

since all government officials are God's, officers. They serve God by collecting taxes. ⁷Pay every government official what he has a right to ask—whether it be direct tax or indirect, fear or honour.

Love and law

⁸Avoid getting into debt, except the debt of mutual love. If you love your fellow men you have carried out your obligations. ⁹All the commandments: *You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet*, [Ex 20:13–17] and so on, are summed up in this single command: *You must love your neighbour as yourself*. [Lv 19:18] ¹⁰Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbour; that is why it is the answer to every one of the commandments.

Children of the light

¹¹Besides, you know 'the time' has come: you must wake up now: our salvation is even nearer than it was when we were converted. ¹²The night is almost over, it will be daylight soon—let us give up all the things we prefer to do under cover of the dark; let us arm ourselves and appear in the light. ¹³Let us live decently as people do in the daytime: no drunken orgies, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. ¹⁴Let your armour be the Lord Jesus Christ; forget about satisfying your bodies with all their cravings. [...]

B. SAYINGS ON MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Mk. 10:2–12, Lk. 16:18, Mt. 5:31–32, Mt. 19:3–12, 1 Cor. 7, Ep. 5:21–6:9
in *Jerusalem Bible, New Testament* (1966),[†] pp. 78, 120, 22, 45–6, 297–9, 336 [Footnotes omitted.]

Mark 10:2–12

²Some Pharisees approached him and asked, 'Is it against the law for a man to divorce his wife?' They were testing him. ³He answered them, "What did Moses command you?"⁴ "Moses allowed us" they said "to draw up a writ of dismissal and so to divorce." ⁵Then Jesus said to them, "It was because you were so unteachable that he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation *God made them male and female*. [Gn 1:27] ⁶*This is why a man must leave father and mother,* ⁸*and the two become one body*. [Gn 2:24] They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. ⁹So then, what God has united, man must not divide." ¹⁰Back in the house the disciples questioned him again about this, ¹¹and he said to them, "The man who divorces his wife and marries another is guilty of adultery against her. ¹²And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another she is guilty of adultery too."

Luke 16:18

¹⁸"Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another is guilty of adultery, and the man who marries a woman divorced by her husband commits adultery."

Matthew 5:31–32

³¹"It has also been said: *Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a writ of dismissal*. [Dt 24:1] ³²But I say this to you: everyone who divorces his wife, except for the case of fornication, makes her an adulteress; and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

Matthew 19:3–12

³Some Pharisees approached him, and to test him they said, "Is it against the Law for a man to divorce his wife on any pretext whatever?" ⁴He answered, "Have you not read that the creator from the beginning *made them male and female* [Gn 1:27] ⁵and that he said: *This is why a man must leave his father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body*? [Gn 2:24] ⁶They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide."

⁷They said to him, "Then why did Moses command that a writ of dismissal should be given in cases of divorce?" ⁸"It was because you were so unteachable" he said "that Moses allowed you to divorce your

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wives, but it was not like this from the beginning. ⁹Now I say this to you: the man who divorces his wife—I am not speaking of fornication—and marries another, is guilty of adultery.”

¹⁰The disciples said to him, “If that is how things are between husband and wife, it is not advisable to marry.” ¹¹But he replied, “It is not everyone who can accept what I have said, but only those to whom it is granted. ¹²There are eunuchs born that way from their mother’s womb, there are eunuchs made so by men and there are eunuchs who have made themselves that way for the sake of the kingdom. Let anyone accept this who can.”

1 Corinthians 7

¹Now for the questions about which you wrote. Yes, it is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman; ²but since sex is always a danger, let each man have his own wife and each woman her own husband. ³The husband must give his wife what she has a right to expect, and so too the wife to the husband. ⁴The wife has no rights over her own body; it is the husband who has them. In the same way, the husband has no rights over his body; the wife has them. ⁵Do not refuse each other except by mutual consent, and then only for an agreed time, to leave yourselves free for prayer; then come together again in case Satan should take advantage of your weakness to tempt you. ⁶This is a suggestion, not a rule: ⁷I should like everyone to be like me, but everybody has his own particular gifts from God, one with a gift for one thing and another with a gift for the opposite.

⁸There is something I want to add for the sake of widows and those who are not married: it is a good thing for them to stay as they are, like me, ⁹but if they cannot control the sexual urges, they should get married, since it is better to be married than to be tortured.

¹⁰For the married I have something to say, and this is not from me but from the Lord: a wife must not leave her husband—¹¹or if she does leave him, she must either remain unmarried or else make it up with her husband—nor must a husband send his wife away.

¹²The rest is from me and not from the Lord. If a brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she is content to live with him, he must not send her away; ¹³and if a woman has an unbeliever for a husband, and he is content to live with her, she must not leave him. ¹⁴This is because the unbelieving husband is made one with the saints through his wife, and an unbelieving wife is made one with the saints through her husband. If this is not so, your children would be unclean, whereas in fact they are holy. ¹⁵However, if the unbelieving partner does not consent, they may separate; in these circumstances, the brother or sister is not tied; God has called you to a life of peace. ¹⁶If you are a wife, it may be your part to save your husband, for all you know; if a husband, for all you know, it may be your part to save your wife.

¹⁷For the rest, what each one has is the Lord has given him and he should continue as he was when God’s call reached him. This is the ruling that I gave in all the churches. ¹⁸If anyone had already been circumcised at the time of his call, he need not disguise it, and anyone who was uncircumcised at the time of his call need not be circumcised; ¹⁹because to be circumcised or uncircumcised means nothing: what does matter is to keep the commandments of God. ²⁰Let everyone stay as he was at the time of his call. ²¹If, when you were called, you were a slave, do not let this bother you; but if you should have the chance of being free accept it. ²²A slave, when he is called in the Lord, becomes the Lord’s freedman, and a freedman called in the Lord becomes Christ’s slave. ²³You have been bought and paid for; do not be slaves of other men. ²⁴Each one of you, my brothers, should stay as he was before God at the time of his call.

²⁵About remaining celibate, I have no directions from the Lord but give my own opinion as one who, by the Lord’s mercy, has stayed faithful. ²⁶Well then, I believe that in these present times of stress this is right: that it is good for a man to stay as he is. ²⁷If you are tied to a wife, do not look for freedom; if you are free of a wife, then do not look for one. ²⁸But if you marry, it is no sin, and it is not a sin for a young girl to get married. They will have their troubles, though, in their married life, and I should like to spare you that.

²⁹Brothers, this is what I mean: our time is growing short. Those who have wives should live as though they had none, ³⁰and those who mourn should live as though they had nothing to mourn for; those who are enjoying life should live as though there were nothing to laugh about; those whose life is buying things should

live as though they had nothing of their own; ³¹and those who have to deal with the world should not become engrossed in it. I say this because the world as we know it is passing away.

³²I would like to see you free from all worry. An unmarried man can devote himself to the Lord's affairs, all he need worry about is pleasing the Lord; ³³but a married man has to bother about the world's affairs and devote himself to pleasing his wife: ³⁴he is torn two ways. In the same way an unmarried woman, like a young girl, can devote herself to the Lord's affairs; all she need worry about is being holy in body and spirit. The married woman, on the other hand, has to worry about the world's affairs and devote herself to pleasing her husband. ³⁵I say this only to help you, not to put a halter round your necks, but simply to make sure that everything is as it should be, and that you give your undivided attention to the Lord.

³⁶Still, if there is anyone who feels that it would not be fair to his daughter to let her grow too old for marriage, and that he should do something about it, he is free to do as he likes: he is not sinning if there is a marriage. ³⁷On the other hand, if someone has firmly made his mind up, without any compulsion and in complete freedom of choice, to keep his daughter as she is, he will be doing a good thing. ³⁸In other words, the man who sees that his daughter is married has done a good thing but the man who keeps his daughter unmarried has done something even better.

³⁹A wife is tied as long as her husband is alive. But if the husband dies, she is free to marry anybody she likes, on it must be in the Lord. ⁴⁰She would be happier in my opinion if she stayed as she is—and I too have the Spirit of God, I think.

Ephesians 5:21–6:9

²¹Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. ²²Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, ²³since as Christ is the head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; ²⁴and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands in everything. ²⁵Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her ²⁶to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words ²⁷so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. ²⁸In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. ²⁹A man never hates his body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, ³⁰because it is his body—and we are its living parts. ³¹*For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body.* [Gn 2:24] ³²This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church. ³³To sum up; you too, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband.

6 ¹Children, be obedient to your parents in the Lord—that is your duty. ²The first commandment that has a promise attached to it is: *Honour your father and mother*, ³and the promise is: *and you will prosper and have long life in the land.* [Ex 20:12] ⁴And parents, never drive your children to resentment but in bringing them up correct them and guide them as the Lord does.

⁵Slaves be obedient to your masters in this world, with deep respect and sincere loyalty, as you are obedient to Christ: ⁶not only when you are under their eye, as if you had only to please men, but because you are slaves of Christ and wholeheartedly do the will of God. ⁷Work hard and willingly, but do it for the sake of the Lord and not for the sake of men. ⁸You can be sure that everyone, whether a slave or a free man, will be properly rewarded by the Lord for whatever work he has done well. ⁹And those of you who are employers, treat your slaves in the same spirit; do without threats, remembering that they and you have the same Master in heaven and he is not impressed by one person more than by another.

C. TWO WITNESSES IN THE BIBLE

Dt. 17:2–7, Dt. 19:15; Dn. 13:44–62, Mt. 18:15–17, 2 Cor. 13:1–2
in *New Jerusalem Bible*, (1985),[†] as found in *The Complete Parallel Bible* (Oxford, s.d.) pp. 405, 409, 2431–2, 2673–4, 3063

Dt. 17:2–6¹

²“If there is anyone, man or woman, among you in any of the towns given you by Yahweh your God, who does what is wrong in the eyes of Yahweh your God by violating his covenant, ³who goes and serves other gods and worships them, or the sun or the moon or any of heaven’s array—a thing I have forbidden—⁴and this person is denounced to you: if after careful enquiry it is found true and confirmed that this hateful thing has been done in Israel, ⁵you must take the man or woman guilty of this evil deed outside your city gates, and there you must stone that man or woman to death. ⁶A death sentence may be passed only on the word of two witnesses or three; and no one must be put to death on the word of one witness alone. ⁷The witnesses’ hands must strike the first blow in putting the condemned to death, the rest of the people following. You must banish this evil from among you.”

Dt. 19:15

¹⁵“A single witness will not suffice to convict anyone of a crime of any kind; whatever the misdemeanour, the evidence of two witnesses or three is required to sustain the charge.”

Mt. 18:15–17

¹⁵“If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves. If he listens, you have won back your brother. ¹⁶If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you: *whatever the misdemeanour, the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain the charge.* ¹⁷But if he refuses to listen to these, report it to the community; and if he refuses to listen to the community, treat him like a gentile or a tax collector.”

2 Cor. 13:1–2

¹This will be the third time I have confronted you. *Whatever the misdemeanour, the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain the charge.* ²I gave you notice once, and now, though I am not with you, I give notice again, just as when I was with you for a second time, to those who sinned before, and to all others; and it is to this effect, that when I do come next time, I shall have no mercy.

Dn. 13

[To these should be added Daniel 13 (in Greek only), the story of Susannah and the elders, too long to quote here in full, but a wonderful law story about how to examine witnesses.

[In Babylon, Susannah, the daughter of Hilkiah and the wife of Joachim, was the object of the lust of two elders of the people. They trapped her in her garden where she was taking a bath alone and told her that they would accuse her of being with a young man if she did not have sexual relations with them. She screamed, and the elders appeared before the people and accused her of committing adultery with the (fictitious) young man. As we pick up the story, Susannah, being led to execution, cries out to God for help:]

⁴⁴The Lord heard her cry ⁴⁵and, as she was being led away to die, he roused the holy spirit residing in a young man named Daniel ⁴⁶who began to shout: “I am innocent of this woman’s death!” ⁴⁷At this all the people turned to him and asked, “What do you mean by that?” ⁴⁸Standing in the middle of the crowd he replied, “Are you so stupid, children of Israel, as to condemn a daughter of Israel unheard, and without troubling to find out the truth? Go back to the scene of the trial: these men have given false evidence against her.”

⁵⁰All the people hurried back, and the elders said to Daniel, “Come and sit with us and tell us what you mean, since God has given you the gifts the elders have.” ⁵¹Daniel said, “Keep the men well apart from each

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¹ This comes right in the middle of the so-called “priestly Code.”

other, for I want to question them.” ⁵²When the men had been separated, Daniel had one of them brought to him. “You have grown old in wickedness,” he said, “and now the sins of earlier days have overtaken you, ⁵³you with your unjust judgments, your condemnation of the innocent, your acquittal of the guilty, although the lord has said “You must not put the innocent and upright to death.” ⁵⁴Now then, since you saw her so clearly, tell me under what sort of tree you saw them lying under.” He replied, “Under an acacia tree.” ⁵⁵Daniel said, “Indeed, your lie recoils on your own head: ² the angel of God has already received from him your sentence and will cut you in half.” ⁵⁶He dismissed the man, ordered the other to be brought and said to him, “Son of Canaan, not of Judah, beauty has seduced you, lust has led your heart astray! ⁵⁷This is how you have been behaving with the daughters of Israel, and they have been too frightened to resist; but here is a daughter of Judah who could not stomach your wickedness! ⁵⁸Now then, tell me what sort of tree you surprised them under.” He replied, “Under an aspen tree.” ⁵⁹Daniel said, “Indeed! Your lie recoils on your own head: the angel of God is waiting with a sword to rend ³ you in half, and destroy the pair of you.”

⁶⁰Then the whole assembly shouted, blessing God, the Saviour of those who trust in him. ⁶¹They turned on the two elders whom Daniel had convicted of false evidence out of their own mouths. ⁶²As the law of Moses prescribes, ⁴ they were given the same punishment as they had schemed to inflict on their neighbour. They were put to death. And, thus, that day an innocent life was saved.

² A play on words in the Greek.

³ Another play on words in the Greek.

⁴ Cf. Dt 19:16–21, which appears just after the two-witness requirement quoted above.