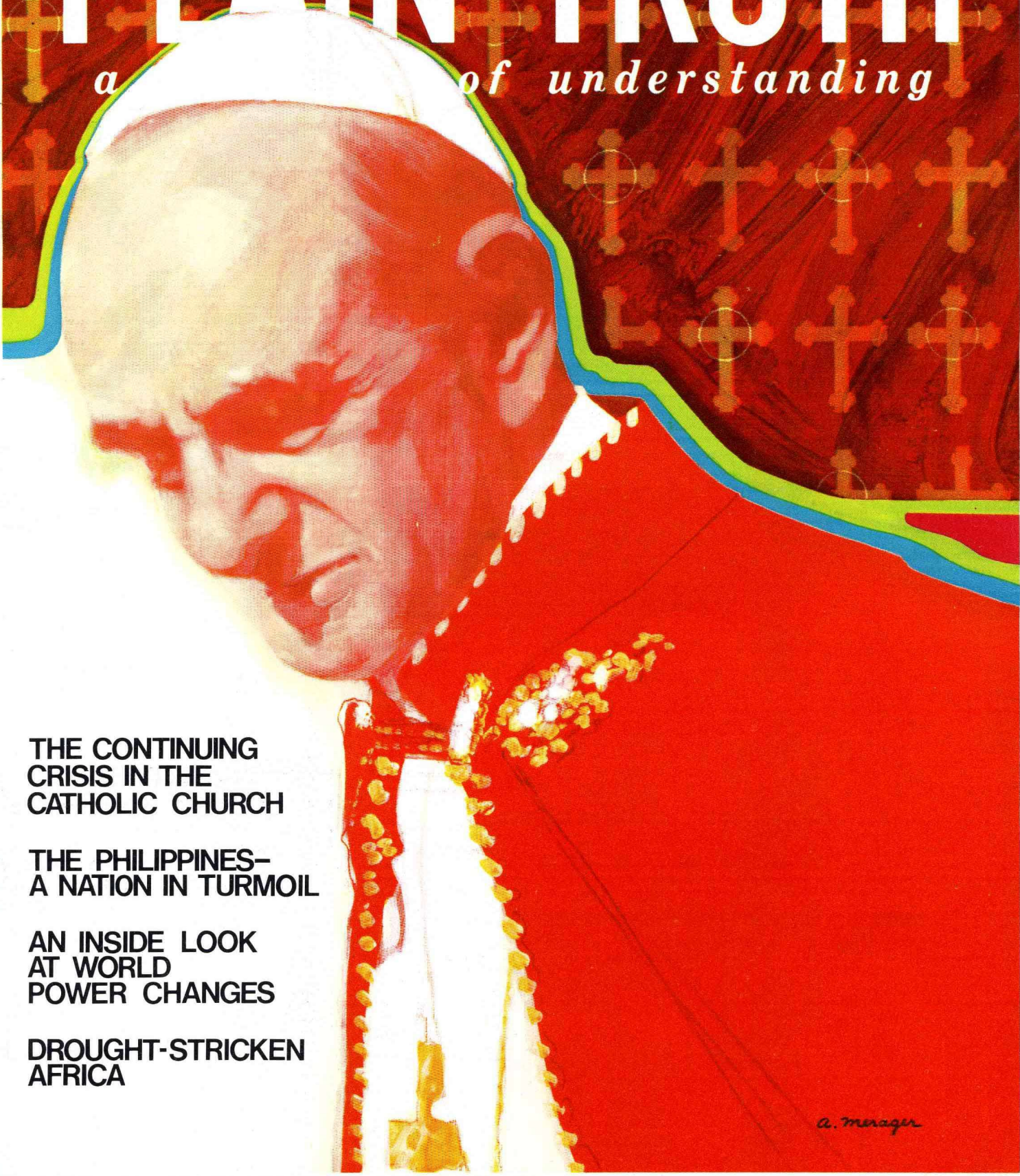


the
PLAIN TRUTH
a of understanding



**THE CONTINUING
CRISIS IN THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**THE PHILIPPINES—
A NATION IN TURMOIL**

**AN INSIDE LOOK
AT WORLD
POWER CHANGES**

**DROUGHT-STRICKEN
AFRICA**

a. menager

Personal from



Alarming Rise in Divorce Poses Major Threat to U. S. and Western World

THE ALARMING rise in the divorce rate is now a major threat to the continued existence of the United States and other Western nations. The tragic breakdown in family life is inscribing the handwriting on the wall of our nations.

Just how important is marriage and family life? Some psychiatrists are now saying that the marriage system is on the way out. Will marriage totally disappear during century 21?

How — when — did the institution of marriage first start?

If man is merely the highest of the animal kingdom, when, in the evolutionary development from some ape-like animal into man, did the marriage institution start? Animals do not marry, though some species mate. But marriage and family life are peculiar to the human race.

Look at the present situation. In the twelve months ending February 1973, increase in divorces in the United States was 8.7 percent over the preceding twelve months. For every 100 marriages, there now are 31 divorces. Divorce is at an all-time high. At the present rate of increase, it soon will have invaded every third home in the United States. In some areas it already has!

In a healthy and happy society, education must begin in the home! It must put major emphasis on the necessity for family life. Yet in our

Western world — particularly in Britain and America — the family system is breaking down. Few parents have themselves been taught how to start education in the home. Few have adequate knowledge or ability to teach their below-school-age children.

The most tragically serious need in education today is in-the-home education on the basic importance of the happy family structure in our society.

Minority group studies made in the United States throw significant light on the vital importance of a tight family structure in any society. Although the specific conditions analyzed in these studies are peculiar to the United States — not Britain, continental Europe or elsewhere — they show emphatically that a happy family life is the very foundation of a stable society in any country.

The studies involve four minority groups in the United States. All four have suffered discrimination and prejudice. Three of these groups have attained status and, in general, have emerged from the former discrimination. These are the American-born Japanese and Chinese, and the Jews. With the Japanese and Chinese there was also the color barrier.

These three groups gained status and recognition, not by police and military enforcement of laws, not by

marches, demonstrations, threats and violence, but by self-improvement and achievement. In the United States, status is attained through the educational and occupational structure.

But the studies show that much, if not most, of the foundation for this achievement is a strong family system. These three groups generally marry within their own ethnic groups and maintain a tight family relationship. In all three groups, there is also family thrift — with the parents willing to make great sacrifices for the education and advancement of the next generation. The very hallmark of Jewish life is the close family relationship. Parents take great pride in every evidence of advancement, superiority and accomplishment by their children.

Compare these three minority groups with the white American majority, where the divorce rate is taking an alarming rise, and families increasingly are falling apart.

Astonishing Facts

The 1960 census showed some significant facts. More than half the children of American-born Japanese and Chinese families, between the ages of 18 and 24, were college educated. A B'nai B'rith study shows that more than 70% of the children of Jewish families in these ages were in a college or university. Yet,

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barely more than 20% of the children of the white American majority in the same age group were being college educated!

But when we consider the fourth minority group, the facts are more significant. Family cohesion is lowest of all among United States blacks. A Department of Labor report titled "The Negro Family — The Case for National Action," stated that, roughly, one black family in four is fatherless. And *that*, despite the rising divorce rate among U. S. whites, was approximately three times the white total! More than half of all black children 18 and under have lived at least part of their lives in broken homes. And what were the percentages of blacks in a college or university? In October 1963, only 5.2% of the males and 4.1% of the females!

Great strides in college and university enrollments have occurred in the last decade. Yet, as recent as 1971, only 18% of all U. S. blacks from age 18 to 24 were attending college, while 22% of all U. S. whites were in attendance.

Now back to the question, **WHY** marriage? Is there any real reason for it? Is there **MEANING** in it, of which most are unaware?

Today, educational institutions in general indoctrinate students with the theory of evolution. Evolution is based on the postulated non-existence of God.

It is the atheists' attempt to explain the presence of a creation without a Creator. Disbelief in God, plus a spirit of rebellion against his laws, has led some to question the marriage institution altogether. There have been predictions that marriage is on the way out — soon to be a relic of the past.

To them, marriage has no moral or spiritual authority. No laws bind one to it, except those of the state. No moral codes prevent its dissolution. They cannot account for its origin. They see no **PURPOSE** in it — no real reason for it.

Animals do not marry. Marriage is not necessary for reproduction. Animals have **NO HOME** and **FAMILY** life. So when, why and how did an animal becoming man decide to start the marriage custom?

The old repressive morality taught that the *only* purpose of sex was reproduction. But if that be true, **NO MARRIAGE WOULD BE NECESSARY**. Animals are male and female. They reproduce, but they don't have married **FAMILY** life.

So, why marriage? Those who do not believe in God can see no authority for marriage — no purpose — no meaning!

So a sick and unbelieving world invents its "new morality," which is promiscuous immorality. And the sin of **DIVORCE** and **REMARRIAGE** accompanies it!

But when we come to understand the **PURPOSE** for human life on this planet, we begin to understand the reason for marriage. And it is much more than merely reproduction.

Is there, after all, purpose to human life? Were we actually *put here* on earth for a purpose? Suppose God does exist, after all. Personally, I have proved it to my own satisfaction. I refer you to our free booklets *Does God Exist?* and *Seven Proofs God Exists*.

Even the disbeliever ought to check on the biblical statements that explain the **PURPOSE** and **MEANING** for man — and *you* judge whether it makes sense.

Why Man?

God is the eternally living Great Designer, Creator, Lawgiver, Source of all basic knowledge, Giver of life, peace, happiness, joy and abundance. He is the **GIVER** of every

good and perfect gift — including eternal life.

But, now — **WHY MAN?**

Is there a reason why God put mankind on the earth? I have found that God never does things without a purpose!

God, through human life upon the earth, says that he actually is **REPRODUCING HIS OWN KIND!**

God designed and made cattle after the cattle kind (Genesis 1:24). He made horses after the horse kind, dogs after the dog kind, chimps after the chimp kind. But God said: "Let us make man in **OUR** image, after **OUR** likeness . . ." (verse 26) — after the **GOD** kind!

Man was made to have a close and special relationship with God his Creator. Converted man has actual fellowship with God (I John 1:3). Animals have no such relationship!

God's **PURPOSE** is for men to come to *know* the true values of life from the false — to know the **WAY** that causes all **GOOD** — that men come to repent of every false way and choose that right and living way, that they may receive the Holy Spirit of God, thus being begotten as children of God, and finally, at the time of the resurrection, be **BORN INTO** the supreme, divine family — the **GOD FAMILY** — which family is the Kingdom of God! To understand, you need our free booklet, *Just What Do You Mean . . . Kingdom of God?*

Animals have no such potential.

Man, now, is composed of material flesh from the ground. He is formed and shaped like God — but composed of matter. God is composed of spirit! God formed man from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7). That material dust *became* a living **SOUL**. So the soul is composed of matter! But when man finally becomes born of God, he shall be composed of spirit. Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is **FLESH**; and that which is born of the Spirit is **SPIRIT**" (John 3:6). Then, at

the time of the resurrection, God "shall change our vile body [of corruptible flesh], that it may be fashioned like unto his [Christ's] glorious [spirit-composed] body" (Philippians 3:21). To fully understand, you need our free booklet *Just What Do You Mean... Born Again?*

Then what?

Then there shall be a marriage! But *how?* What kind?

God's purpose involved the raising up of his Church. It is God's Church, named after the Father of the God family — named the Church of God. Every one who is a repentant, obedient believer and an overcomer, upon receiving God's Holy Spirit, is baptized *by* God's Spirit — BY GOD HIMSELF — into his Church. The Church, spoken of as a woman, is the affianced bride of the living, glorified Christ.

At the time of resurrection and Christ's coming in supreme power and glory, the Church of God, its members being changed to spirit and made immortal, shall *enter into* the Kingdom of God.

At that time, Christ shall marry his Church (Ephesians 5:22-33). At that time, it is written, "The Lord omnipotent reigneth... the marriage of the Lamb is come, and *his wife* hath made herself ready" (Revelation 19:6-7). And verse 8 shows the wife to be "the saints."

But why, prior to the marriage, is the Church called "*his wife*"? Because God married Israel at Mt. Sinai (Jeremiah 3:14). The making of the Old Covenant (Exodus 24:6-8) was the marriage ceremony, setting up Israel as not only wife and Church, but also as a KINGDOM — the kingdom of Israel.

The LORD (YHWH) of the Old Testament is the Christ of the New Testament. When Christ was crucified, Israel's husband died, paying the penalty for Israel's sins.

But the Church *is* Israel, spiritually begotten. Gentile converts are no longer foreigners to Israel (Eph-

esians 2:11-19). Israel is pictured as the natural olive tree and Gentiles as wild olive trees (Romans 11). But because of unbelief, the natural olive tree branches were broken off, and Gentile converts, as branches of wild olive trees, were grafted onto the natural olive tree of Israel (verse 17). And natural-born Israelites, by repentance, belief and conversion, are grafted back onto the Israelite tree. The Church is pictured as *converted Israel* — or *spiritual Israel* (Romans 11:23). The New Testament Church is Israel, spiritually!

Since Israel's husband died, she is freed from her Old Testament marriage and is *free to remarry*. Christ's death paid the penalty of her sins

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(spiritual harlotries) as a church or nation, as well as those of the individuals.

So the Church — *spiritual Israel* — becomes the affianced bride, to MARRY Christ. And when this divine marriage takes place, Christ will be marrying HIS WIFE!

There is another reason why the Church, *prior* to the wedding ceremony, is called "*his wife*." A betrothed woman, in Scripture, is called her fiancé's WIFE, though the marriage *has not yet been* BOUND — prior to the marriage ceremony (Matthew 1:18-20, 24). This was ancient Jewish practice. There was a betrothal ceremony, called the *erosin* ceremony. The betrothed or espoused woman remained in her father's house until the wedding cer-

emony, called the *kiddushin* ceremony. At this *kiddushin* or wedding ceremony, the marriage was bound. Then the husband took his wife to his own house.

Marriage Covenant Is the Gospel

Jesus came as *the messenger of the covenant* (Malachi 3:1). He was the messenger bringing us the message of the New Covenant, which is the marriage covenant which will establish the Church in the Kingdom of God. Just as Moses was the mediator of the Old Covenant, so is Christ of the New Covenant. The gospel is that MESSAGE! And just as the marriage at Sinai *set up* the Kingdom of Israel, so the marriage of the Church to Christ will *set up* the Kingdom of God! So, *that* marriage is the gospel!

The gospel Jesus brought is the GOOD NEWS of the coming Kingdom of God.

This is a most important truth which has not been fully recognized. Let's be sure we understand it!

The Kingdom of God *is* the FAMILY OF GOD! The Kingdom of Israel was the "children of Israel" — as they are called repeatedly in the Old Testament — which actually was the FAMILY of Israel or Jacob, which became one of the kingdoms — governments or nations — of the world. In precisely the same manner, the Kingdom of God will be the FAMILY (spirit-born children) of God! It will be the one and only world-ruling kingdom — government — ruling over all nations.

And what will the Kingdom of God include? It will include those saints spiritually born of God the Father *and married to God the Son!*

The GOSPEL of Jesus Christ is the GOOD NEWS of this Kingdom of God. That kingdom includes those (the Church) MARRIED to Christ!

So what does that mean?

It simply becomes axiomatic that when one becomes converted and is

put by God's Spirit into the Church, he also automatically has become *betrothed* to the marriage with the living Christ!

And what of *that* marriage? Will it be subject to divorce and remarriage? You know that answer is A THOUSAND TIMES *NO!* That marriage *can never be broken!*

The betrothed wife **MUST BE FAITHFUL** in her betrothal! In the experience of Joseph, the betrothed — yet unmarried — husband of Mary, mother of Jesus, he, supposing she had been unfaithful, was minded to put her away *before* the **BOUND MARRIAGE**. If one of us, spiritually betrothed to the living Christ, becomes unfaithful through physical divorce and remarriage in this Christian life, would not our espoused spiritual husband, Christ, **PUT US AWAY?** This sin of unfaithfulness cuts us off from God. Unless our sin is repented of and forgiven, we will never make it into God's kingdom!

What is God's command to us, in this regard? It is: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man *as long as he liveth?* For the woman which hath an husband *is bound* by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law . . ." (Romans 7:1-3).

The marriage institution was ordained for man by God *at the creation of man* (Genesis 2:24). Human marriage was given as a **TYPE** of the spiritual marriage of the spiritual "woman" — the Church — to Christ in the Kingdom of God. That marriage to Christ will *not* be subject to divorce and remarriage. Therefore neither can the human marriage be subject to divorce and remarriage in God's sight. God's law forbids it. No

law in the Bible allows it. Any such law would do violence to the human type of the divine.

To be **UNFAITHFUL**, now, to the betrothed relationship to Christ would, as we shall show by the Scriptures, result in Christ "putting us away" — *before* that marriage! Why? Because sin "puts us away."

Marriage is a God-plane relationship. Even though a physical union, it is a **DIVINE INSTITUTION**, ordained of God. God had great purpose and meaning in giving it to man. God's Church, called to preach Christ's gospel of the kingdom (to be established over the earth *by* the **MARRIAGE COVENANT** with Christ — which is the *New Covenant*) cannot pollute that very gospel by approving divorce and remarriage!

The True Meaning of Marriage

Remember, in this exposition, we are viewing the subject *as God views it*.

I repeat: Though marriage is a physical union, it is a *divine* institution. God does nothing without a *reason* — a definite **PURPOSE!** To understand the "why" of the laws of God respecting the marriage institution, we need to know still more about the reason God had in mind for establishing marriage.

The living Christ already is crowned with glory and honor (Hebrews 2:9). He is the firstborn of many brethren — meaning we who have his Spirit (Romans 8:29). Christ is the captain of our salvation (Hebrews 2:10). That is, he is the pioneer, who has gone on ahead, leading the way, *as the husband, preparing the dwelling place for his wife* (John 14:2). Jesus rose from the dead. He is alive and he is divine — as we shall be. He has been glorified. His eyes are as flames of fire, and his face is as bright as the sun in full strength (Revelation 1:14-16). That's what we may inherit!

Are you really comprehending this colossal truth? *Are you?*

And we, if we repent, believe with

living faith, and accept Jesus Christ as personal Saviour *and betrothed husband*, can receive God's gift of the Holy Spirit. That gift imparts to us the very *life*, essence, nature, mind and power of God! It begets us, now, as God's own (yet unborn) sons! And if we grow spiritually (II Peter 3:18), overcome and endure, we shall, at Christ's coming, be *changed* from mortal flesh to immortal spirit (I Corinthians 15:44-54). We, collectively, shall be the **BRIDE OF CHRIST!**

And that is the supreme heritage of human **MAN!**

Man, now lower than angels, has a destiny far higher!

So grasp this stupendous truth if you can!

For here is the greatest good news you can ever know! That good news is the gospel. And that very gospel involves *faithfulness* in any marriage relationship now, for it is preparation for the spiritual marriage to Christ for all eternity.

Man, and man *only*, of all life forms God has created, can be born into the very God family — the Kingdom of God! And as a most vital part of it, he will enter an eternal, unbreakable, never-to-be-divorced **MARRIAGE** relationship.

To prepare us for that, God has made us mortal — human — and ordained the marriage and family relationship *in this life!*

WHY?

God has never given animals this marriage and family relationship! Angels never marry nor are given in marriage (Matthew 22:30). Angels have never enjoyed **FAMILY** status! The marriage and family relationship is a God-plane relationship — higher than even an angel-plane relationship. And God bestowed it on **MAN** because man is being now prepared for the marriage and family relationship **FOREVER** in the God family!

Think of it! Of all life forms, whether plant, animal, human or angel, in all that God created, **MAN**

ALONE was created for marriage and family life!

In the Kingdom of God — in the God family — there will be a marriage and family relationship — *but no divorce!*

God is consistent!

Could we be preparing for that kind of marriage forever by divorcing and remarrying now?

What a supreme, matchless, awe-inspiring potential!

You are, if converted with God's Holy Spirit dwelling in you, the *heir* of God, and *co-heir* with Christ, to enjoy eternally this unbreakable

God, through human life upon the earth, says that he actually is REPRODUCING HIS OWN KIND!

marriage and family relationship in God's kingdom! Even now if you are a begotten child of God, you are betrothed to marry Christ!

God is the divine FAMILY! The family relationship demands a husband-and-wife relationship. And that demands *faithfulness* to the matrimonial bond. Human marriage, again I repeat, is the TYPE of the divine marriage setting up God's kingdom on earth.

God, I repeat, *is consistent!* He does not ordain faithfulness forever in the marriage to Christ, and then PREPARE US for that marriage by ordaining unfaithfulness, with divorce and remarriage during this preparatory period.

The pivotal reason for the marriage relationship in this human life is to prepare us, by FAITHFULNESS now, for that eternally faithful marriage state then and to constantly remind us of our sacred relationship to Christ, as espoused to the NEVER-ending marriage to him!

How much sense would it make

to teach us to be ETERNALLY faithful then, by ruling that we may be UN-FAITHFUL now, divorcing and remarrying? God has given no such law!

One of the most important purposes in our human lives, now, is that we learn the sanctity, the sacredness, the permanency of the marriage bond!

Of course, God has not willed that every human must marry. That is made very clear in I Corinthians 7. The apostle Paul was not married. Yet, I am persuaded that I, like he, have the mind of Christ, and, after all, it was God who said, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18). However, it would be far better to live alone than to be yoked to what might be called a "hell-on-earth" situation.

Everyone should take marriage so seriously that a wrong marriage is not made in the first place. And if this truth were known by all, there would be few mismated marriages. On the other hand, if this truth were more thoroughly realized, married partners would TRY HARDER to make marriages happy. Our booklet says: "Your marriage *can* be happy."

But, whether married or single, all need to learn that marriage is the type of a coming divine marriage to Christ. And a type cannot be the type unless consistent with the anti-type.

I repeat, God's laws regarding marriage — which is a DIVINE INSTITUTION — could not be consistent if they provided for divorce and remarriage now, when it shall NOT be allowed then!

Marriage "For This Cause"

In Ephesians 5:31 we read: "For this cause [because of the coming divine marriage of the Church to Christ]" "that he might present it to himself a glorious church . . ." (verse 27). For this reason God ordained the marriage institution for humans,

now! That is the REASON humans are given this God-plane relationship which has been given to NO OTHER species — whether animal or angel. That is God's purpose in granting humans marriage, now. It is a type! And God's laws DO make the human type consistent with the divine antitype.

I think we ought to reflect on what a WONDERFUL privilege God bestowed on us in giving us the God-plane marriage and family relationship! And why? To prepare us for the never-ending joy and ecstasy of our spiritual marriage bliss FOR ETERNITY in the Kingdom of God — in the God family!

And this is real. It is the Creator's purpose. And all humans are going to know, in God's due time, that HIS PURPOSE STANDS!

But most don't know it, now. Most are not willing to know it! My commission is not to compel any to know it. It is merely to state it — to ANNOUNCE IT. Whether readers and hearers believe, it is *their* decision, not mine.

And of course, in this world, today, the divorce rate will continue to mount. More and more families will be broken up. The evils in today's world will continue to accelerate. Writers and speakers will continue to reassure us that this is a good and wonderful world, after all. And all because people are BLIND to the causes and will not see them until the great God intervenes, reveals himself to a deceived and unbelieving world, and by divine power saves us from ourselves — else humanity *would* destroy itself — utterly.

And THEN — the wonderful world tomorrow will be ushered in — a world of PEACE, of happiness, joy and abundance.

Incidentally, please write for our free booklets: *The Wonderful World Tomorrow — What It Will Be Like* and *Your Marriage Can Be Happy*. □