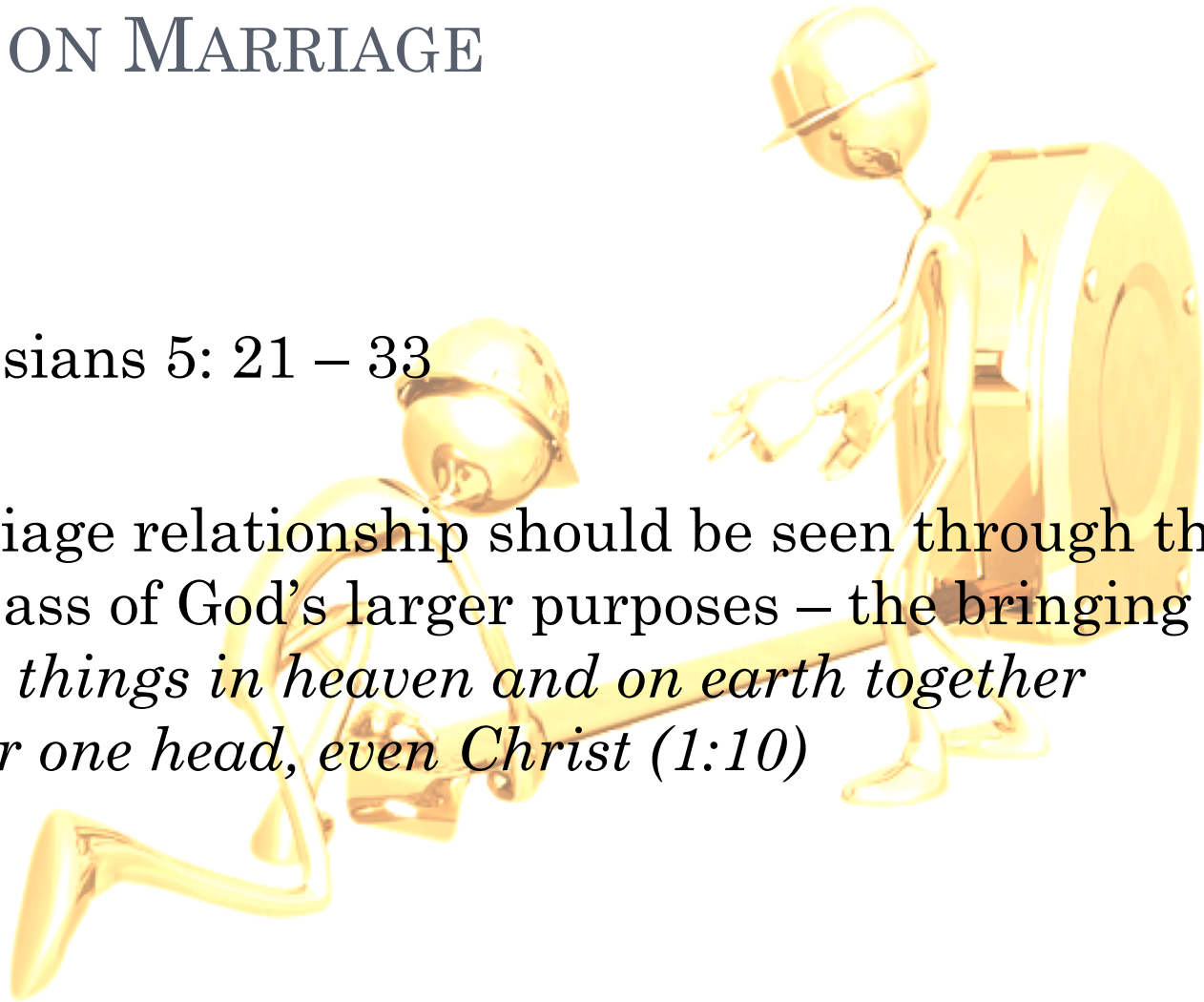
JESUS ON MARRIAGE

- Affirmed its permanence (cf. Matt 19:6)



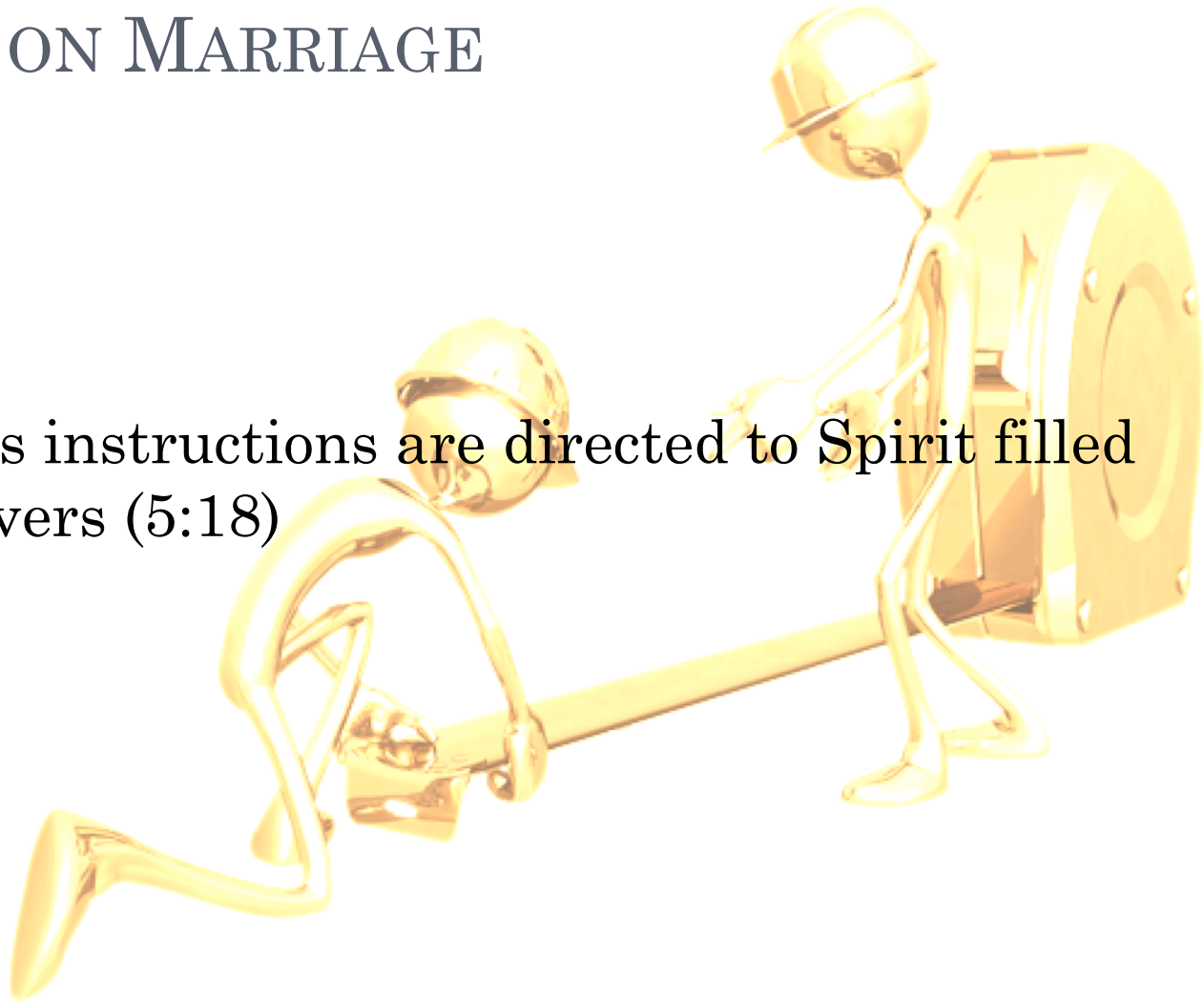
PAUL ON MARRIAGE

- Ephesians 5: 21 – 33
- Marriage relationship should be seen through the compass of God's larger purposes – the bringing of *all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ (1:10)*



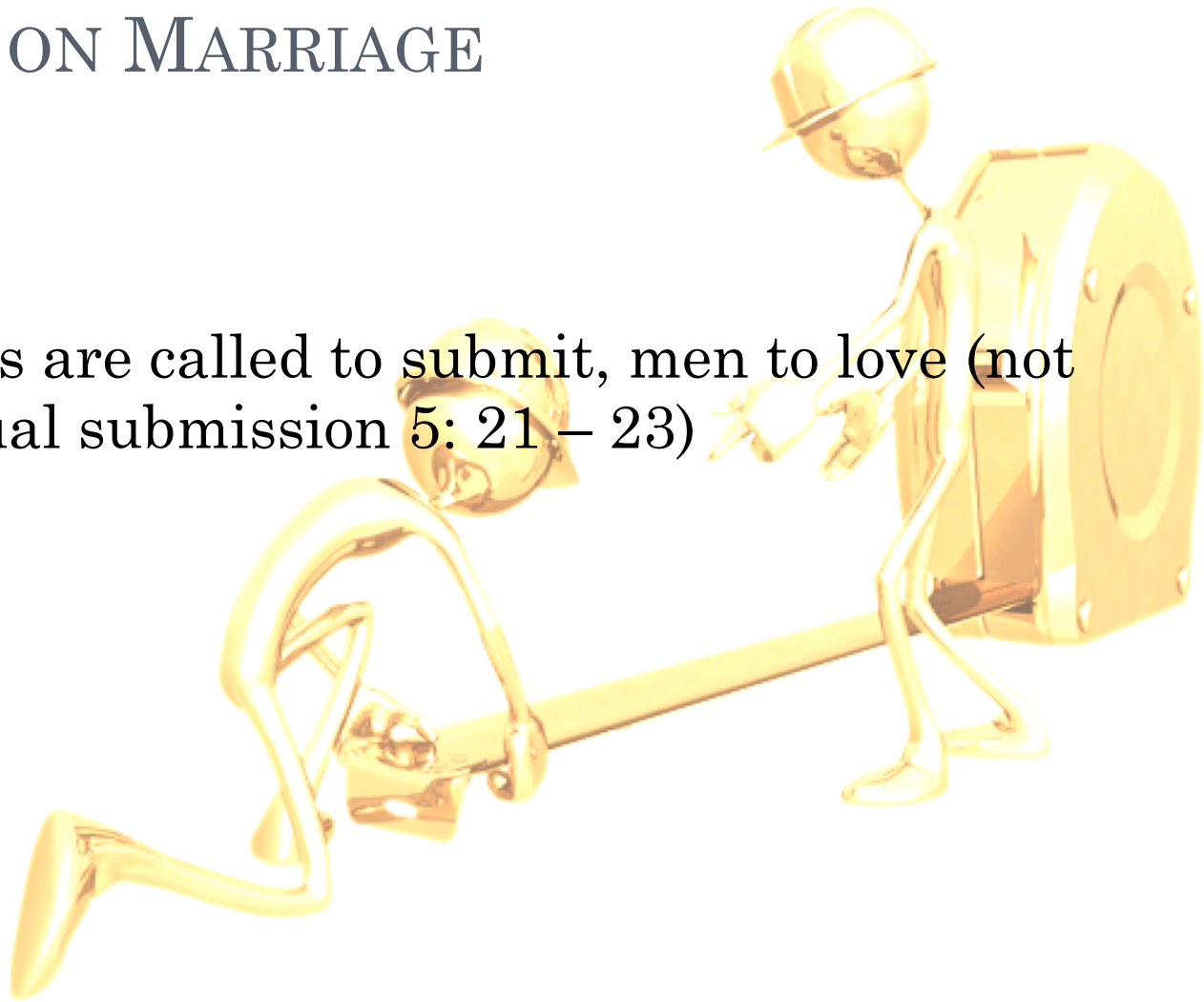
PAUL ON MARRIAGE

- Paul's instructions are directed to Spirit filled believers (5:18)



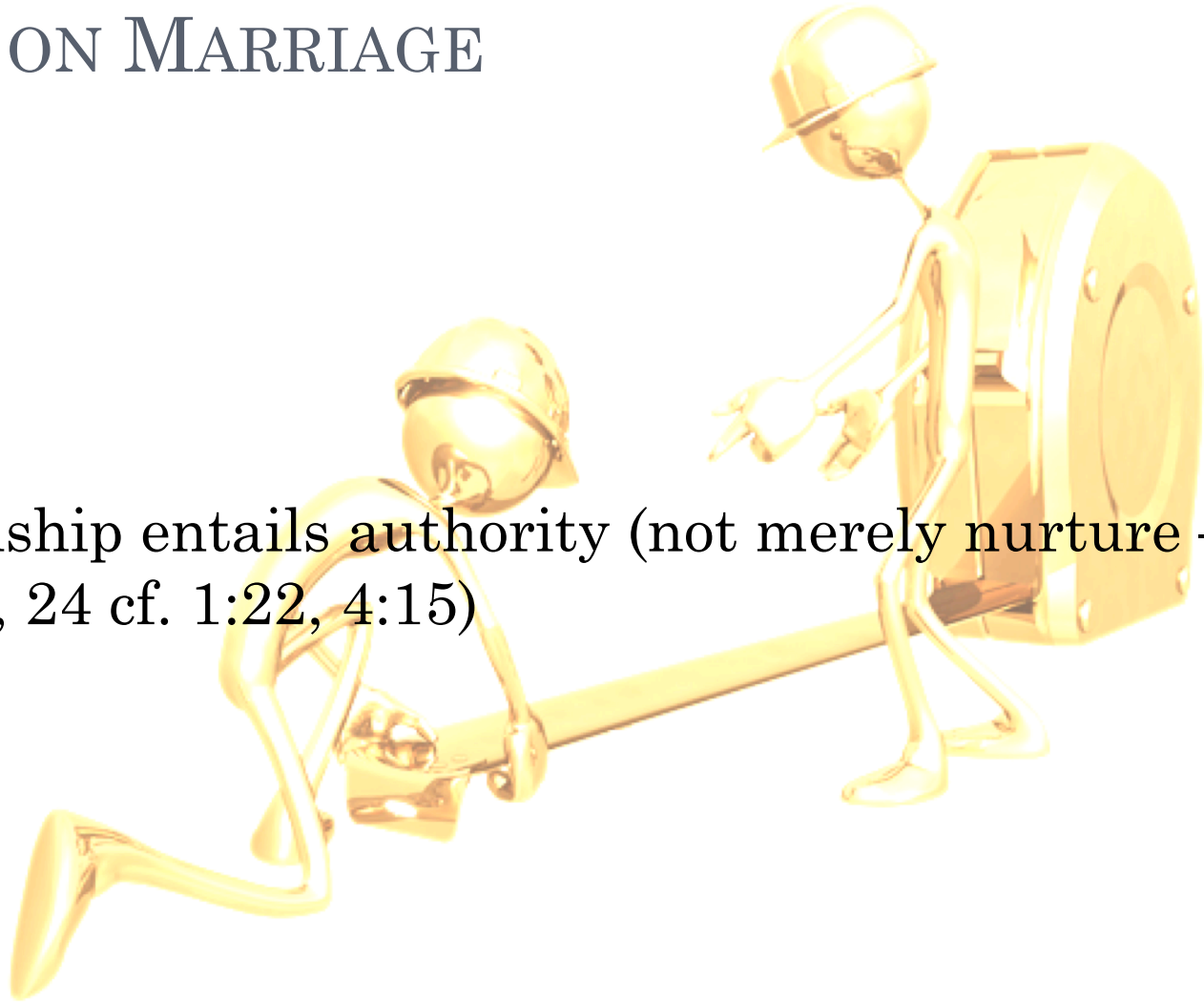
PAUL ON MARRIAGE

- Wives are called to submit, men to love (not mutual submission 5: 21 – 23)



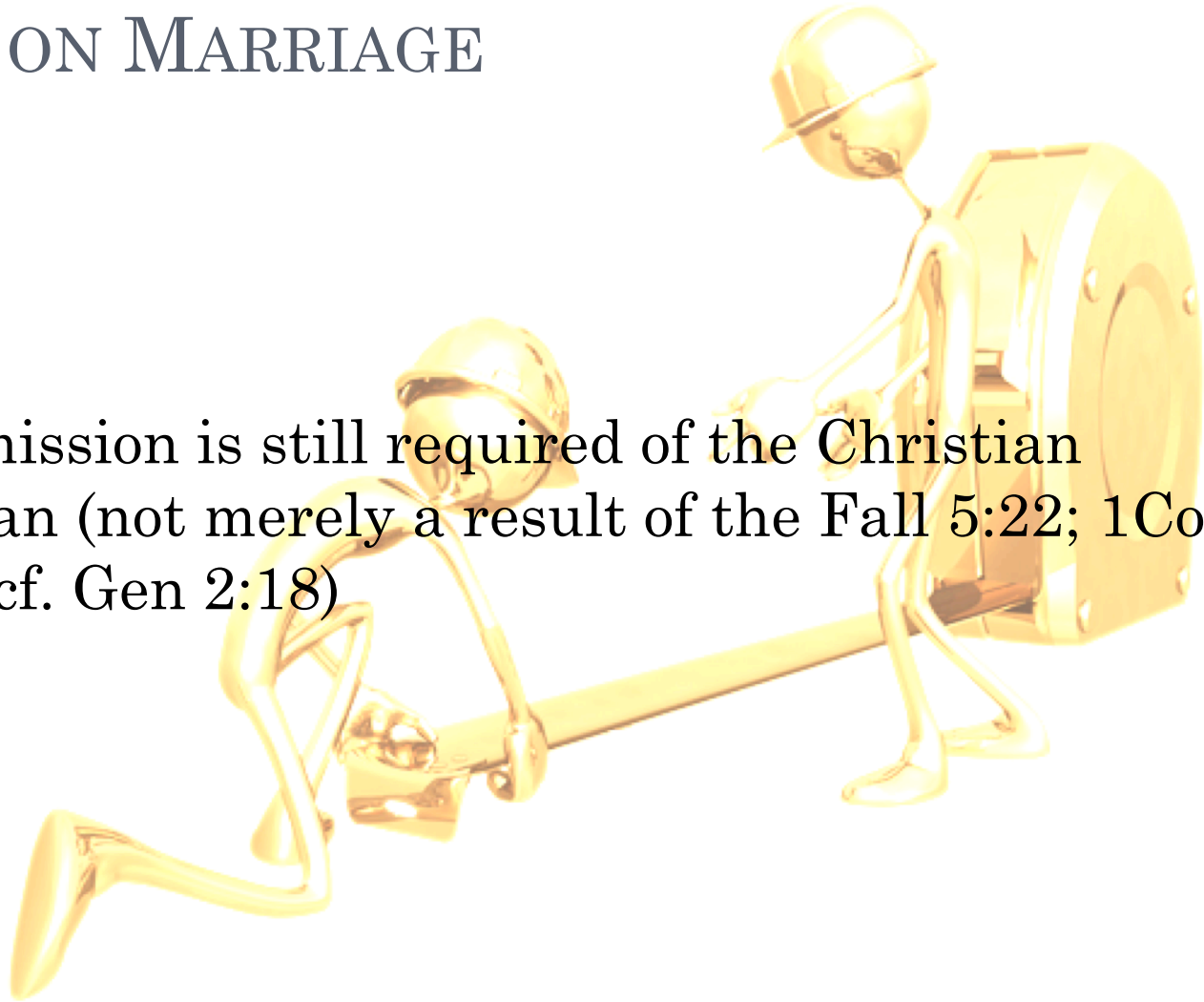
PAUL ON MARRIAGE

- Headship entails authority (not merely nurture – 5: 23, 24 cf. 1:22, 4:15)



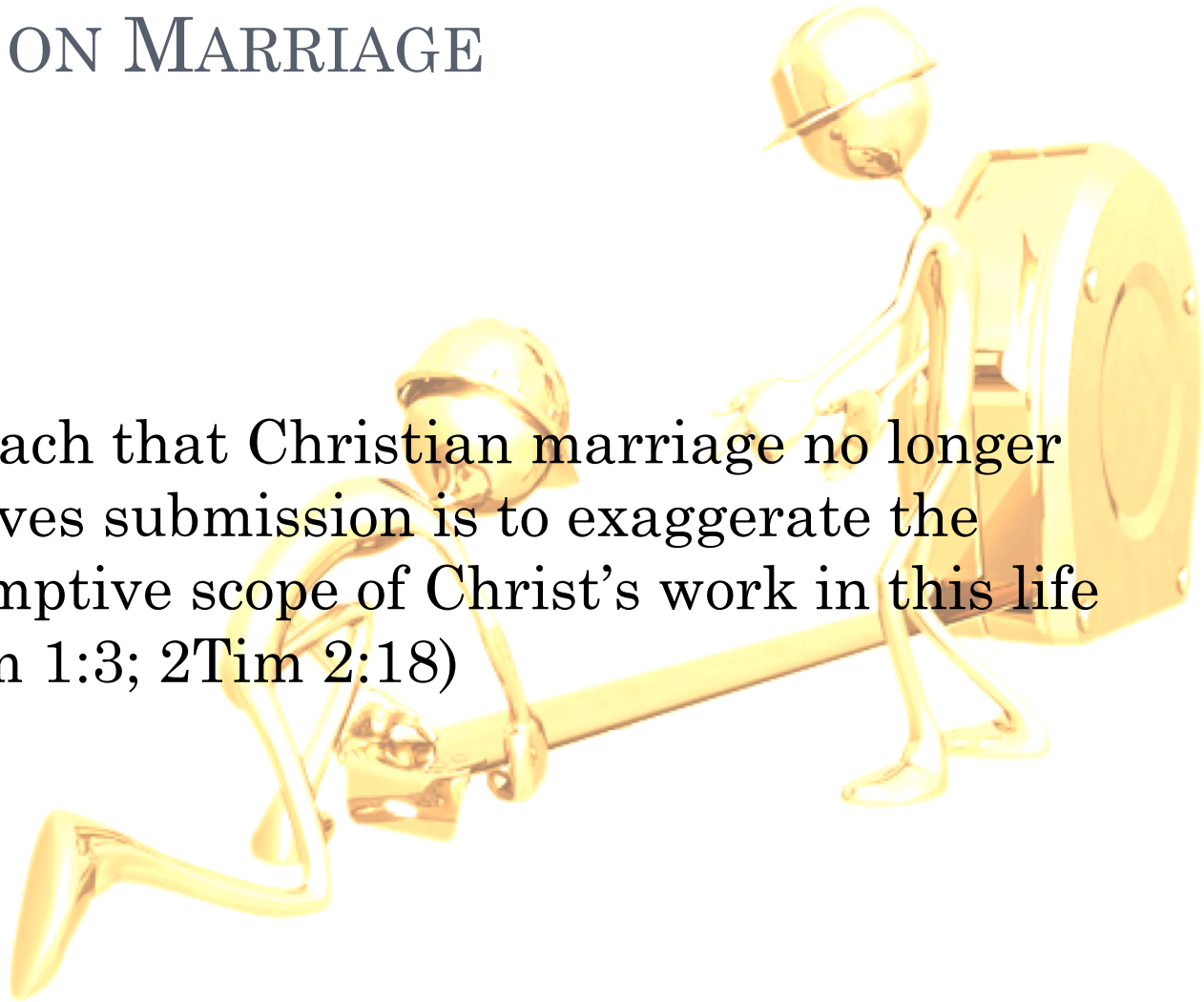
PAUL ON MARRIAGE

- Submission is still required of the Christian woman (not merely a result of the Fall 5:22; 1Col 3:18 cf. Gen 2:18)



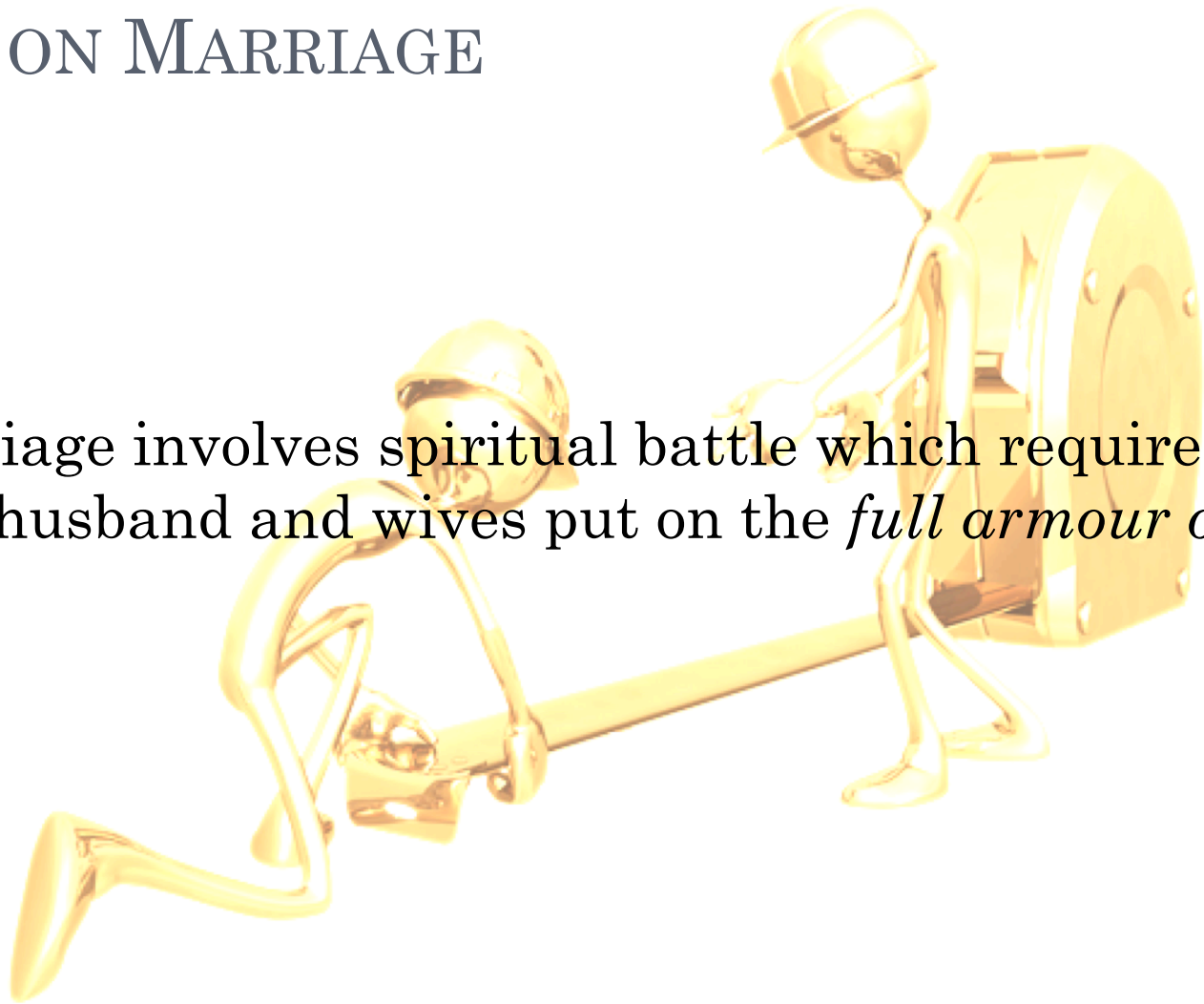
PAUL ON MARRIAGE

- To teach that Christian marriage no longer involves submission is to exaggerate the redemptive scope of Christ's work in this life (1Tim 1:3; 2Tim 2:18)



PAUL ON MARRIAGE

- Marriage involves spiritual battle which requires that husband and wives put on the *full armour of God*.



PETER ON MARRIAGE

- In the context of talking about the general conduct of believers in society he states that – wives are called to submit to their husband, even when they are unbelievers.
- Peter here raises the bar.



MARRIAGE IN THE NT...

- True partners where the wife is called to follow their husbands loving leadership.
- Husbands should genuinely value his wife's companionship and counsel.
- There is a difference between *traditional* and *biblical* marriage (IT IS NOT DIVISION OF LABOR)



MARRIAGE IN THE NT...

- Model for Christian marriage is where the husband and wife are partners who value and respect each other and where the husband's loving leadership is met with the wife's intelligent response.



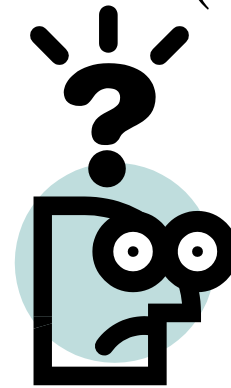


DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE



DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE IN OT

- Grounds for divorce is not really understood by us today, but we know that it was allowed (Deut 24: 1ff).

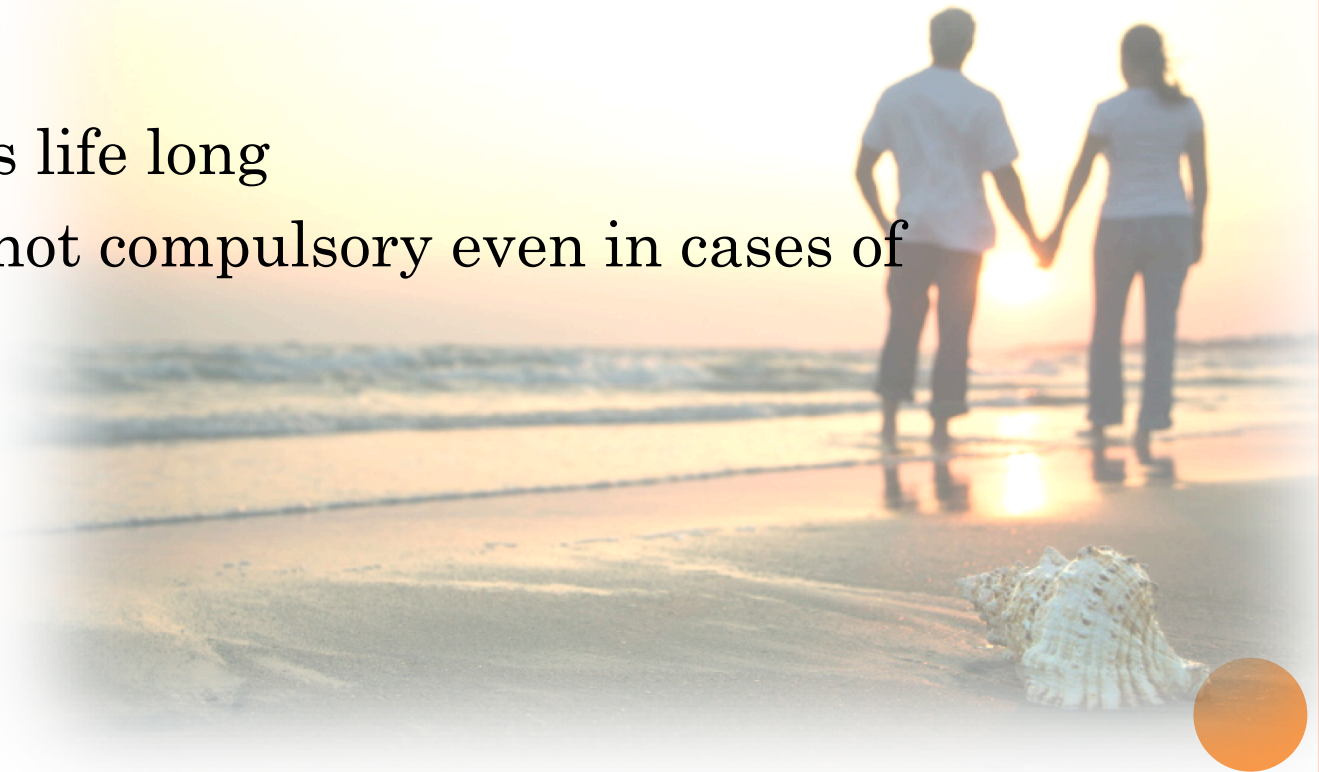


- God is clearly unhappy over his people breaking their marriage vows (Mal2:13)



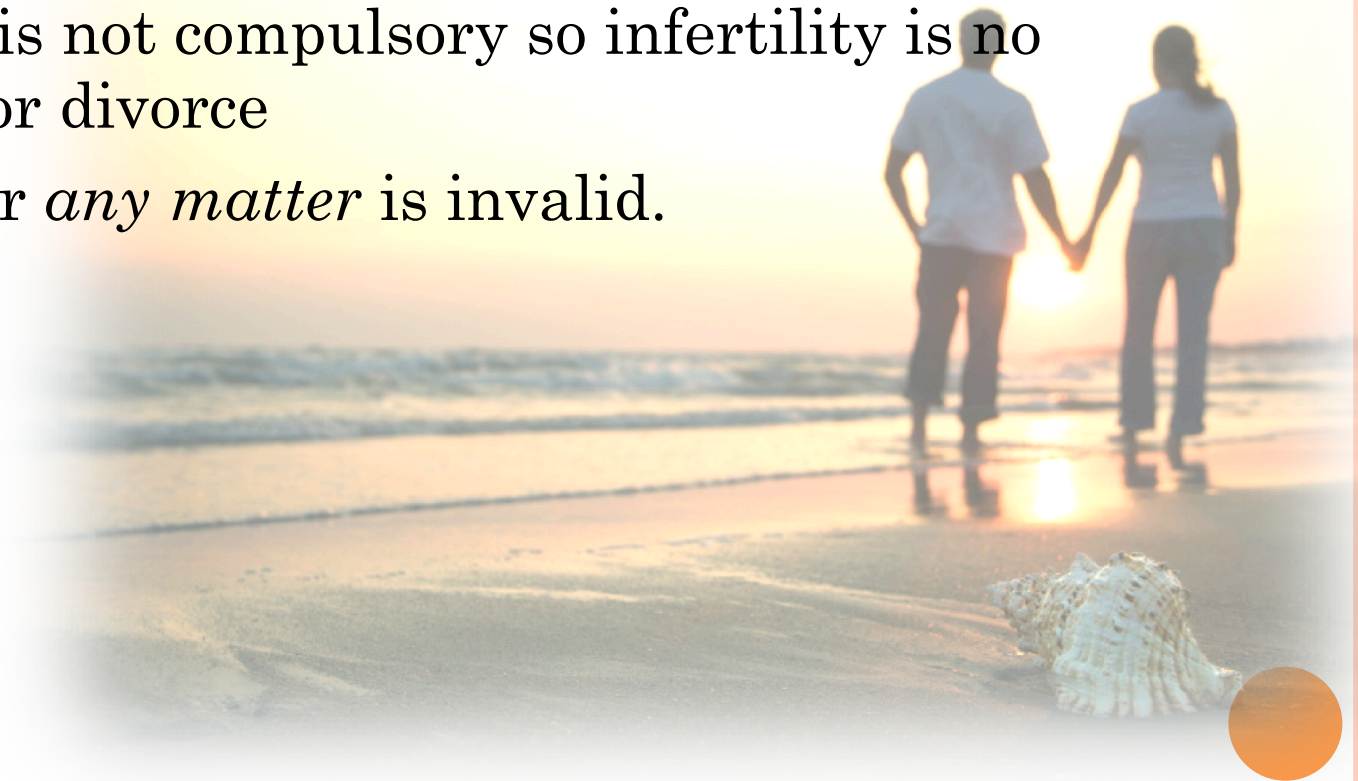
JESUS ON DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE

- Matt. 19 & Mark 10
- Monogamy
- Marriage is life long
- Divorce is not compulsory even in cases of adultery



JESUS ON DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE

- Divorce is permitted not commanded (grounds for divorce unsure).
- Marriage is not compulsory so infertility is no grounds for divorce
- Divorce for *any matter* is invalid.



PAUL ON DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE

- 1Cor 7

- Emotional Obligation(1, cf. Ex 21:10-11)
- Material Obligation (32 – 35)
- Marriage is good – lifelong – but difficult at the present (25 – 35).
- Remarriage after widowhood – *in the Lord*.



PAUL ON DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE

- Temporary Separation for prayer (outside the Law)
 - By mutual consent
 - For a limited time



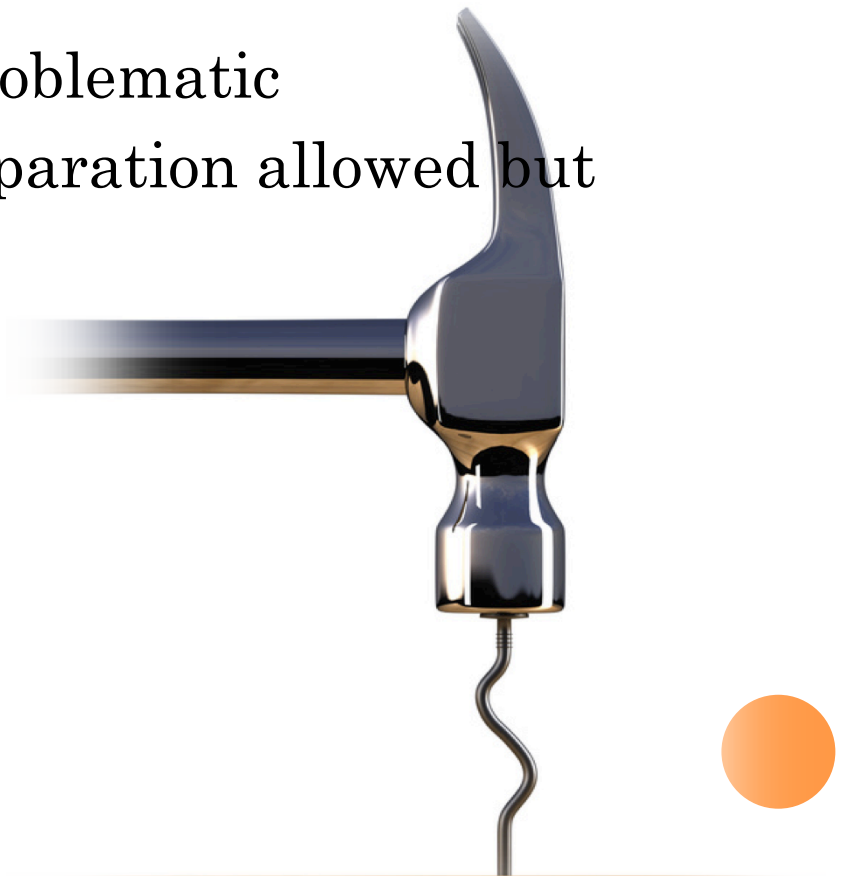
PAUL ON DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE

- Two Grounds for Separation
- Severe incompatibility – to remain unmarried or to be reconciled (10,11).
- If the unbeliever in the marriage chooses to leave then the believing spouse is not under bondage (15 cf. 39ff)



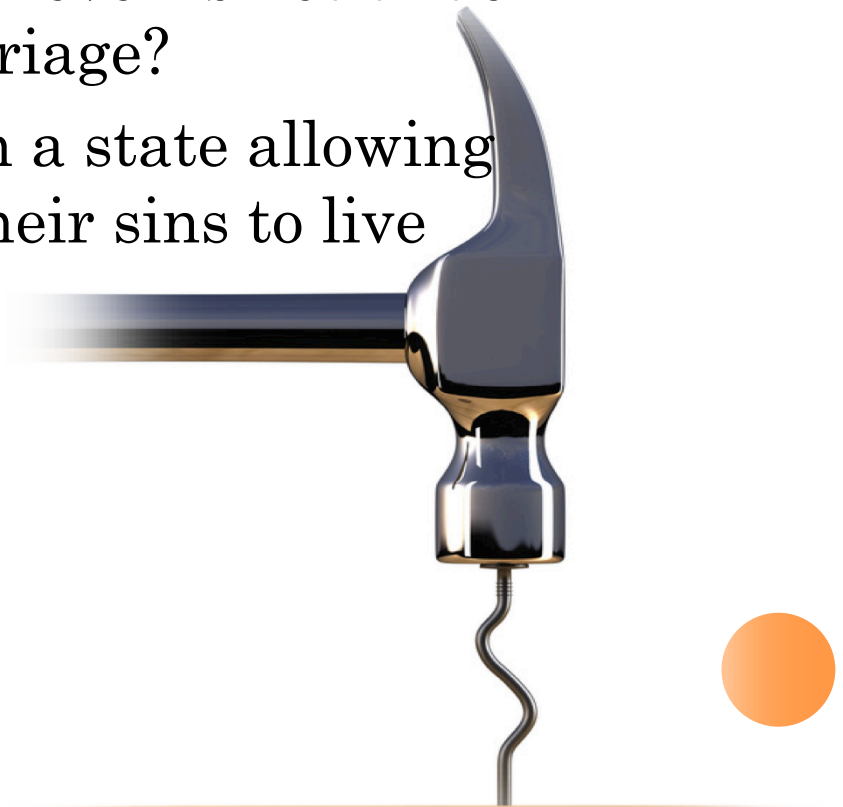
NT CONCLUSIONS

- Permanence of Marriage
- Possible exception – still problematic
- Severe incompatibility – separation allowed but no remarriage



NT CONCLUSIONS

- When the unbeliever chooses to dissolve the marriage union then the believer is not under bondage - allowed to remarriage?
- Adultery an act rather than a state allowing those who truly repent of their sins to live without guilt in Christ.





Case Studies



CASE STUDIES

- #1 Ian and Suzy are engaged to be married in six months. Ian feels it's ok to cross that line if the mood arises. "After all, we are as good as married" figures Ian. Suzy feels she ought to comply as she already regards him as her 'head'.
- 1 What would you advise the couple? Give reasons.



CASE STUDIES

- #2 John and Emma have been married for several years. They loved each other despite their many faults. They always believed they were in it for the long haul. Recently, John found out Emma had been cheating on him. He is furious and walked out on his marriage. He has the support of his family and peers. His parents have even suggested he remarry.
- 1 Is John's reaction right?
- 2 What would you advise John based on scripture?
- 3 How would you react to Emma?



CASE STUDIES

- #3 Tom and Andrea is a happily married couple. Tom struggles with his addiction of pornography from time to time. However, it is not without the knowledge of his wife. Tom feels it is his right to indulge when his wife does not oblige. “At least I am not sleeping around” he justifies. Andrea has deceived herself into thinking that as long as no one is hurt, it’s ok.
- 1 Is pornography a good alternative for Tom?
- 2 Is there a problem in this marriage? If yes, what would you advise the couple?



CASE STUDIES

- #4 James and Jessy are newlyweds. In an attempt to be completely honest with his wife, he confesses of a past affair before marriage. Jessy is furious and feels cheated. She claims she had a right to know this before the marriage took place and that because her trust has been broken, she cannot continue in this relationship.
- 1 Is this adultery?
- 2 Is Jessy's reaction justified? What would you advise?



CASE STUDIES

- #5 After being married for 10yrs, love and patience does not come very easily for Elton. He complains that his wife does not love him anymore and that she doesn't seem to care. Kierra confesses that Elton was becoming difficult and that she had started to develop certain unnatural affections for another. It was not intentional, but time and opportunity in the right combination brought them together in an irresistible web of emotions. Wanting to break free from this, before it got out of control, she confides in her husband. Elton is unforgiving and is resolved to divorce her. 'It's as good as adultery' he says.
- 1 Is this adultery? If yes, does Kierra deserve what she gets?
- 2 Is there an alternative recourse?



CASE STUDIES

- #6 Timothy just finds out that his beloved wife Anna had cheated on him a few years ago. She was young and gullible and didn't realise how subtly it had happened. She was remorseful and thoroughly ashamed of her behaviour and begged Timothy to forgive her. After much deliberation, Timothy decides love covers a multitude of sins. He forgives her unconditionally. His friends however, feel he is making a grave mistake. They are encouraging him to date this other 'spiritual girl' in the neighbourhood. "Once a marriage is broken, it can never be mended" they say.
- 1 Is Timothy's marriage beyond repair?
- 2 If you were his friend, what would you advise?



CASE STUDIES

- #7 Farhan and Amy is an unbelieving couple. Farhan comes to know the Lord two years after his marriage. Amy finds the new Farhan boring and not 'her type'. She decides to leave him. The Church pastor thinks Farhan needs a godly woman in his life and introduces a friend to him.
- 1 Is Farhan free from his marriage to Amy? Base your answer on scripture.
- 2 Is it right for Farhan to remarry?



CASE STUDIES

- #8 Toby and Mary are common-law partners. They having been living together for 20 yrs. Mary becomes a believer and wishes to be part of a local assembly. The elders are hesitant to accept her into fellowship as she is 'living in sin'. Mary says that she would like to be married, but can't force Toby to oblige. What should Mary do?
- 1 Are the elders right in being hesitant about accepting Mary into fellowship?
- 2 Is Mary 'living in sin'? What are her choices?

