

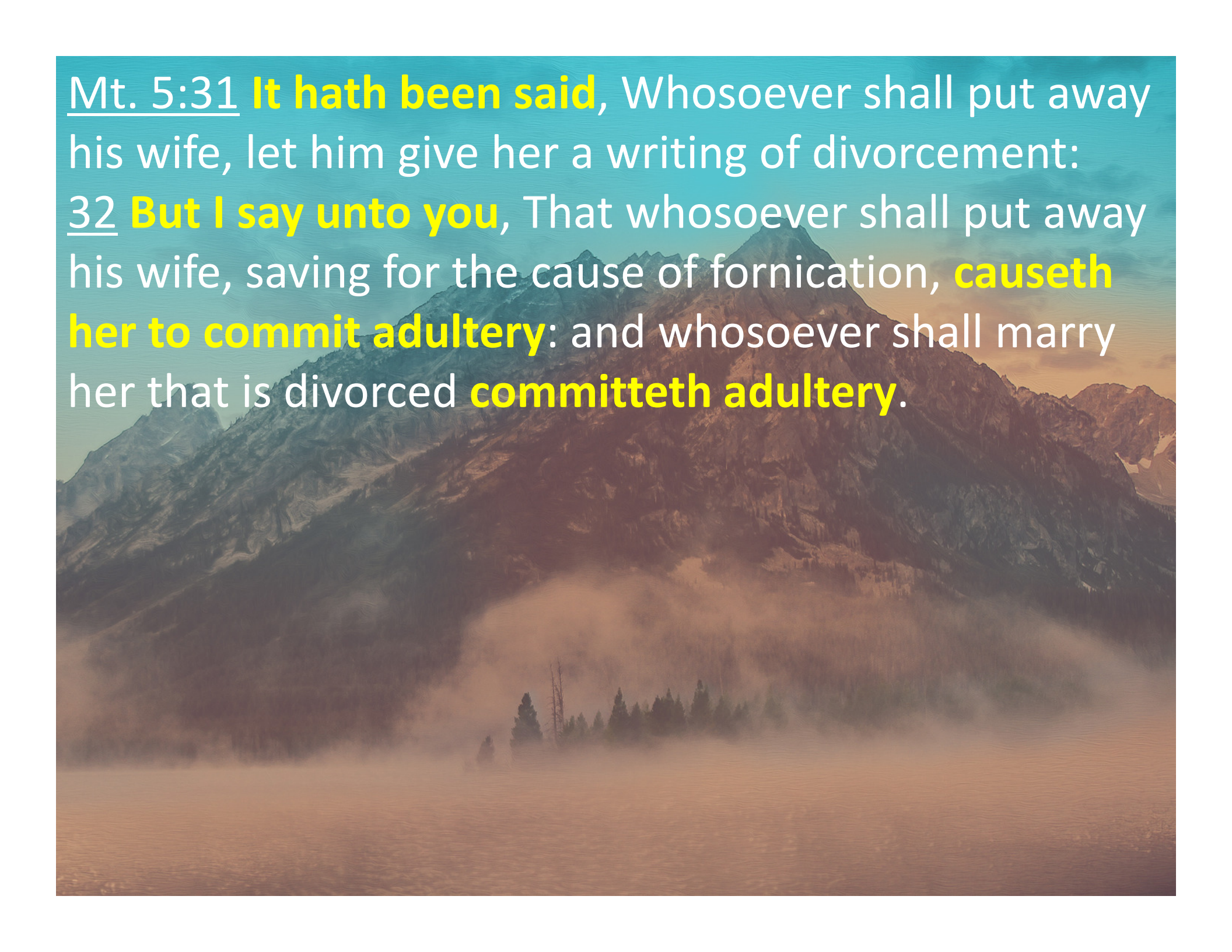


THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Mt. 5:31-32

*“The Question of Indulging Lust”*





Mt. 5:31 **It hath been said**, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:  
32 **But I say unto you**, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, **causeth her to commit adultery**: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced **committeth adultery**.



## Review

Back in December we began the exegesis of this great sermon preached by the Lord Jesus Christ.

### I. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BLESSINGS, 5:1-16

A. The Setting, 5:1-2

B. The Sayings, 5:3-12

C. The Sequel, 5:13-16

### II. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BELIEFS, 5:17-20

A. A Personal Appreciation of God's Law, 5:17-18

B. A Personal Application of God's Law, 5:19-20



### III. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BIBLE, 5:21-48

A. The Question of Injuring Lives, 5:21-24

B. The Question of Invoking Law, 5:25-26

C. The Question of Indulging Lust, 5:27-32

1. A Defiled Marriage, 5:27-30

a. God's Condemning Law, 5:27

b. Man's Corrupting Lust, 5:28-30

(1) A Wrong Look, 5:28

(2) A Wrong Life, 5:29-30

(a) Dealing with Wrongful Input, 5:29

(b) Dealing with Wrongful Output,

5:30



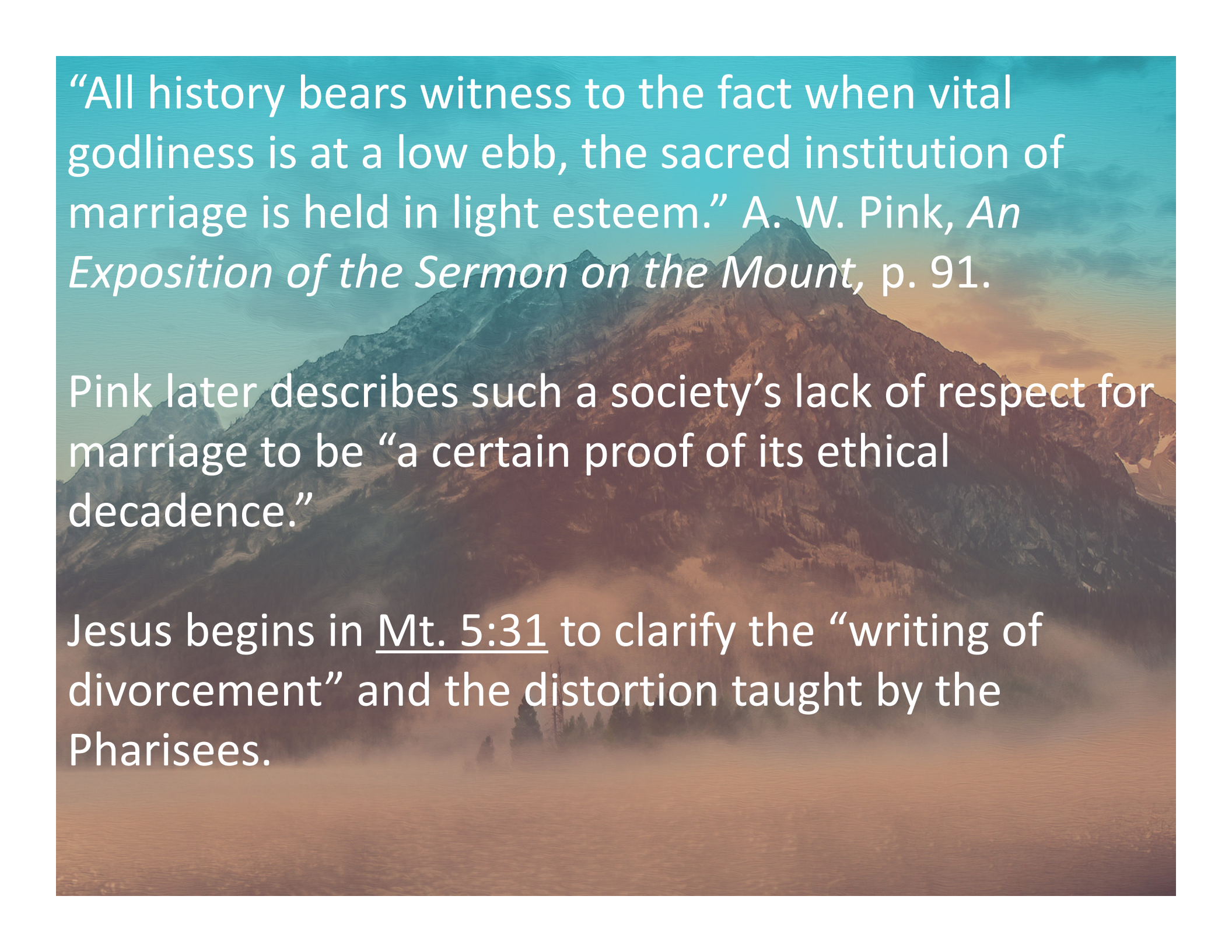


Early in the “Sermon on the Mount” the Lord Jesus emphasized His concern regarding “righteousness.”

Mt. 5:20 For I say unto you, That **except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

Over a month ago, we began looking at the passage that is most relevant for 2021, regarding moral purity and God’s plan for intimate relationship between a man and a woman via marriage. We continue with the premise and its seriousness by looking at the severity of the examples in Mt. 5:31-32.





“All history bears witness to the fact when vital godliness is at a low ebb, the sacred institution of marriage is held in light esteem.” A. W. Pink, *An Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 91.

Pink later describes such a society’s lack of respect for marriage to be “a certain proof of its ethical decadence.”

Jesus begins in Mt. 5:31 to clarify the “writing of divorcement” and the distortion taught by the Pharisees.



## 2. A Defaulting Marriage, 5:31-32

### a. The Law and Its Position, 5:31

Mt. 5:31 **It hath been said**, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

- The “writing of divorcement” was basically a simple procedure as found in Deut. 24:1-4 and there is no mention of adultery:



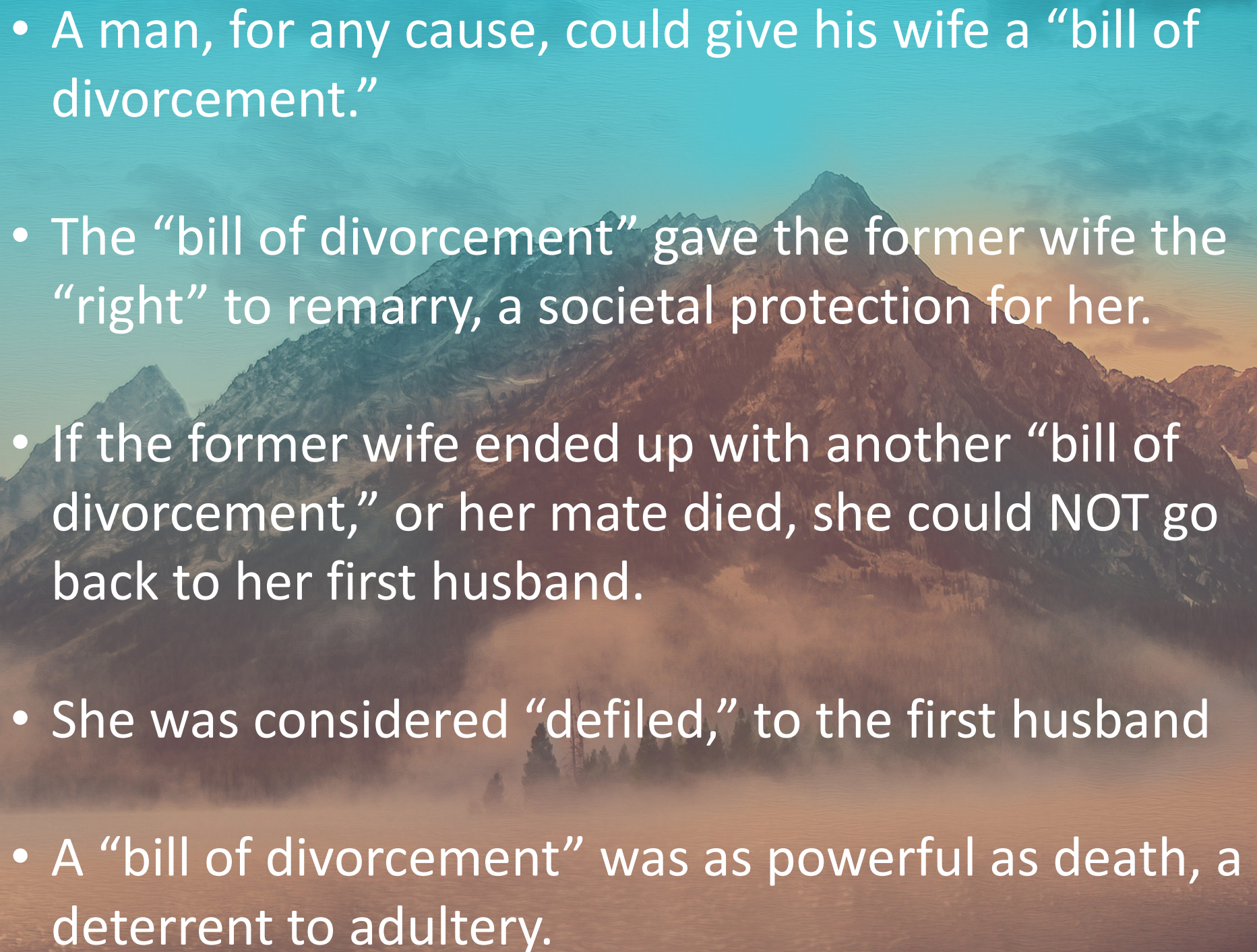
Deut. 24:1 When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, **because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.**

2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's *wife*.

3 And *if* the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her *to be* his wife;

4 **Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD:** and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.



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- A man, for any cause, could give his wife a “bill of divorcement.”
  - The “bill of divorcement” gave the former wife the “right” to remarry, a societal protection for her.
  - If the former wife ended up with another “bill of divorcement,” or her mate died, she could NOT go back to her first husband.
  - She was considered “defiled,” to the first husband
  - A “bill of divorcement” was as powerful as death, a deterrent to adultery.



- The Pharisees distorted Moses' intention, making any offense a reason for divorce.
- Such belief was the “norm” for the Pharisees regarding divorce.

### b. The Law and Its Prohibition, 5:32

- Jesus gives further illumination of the consequences of the procedure:

Mt. 5:32 **But I say unto you**, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.



- Jesus states that, with the exception of fornication, that a divorce has more ramifications than a simple procedure:

1. A person who puts away his wife causes HER to commit adultery.

2. A person who marries her that is “put away” also commits adultery.

- The penalty for committing adultery was death:



Lev. 20:10 And the man that committeth adultery with *another* man's wife, *even he* that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, **the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.**

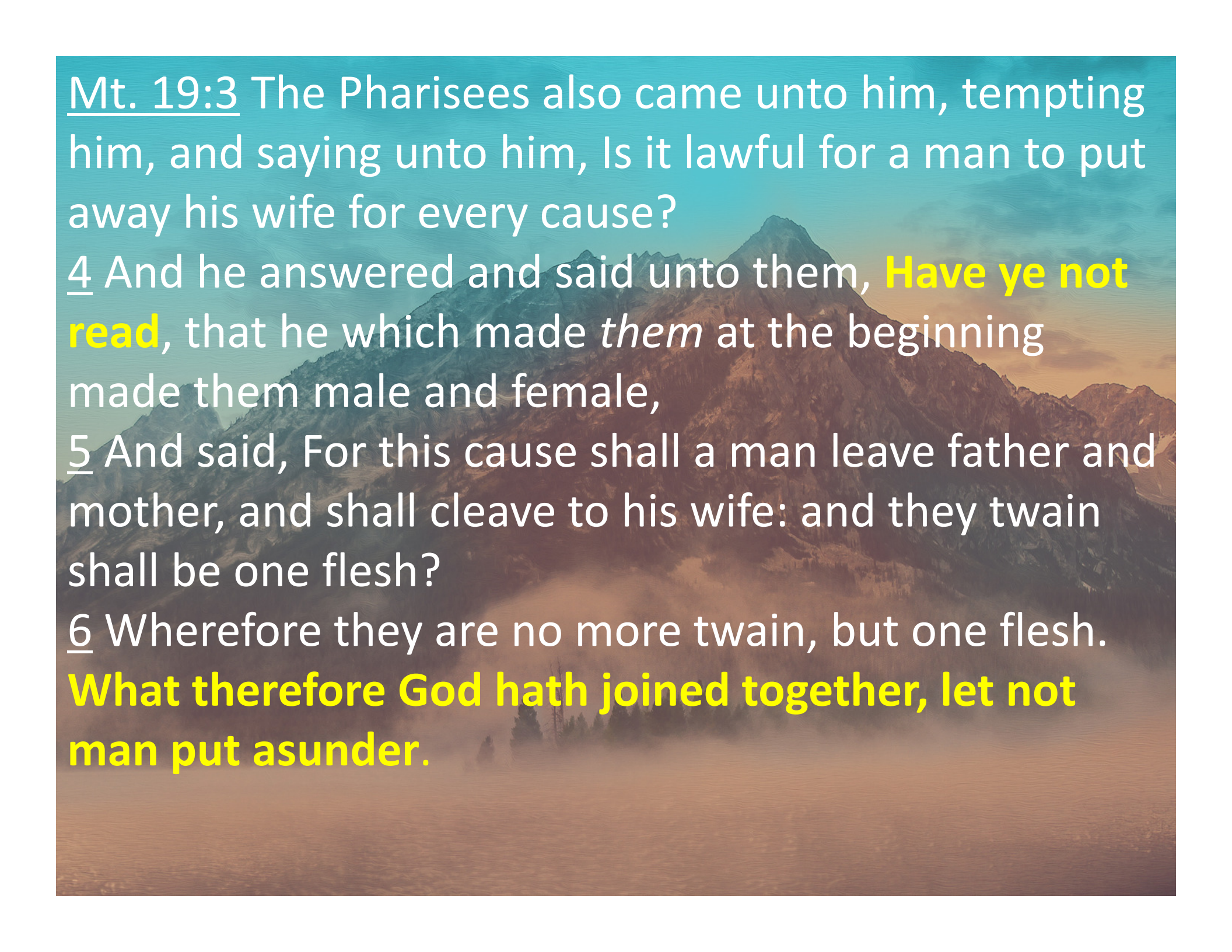
- The pious Pharisees looked upon divorce as a simple procedure rather than a perspective of adultery. Jesus elevated the ramifications of a broken marriage.
- The world today has minimized the institution of marriage as a matter of convenience, with little to no regard of God's perspective.
- God has not changed and still hates divorce:



Mal. 2:16 For **the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away**: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

- In regard to infidelity within the marriage, an innocent party is protected by the “exception clause” – “...saving for the cause of fornication...” – there are no charges of adultery for the innocent partner.
- The same principle is seen in Mt. 19:3-9 when the Pharisees tempted the Lord regarding the same subject:





Mt. 19:3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said unto them, **Have ye not read**, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh.

**What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**



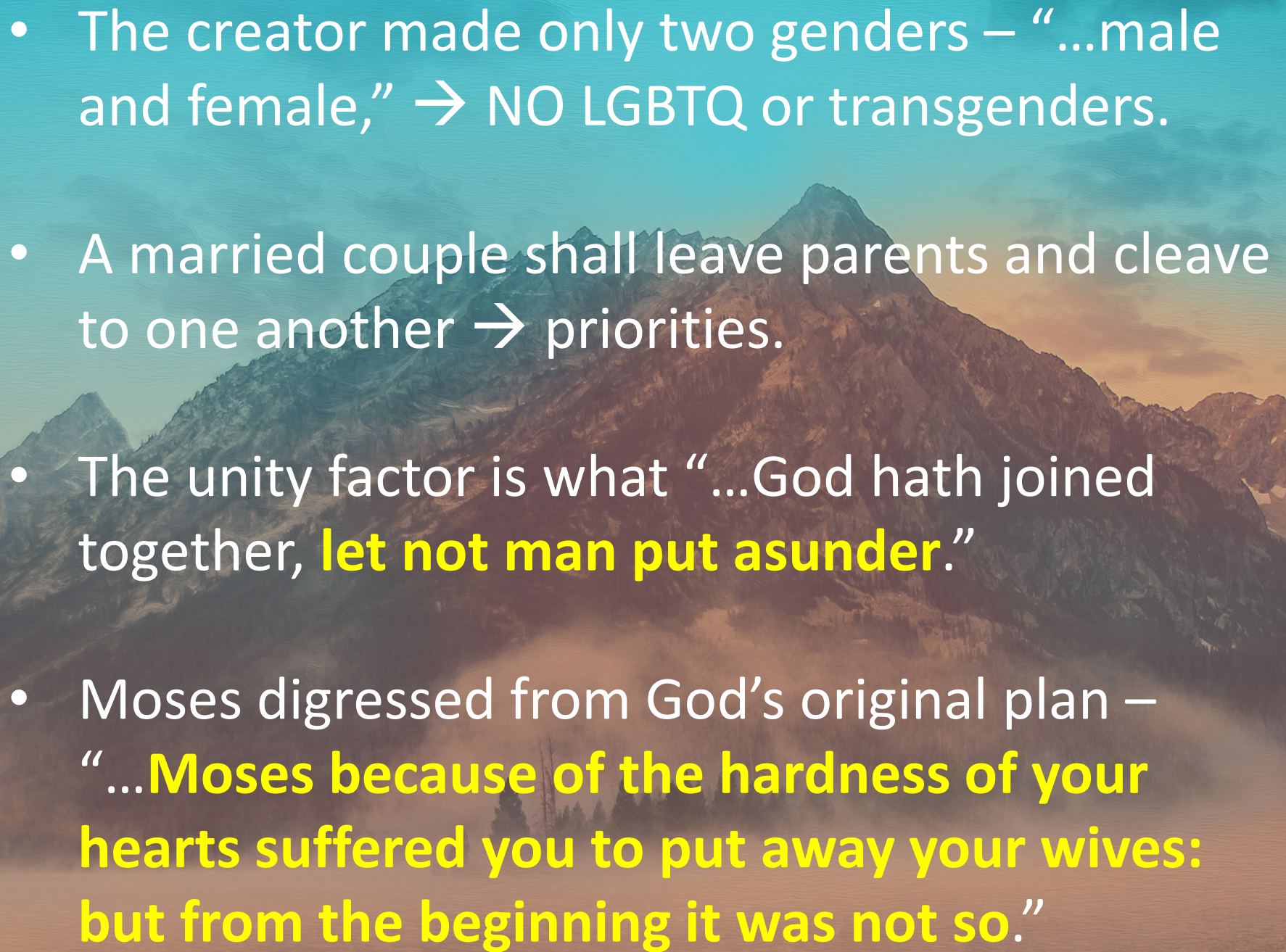
7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: **but from the beginning it was not so.**

9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

- Jesus began His reply by chiding them for not reading the Scripture – “...Have ye not read...”
- Jesus clarified God’s intention for marriage:



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- The creator made only two genders – “...male and female,” → NO LGBTQ or transgenders.
  - A married couple shall leave parents and cleave to one another → priorities.
  - The unity factor is what “...God hath joined together, **let not man put asunder.**”
  - Moses digressed from God’s original plan – “...**Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.**”



- Marriage is God's plan, "...from the beginning..."
- In Mt. 19:9, Jesus reiterated the seriousness of divorce → "adultery" as well as protection for an innocent party by way of the "exception clause."

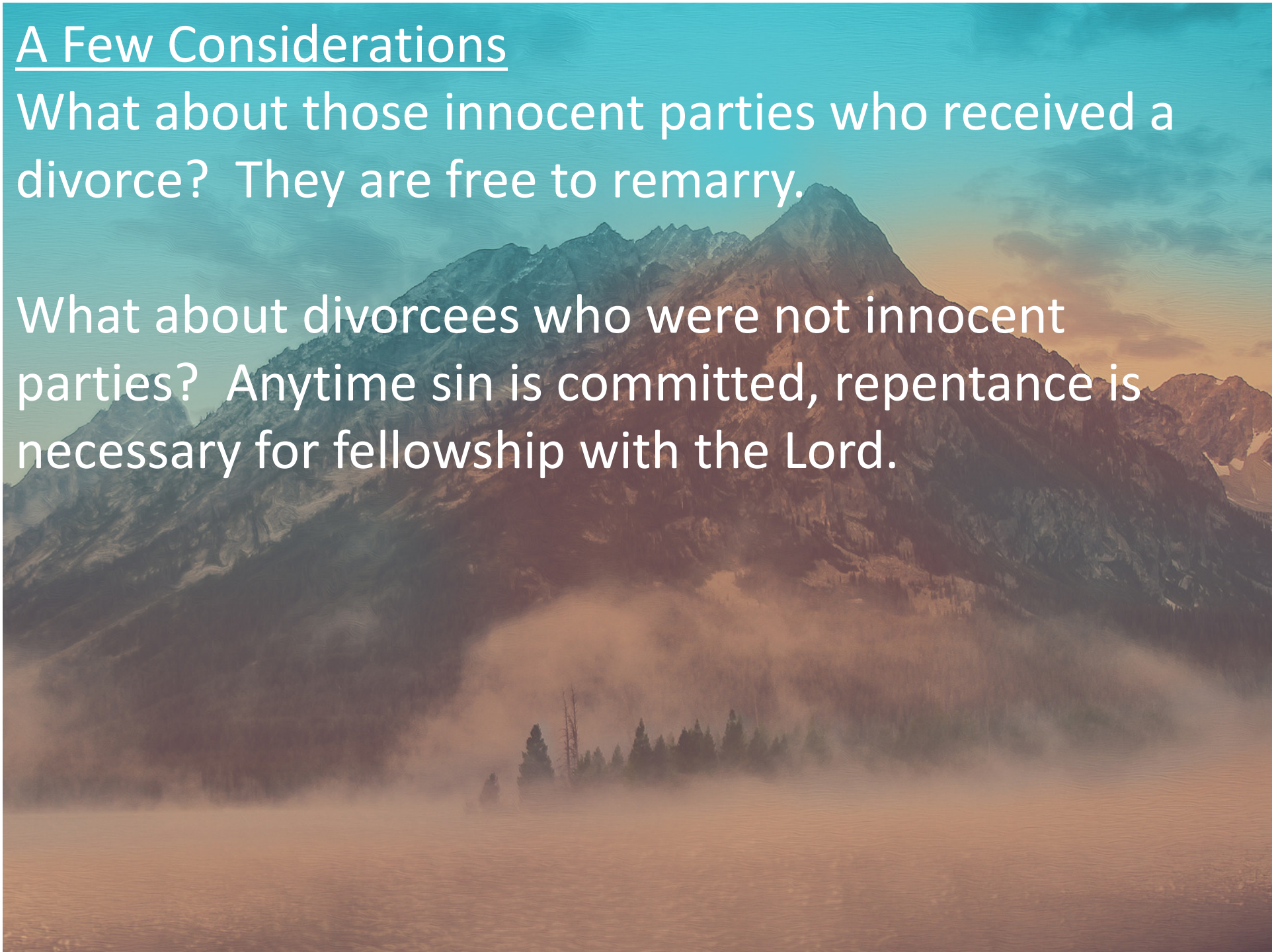
Mt. 19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, **except it be for fornication**, and shall marry another, **committeth adultery**: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth **commit adultery**.



## A Few Considerations

What about those innocent parties who received a divorce? They are free to remarry.

What about divorcees who were not innocent parties? Anytime sin is committed, repentance is necessary for fellowship with the Lord.





## Summary

- The Pharisees trivialized the seriousness of marriage by divorcing a wife for any cause.
- Jesus “raised the bar” by charging those involved with divorce as adulterers.
- Jesus made provision for innocent parties.
- The primary principle is righteousness from God’s perspective, not “accepted actions” of society, be it religious or secular – EXALT MARRIAGE!!!
- Other passages to consider: Deut.22:14, 19, 28-29; Lev. 21:7, 14; Ezra 10:3-5; Hosea; Jer. 3:1-10; Jn. 8:3-11!



## Conclusion

Heb. 6:9 But, **beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation,** though we thus speak.

10 For **God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name,** in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.