

Coordinating Team

Mauricio Chacón | Associate Pastor for Fuente
Brandon Gaide | Associate Pastor for Next Gen
Ginny Glass | Communications & Media Dir.
Meliza Gómez | Contemporary Music Dir.
Alf Halvorson | Senior Pastor
Charles Hausmann | Traditional Music Dir.
Kristin Huffman | Associate Pastor for Outreach
Brett Hurst | Relationships Minister
Christyn Knoop | Adult Ministries Dir.
Gena Kookan | Sr. Leadership Ministry Coor.
Laura Miller | Youth Ministries Dir.
Rick Myers | Associate Pastor for Caring
Rachel Poysky | Children's Ministries Dir.
Becky Riggs | Business Administrator
Dave Steane | Executive Pastor & Head of Staff
Kathryn White | Coordinating Music Dir.
Karen Winship | Human Resources Dir.

Dave Peterson | Pastor Emeritus
Gary Bowker | Pastor Emeritus

MDPC Foundation

For information, contact Business Administrator
Becky Riggs at briggs@mdpc.org or 713-953-2570.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT



Daily Bread

Daily Bread is a community of men and women in their 40s and 50s who enjoy weekly discussions on God's Word. This fall they are looking at the Scriptures preached during the 9:45 service on Pastor Alf's sermon series, *Higher Ground*. Join them as they dig deeper into the word of God to find real life application. Drop in and get to know them! They will save a chair for you!

Sundays at 11:15 AM | Summit Room

Drop in, or contact Chris Arend with questions:
chrisarend73@gmail.com

The White Rose is in memory of

- Larry Kelminson, who passed away September 4, 2016.
- Norma Benson, who passed away September 9, 2016.

Ministry Partners 2016

This week, we ask that you pray for these partners in ministry that MDPC assists with your support:

Santa Maria Hostel's mission is to empower women with children to become alcohol and drug free. It is Texas' largest multi-site residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment center and one of few that provides a continuum of care for pregnant and parenting women and their children.

santamariahostel.org

Scripture Awakening provides resources to encourage people to read, study, and live the Bible and awaken the world to the power of God's Word.

scriptureawakening.com

MDPC partners Reverends David and Kim moved their family to East Asia in 2013. There, they train and coach church leaders and connect them to resources and curriculum. Please pray for Dave and Kim and their two children as they continue to build their community. Pray that God would continue to go before them in every way, helping them build new support systems and connections for ministry.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

OPERATING INCOME

2016 Annual Budget	\$ 11,050,000	100%
Actual Income to Date (Sept. 11, 2016)	\$ 5,989,487	54%
Needed to Meet 2016 Budget	\$ 5,060,513	46%

Pictured: It can be easy to take for granted our families and support networks. Many women have no hope of changing their situations because they have no one to turn to and nowhere to go. Santa Maria Hostel's Hope Housing Project is one of Houston's very few transitional housing resources that serves women with children, and your generosity makes it possible. >



Sunday, September 18, 2016



HIGHER GROUND

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount

Coming Up at MDPC

MDPC Dads Coffee & Kolaches

Join other dads this morning for a cup of coffee and a kolache. Bring your kids to snap a picture in our homemade photo booth, complete with fun props!

Today, 10:45-11:30 AM | Breezeway

Teens & Tweens Group Starting

A time to connect and build friendships with other adopted and foster children, ages 12-18, with food, games, a movie, and more! Bring your favorite bean bag chair, blanket, and/or pillow.

Next Saturday, Sept 24 | 4:00-8:00 PM

RSVP required: Ann Rome, mdpcsafehaven@gmail.com

Special Blessings Needs Your Help!

We host monthly events for children with special needs, giving parents a much-needed break. However, we often are forced to turn folks away due to a lack of volunteers. Our community has a tremendous need for this type of service - registrations consistently fill up within minutes of opening!

Could you spare 4 hours on a Saturday so we can serve more children and families? If so, please contact Keri Mosk at kmosk@mdpc.org or 713-490-9265.

Elementary Pizza Parties

Come eat pizza and play games at a Pizza Party! Kindergartners and first graders party this month; Pizza Parties for 2nd-5th grade are later this fall.
K & 1st Grade: Sunday, Sept 25 | 12:30-2:30 PM
register.mdpc.org

Outreach Sunday on September 25

Next weekend, many of our local and global ministry partners will join us. Plan to drop by the Lobby before and after the 9:45 and 11:15 services to extend a warm MDPC welcome to our special guests. Be sure to invite a partner to worship with you!

Save the Date...

Join us to celebrate Kristin Huffman and her 19 years of ministry at MDPC.

Sunday, October 16 | 4:30-6:00 PM

Details coming soon.

National Night Out

Meet your Memorial Villages police officers, fire department, and local area government entities. The festivities will include hot dogs, popcorn, cotton candy, and snow cones, plus a moonwalk and a Chiefs Dunk Booth! Sponsored by MVPOA.

Tuesday, Oct 4 | 5:00-8:00 PM | MDPC Parking Lot

Theology On Tap: Closer Than You Think?

Young adults (age 21 to 40-ish) are invited to an interactive panel discussion on atheism, Humanism, and Christian belief with special guests Dr. Anthony Pinn, Robert Garment, and Gregory Han.

Tuesday, Oct 11 | 7:00-9:00 PM | 8484 Katy Frwy
Free craft beer & food! Location details: ya.mdpc.org

Confirmation 2017

Confirmation is our yearly program for all students who are currently in the 8th grade or above. Join us for a time of focusing on what it means to follow Jesus and be part of His Church.

Sundays, January 8-March 5 | 11:00 AM-12:15 PM
Register through Dec 1: \$115 (\$140 through Jan 8)

MDPC Women Newsletter

Whether you're refereeing kids, in a season of transition, or even dealing with a loss, September may feel like a blur. You're not alone! Find some comfort and enjoyment in our first-ever newsletter, with recipes, a fun DIY idea, spiritual and fitness tidbits, and a book review and prayer.

Find the MDPC Women Newsletter around the campus or download a PDF at women.mdpc.org.

The Well: Who Do You Think I Am?

We care what our families, our friends, our coworkers, and even strangers think about us. Behind the social media posts, the volunteer hours, the striving, who do they think we are? And who does God think we are? Join us at The Well to hear a panel of real, honest women talk about how they learned of the way God views them.

Wednesday, Oct 26 | 6:30-8:00 PM | Chapel

Details and RSVP: women.mdpc.org



MDPC MORNING WORSHIP

Congregational Meeting

MDPC Session has called a congregational meeting for the purposes of calling the Rev. Rachel Poysky as Associate Pastor for Children's Ministries; calling the Rev. Brett Hurst as Affiliate Associate Pastor for Relationship Ministries; approving the revised MDPC by-laws, dated August 22, 2016; and dissolving the call between MDPC and the Rev. Dr. Kristin Huffman, effective October 16, 2016.

Today following 9:45 AM Worship | Sanctuary

*Please stand if able.

CCLI # 182374

8:30 AM SERVICE

WELCOME		Dave Steane
*SONGS OF PRAISE		
*PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE		Rachel Poysky
*SONGS OF RESPONSE		
GIFTS OF GRATITUDE		
MESSAGE	<i>Jesus' Sermon on the Mount</i> (Matthew 5:27-37)	Alf Halvorson
RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE		

9:45 AM SERVICE

WORSHIP INVITATION		
*CALL TO WORSHIP		
*MOMENT OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE		Kyle Collins
CHILDREN'S MESSAGE		
GIFTS OF GRATITUDE		Dave Steane
MESSAGE	<i>Jesus' Sermon on the Mount</i> (Matthew 5:27-37)	Alf Halvorson
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING		

Musicians in these services: Joe Gavito, guitar; Meliza Gómez and Michael Middleton, worship leaders; Craig Gysler, keys; Asher Pudlo, drums; Dennis Whittaker, bass

11:15 AM SERVICE

PRELUDE	<i>Two Arias</i>	G.F. Handel (1685-1759)
WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP		Dave Steane
*HYMN OF PRAISE	<i>Praise to the Lord, the Almighty</i>	arr. John Rutter (b. 1941)
*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON		
*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH	From the Apostles Creed	
ANTHEM	<i>O Sing Unto the Lord a New Song</i>	Healey Willan (1880-1968)
OFFERTORY	<i>To the Lamb on the Throne</i>	Dan Forrest (b. 1978)
MESSAGE	<i>Jesus' Sermon on the Mount</i> (Matthew 5:27-37)	Alf Halvorson
*HYMN OF RESPONSE	<i>More Love to Thee, O Christ</i>	#359; Vs. 1, 2 MORE LOVE TO THEE
POSTLUDE	<i>Psalms 20</i>	Gordon Young (1919-1998)

Musicians in this service: Robert Walp, Carrie Schafer, trumpet; Kendall Gray, horn; Ivan Ley, soloist; Rick White, Brian Logan, trombone; Julio Sanchez; Charles Hausmann, conductor; Kathryn White, organ/piano

MORE ON MDPC SUNDAY MORNINGS

11:00 AM FIFTH SERVICE: Join folks at Fifth for energetic worship, dynamic teaching, and casual community. Everyone is welcome! We meet in the Amphitheater. Visit fifthservice.mdpc.org for more.

11:15 AM SPANISH SERVICE: MDPC's Fuente Hispanic Ministries worships in the Chapel. For more information on Spanish and bilingual community events and programs, visit fuente.mdpc.org.

VISITORS: If you are visiting MDPC today, we are delighted that you have come to worship with us! Allow us to welcome you personally at the Connection Center located in the Sanctuary Lobby.

INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP? For inquiries on how to become a member of MDPC, contact Diann Turet at dturet@mdpc.org and join one of our New Member Classes that run throughout the year.

8th Annual

NOCHE DE SABOR

Saturday, September 24
6:00 PM | Fellowship Hall

Come for an evening of Latin American culinary, musical, and artistic traditions!



Sunday, September 25

8:30-9:30 AM | Parlor
Morning's Topic: ANXIETY

Anxiety can affect anyone, at any stage of life. Join **Tim Mavergeorge**, LPC, LMFT, LCDC, to talk about regaining control of our lives and finding serenity despite anxious thoughts and feelings.

The Breakfast Club forums are offered bi-annually on Sunday mornings.



MDPC Marriage Retreat 2016

Saturday-Sunday, Oct 1-2
Woodlands Waterway Marriott
\$210/couple

Spend a weekend relaxing and reconnecting with your spouse! This special experience includes fabulous amenities, a comfortable atmosphere, one-on-one date night, and expert teaching from Brett and Kellie Hurst of Home Encouragement.

Space is limited! marriage.mdpc.org



TRUNK or TREAT

Sunday, October 30

3:00-5:00 PM | Ball Field & Parking Lot

Join other MDPC families to trick-or-treat from car trunk to car trunk and other family-friendly activities. Awards will be given for Best Costume, Best Decorated Trunk, and Best Candy. All are welcome! Please register if you are passing out candy, or signing your child up to participate...

Sign up at men.mdpc.org.



The Venturers at MDPC present

Travel THAT Transforms

With Pastor Alf Halvorson

Monday, October 3

Social Hour 6:00-7:00 PM

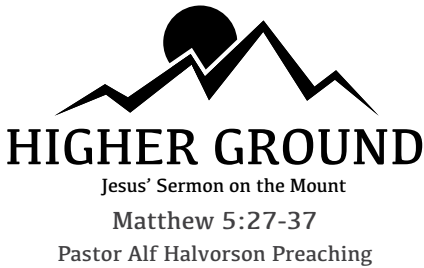
Dinner/Program 7:00 PM

Westchase Hilton (9999 Westheimer Road)

RSVP deadline is **Wednesday, September 28.**

Pick up a flier for registration details.





This is the fourth in a series of messages on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, where He attempts to take His disciples—His climbing companions—to the higher ground of joy and faithfulness. Last week, we talked about nursing or “crock-potting” anger. This week, Jesus centers on lust, divorce, and oaths.

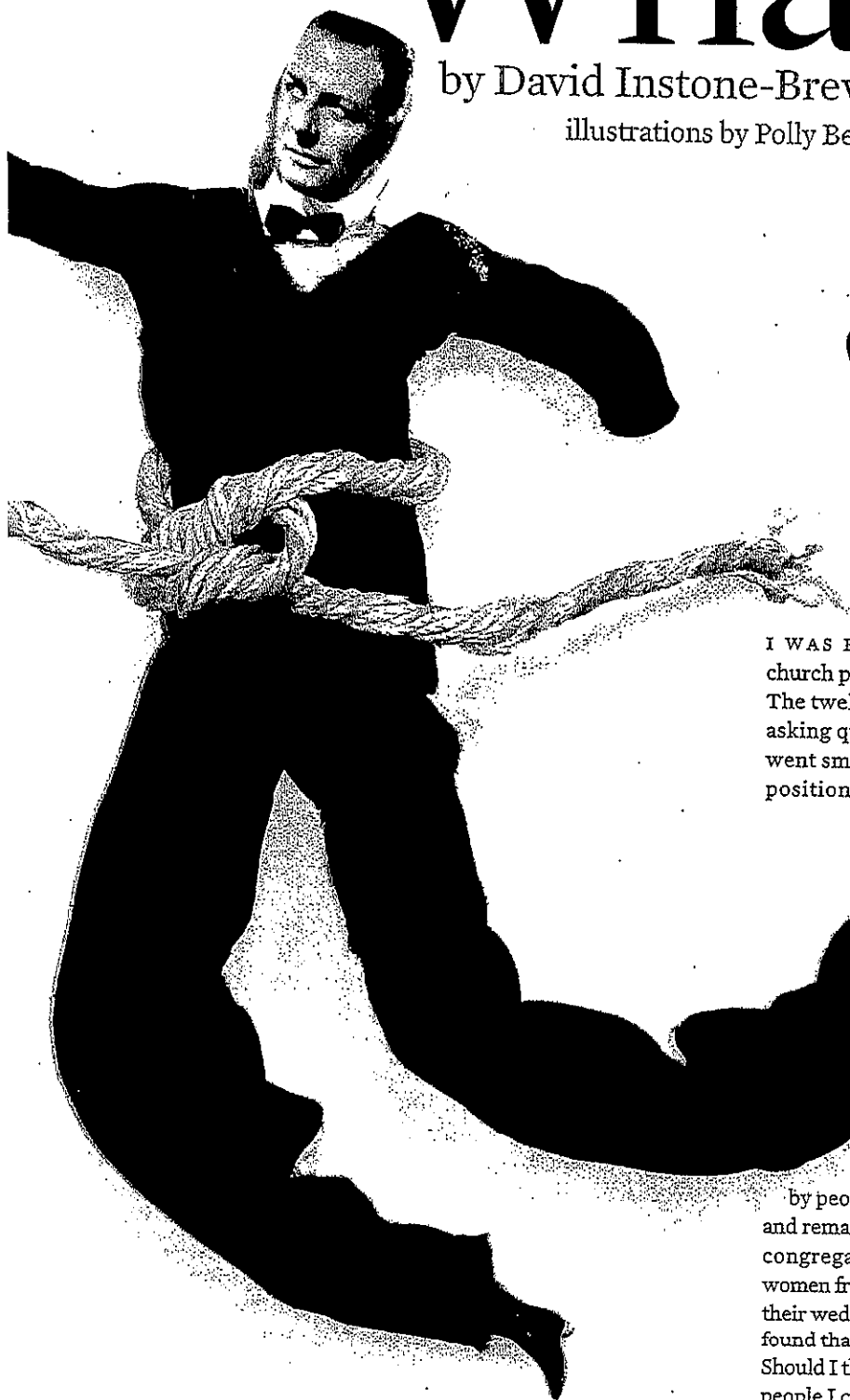
1. Jesus started last week in verse 21 by saying, “You have heard it said ____, but I say to you ____.” He uses that same formula three more times in verses 27-37. What are the three comparisons, and how does Jesus intensify the previous understanding?
2. In verses 29-30, is Jesus to be taken literally or is He using hyperbole? How did Pastor Alf argue one way or the other?
3. If you don't take Jesus literally in verses 29-30, how can you still take His words seriously? What connection does the eye or hand have with the heart here?
4. If we jump over divorce for a minute and go to oaths in verses 33-37, why do you think Jesus says that we don't need to swear an oath, using our parents or our life or Jerusalem or God or anything? Name some examples from the headlines where people or institutions have not followed Jesus' prescription: “let your word be ‘yes, yes’ or ‘no, no’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.” What would happen if you and I were committed to telling the truth?
5. Sandwiched between Jesus' discussion of lust and lying, He addresses the topic of divorce. Pastor Alf shared some shocking statistics. As of 2012, 45% of first marriages in the US end in divorce; 64% of second marriages; and 73% of third. In America today, a divorce happens every 13 seconds; 46,523 a week. If you live together before marriage, it can raise the divorce rate by 40%. And 29% of children living with a divorced parent live below the poverty line. Share your personal story of divorce or how divorce has impacted your extended family...
6. What do you think Jesus is saying in verses 31-32? What is He for? What is He against? Where is grace and hope? Consult these other Scriptures for a more complete understanding of what the Bible says about marriage/divorce: Matthew 19:3-12; 1 Corinthians 7:10-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; Deuteronomy 22:13-19, 24:1-4; Exodus 21:7-11; and Genesis 2:18-24.
7. For you, does unfaithfulness include physical or emotional abuse, as Alf quoted from John Stott and David Instone-Brewer's book, *A Deeper Look at the Sermon on the Mount*? How does a Christian church help troubled married couples and persons who have been divorced? Where do the biblical concepts of repentance, forgiveness, restoration, and resurrection (new life) come into this discussion?
8. What is your “takeaway” (belief and action) from this section (verses 27-37) of Jesus' sermon?



What God

by David Instone-Brewer

illustrations by Polly Becker



I WAS BEING INTERVIEWED for what would be my first church pastorate, and I was nervous and unsure what to expect. The twelve deacons sat in a row in front of me and took turns asking questions, which I answered as clearly as I could. All went smoothly until they posed this question: "What is your position on divorce and remarriage? Would you remarry a divorcée or divorced man?"

I didn't know if this was a trick question or an honest one. There might have been a deep-seated pastoral need behind it, or it might have been a test of my orthodoxy. Either way, I didn't think I could summarize my view in one sentence; when I thought about it further, I couldn't decide exactly what my view was. I gave a deliberately vague reply. "Every case should be judged on its own merits."

It worked; I got the job. But I made a mental note to study the subject of divorce, and to do it quickly.

It's a good thing I did. As it turned out, I was surrounded by people who needed answers to questions raised by divorce and remarriage. My Baptist church was located near an Anglican congregation and two Catholic churches. Divorced men and women from these congregations came asking if we would conduct their weddings, having been denied in their local churches. Then I found that some of my deacons had been divorced and remarried. Should I throw them out of church leadership? If I did, I would lose people I considered some of the most spiritual in the church, people with exemplary Christian homes and marriages.

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WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

The New Testament presents a problem in understanding both what the text says about divorce and its pastoral implications. Jesus appears to say that divorce is allowed only if adultery has occurred: "Whoever divorces a wife, except for sexual indecency, and remarries, commits adultery" (Matt. 19:9). However, this has been interpreted in many different ways. Most say that Jesus allows divorce only for adultery. But some argue that Jesus originally didn't allow even that. Only in Matthew does he offer an

out from marriage: "except for sexual indecency." Beyond what Jesus says, Paul also allows divorce. He permits it for abandonment by a nonbeliever (1 Cor. 7:12-15). Many theologians add this as a second ground for divorce.

Yet some pastors have found this teaching difficult to accept, because it seems so impractical—even cruel in certain situations. It suggests there can be no divorce for physical or emotional abuse, and Paul even seems to forbid separation (1 Cor. 7:10).

As a result, some Christians quietly ignore this seemingly "impractical" biblical teaching or find ways around it. For example, they suggest that when Jesus talked about "sexual immorality," perhaps he included other things like abuse. Or when Paul talked about abandonment by a nonbeliever, perhaps he included any behavior that is not supportive of the marriage or abandonment by anyone who is *acting* like a nonbeliever. Many have welcomed such stretching of Scripture because they couldn't accept what they believed the text apparently said.

But does the literal text mean what we think it does? While doing doctoral studies at Cambridge, I likely read every surviving writing of the rabbis of Jesus' time. I "got inside their heads" enough to begin to understand them. When I began working as a pastor and was confronted almost immediately with divorced men and women who wanted to remarry, my first response was to re-read the Bible. I'd read the biblical texts on divorce many

What does the Bible really teach about divorce?



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times in the past, but I found something strange as I did so again. They now said something I hadn't heard before I read the rabbis!

'ANY CAUSE' DIVORCE

The texts hadn't changed, but my knowledge of the language and culture in which they were written had. I was now reading them like a first-century Jew would have read them, and this time those confusing passages made more sense. My book, *Divorce and Remarriage in the Church* (InterVarsity Press), is a summary of several academic papers and books I began writing with this new understanding of what Jesus taught.

One of my most dramatic findings concerns a question the Pharisees asked Jesus: "Is it lawful to divorce a wife for any cause?" (Matt. 19:3). This question reminded me that a few decades before Jesus, some rabbis (the Hillelites) had invented a new form of divorce called the "any cause" divorce. By the time of Jesus, this "any cause" divorce had become so popular that almost no one relied on the literal Old Testament grounds for divorce.

when you married your wife, could be a cause! The text, they said, taught that divorce was allowed both for adultery and for "any cause."

Another group of rabbis (the Shammaites) disagreed with this interpretation. They said Moses' words were a single phrase that referred to no type of divorce "except immorality"—and therefore the new "any cause" divorces were invalid. These opposing views were well known to all first-century Jews. And the Pharisees wanted to know where Jesus stood. "Is it lawful to divorce your wife for any cause?" they asked. In other words: "Is it lawful for us to use the 'any cause' divorce?"

When Jesus answered with a resounding no, he wasn't condemning "divorce for any cause," but rather the newly invented "any cause" divorce. Jesus agreed firmly with the second group that the phrase didn't mean divorce was allowable for "immorality" and for "any cause," but that Deuteronomy 24:1 referred to no type of divorce "except immorality."

This was a shocking statement for the crowd and for the disciples. It meant they couldn't get a divorce whenever they wanted it—there had to be a lawful cause. It also meant that virtually every divorced man or woman was not really divorced, because most of them had "any cause" divorces.

Jesus didn't reject the *other* ground for divorce

The "any cause" divorce was invented from a single word in Deuteronomy 24:1. Moses allowed divorce for "a cause of immorality," or, more literally, "a thing of nakedness." Most Jews recognized that this unusual phrase was talking about adultery. But the Hillelite rabbis wondered why Moses had added the word "thing" or "cause" when he only needed to use the word "immorality." They decided this extra word implied another ground for divorce—divorce for "a cause." They argued that anything, including a burnt meal or wrinkles not there

Luke and Matthew summarized the whole debate in one sentence: Any divorced person who remarried was committing adultery (Matt. 5:32; Luke 16:18), because they were still married. The fact that they said "any divorced person" instead of "virtually all divorced people" is typical Jewish hyperbole—like Mark saying that "everyone" in Jerusalem came to be baptized by John (Mark 1:5). It may not be obvious to us, but their first readers understood clearly what they meant.

Within a few decades, however, no one understood these terms any more. Language often changes quickly (as I found out when my children first heard the Flintstones sing about "a gay old time"). The early church, and even Jewish rabbis, forgot what the "any cause" divorce was, because soon after the days of Jesus, it became the only type of divorce on offer. It was simply called *divorce*. This meant that when Jesus condemned "divorce for 'any cause,'" later generations thought he meant "divorce for any cause."

REAFFIRMING MARRIAGE

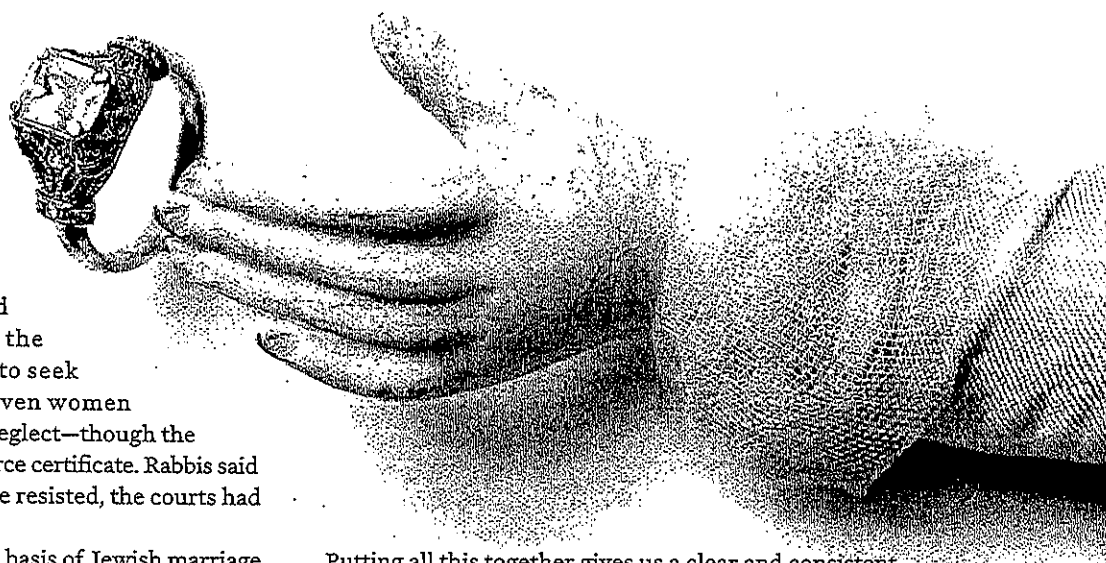
Now that we know what Jesus did reject, we can also see what he *didn't* reject. He wasn't rejecting the Old Testament—he was rejecting a faulty Jewish interpretation of the Old Testament. He defended the true meaning of Deuteronomy 24:1. And there is one other surprising thing he didn't reject: Jesus didn't reject the *other* ground for divorce in the Old Testament, which all Jews accepted.

Although the church forgot the other cause for divorce,



every Jew in Jesus' day knew about Exodus 21:10-11, which allowed divorce for neglect. Before rabbis introduced the "any cause" divorce, this was probably the most common type. Exodus says that everyone, even a slave wife, had three rights within marriage—the rights to food, clothing, and love. If these were neglected, the wronged spouse had the right to seek freedom from that marriage. Even women could, and did, get divorces for neglect—though the man still had to write out the divorce certificate. Rabbis said he had to do it voluntarily, so if he resisted, the courts had him beaten till he volunteered!

These three rights became the basis of Jewish marriage vows—we find them listed in marriage certificates discovered near the Dead Sea. In later Jewish and Christian marriages, the language became more formal, such as "love, honor, and keep." These vows, together with a vow of sexual faithfulness, have always been the basis for marriage. Thus,



Putting all this together gives us a clear and consistent set of rules for divorce and remarriage. Divorce is only allowed for a limited number of grounds that are found in the Old Testament and affirmed in the New Testament:

- *Adultery* (in Deuteronomy 24:1, affirmed by Jesus in Matthew 19)

orce in the Old Testament, which all Jews accepted.

the vows we make when we marry correspond directly to the biblical grounds for divorce.

The three provisions of food, clothing, and love were understood literally by the Jews. The wife had to cook and sew, while the husband provided food and materials, or money. They both had to provide the emotional support of marital love, though they could abstain from sex for short periods. Paul taught the same thing. He said that married couples owed each other love (1 Cor. 7:3-5) and material support (1 Cor. 7:33-34). He didn't say that neglect of these rights was the basis of divorce because he didn't need to—it was stated on the marriage certificate. Anyone who was neglected, in terms of emotional support or physical support, could legally claim a divorce.

Divorce for neglect included divorce for abuse, because this was extreme neglect. There was no question about that end of the spectrum of neglect, but what about the other end? What about abandonment, which was merely a kind of passive neglect? This was an uncertain matter, so Paul deals with it. He says to all believers that they may not abandon their partners, and if they have done so, they should return (1 Cor. 7:10-11). In the case of someone who is abandoned by an unbeliever—someone who won't obey the command to return—he says that the abandoned person is "no longer bound."

Anyone in first-century Palestine reading this phrase would think immediately of the wording at the end of all Jewish, and most Roman, divorce certificates: "You are free to marry anyone you wish."

- *Emotional and physical neglect* (in Exodus 21:10-11, affirmed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7)
- *Abandonment and abuse* (included in neglect, as affirmed in 1 Corinthians 7)

Jewish couples listed these biblical grounds for divorce in their marriage vows. We reiterate them as love, honor, and keep and be faithful to each other. When these vows were broken, it threatened to break up the marriage. As in any broken contract, the wronged party had the right to say, "I forgive you; let's carry on," or, "I can't go on, because this marriage is broken."

Therefore, while divorce *should* never happen, God allows it (and subsequent remarriage) when your partner breaks the marriage vows.

Reading the Bible and ancient Jewish documents side-by-side helped me understand much more of the Bible's teaching about divorce and marriage, not all of which I can summarize here. Dusty scraps of parchment rescued from synagogue rubbish rooms, desert caves, and neglected scholarly collections shone fresh light on the New Testament. Theologians who have long felt that divorce should be allowed for abuse and abandonment may be vindicated. And, more importantly, victims of broken marriages can see that God's law is both practical and loving. ©

David Instone-Brewer is senior research fellow in rabbinics and the New Testament at Tyndale House, Cambridge. He is married with two daughters.

The document below represents the amended MDPC bylaws following our recent affiliation with ECO. They will be voted on this morning at a Congregational Meeting (immediately following the 9:45 AM service).

Bylaws of Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church

Section 1. Statement of Purpose. Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church (“The Church”) is a Texas nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Texas with principal place of business in Houston, Texas. The Church is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 2. Relation to ECO. The Church is a member congregation of ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians, a church denomination (“ECO”), and of the ECO Presbytery exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction over The Church pursuant to the Constitution (the “Presbytery”). As such, The Church abides by the ECO Essential Tenets and is governed by the ECO Polity and Rules of Discipline, respectively. The Essential Tenets, Polity, and Rules of Discipline, as amended from time to time, collectively constitute the ECO Constitution, which is incorporated into and made a part of this document.

This corporation shall constitute the corporation through which The Church shall act legally as described in the Polity. The following Bylaws set forth provisions for the governance and operation of the corporation. These Bylaws shall at all times be subject to the provisions of the Constitution, and the applicable provisions in the Constitution shall take priority over any inconsistent provisions in these Bylaws. These bylaws are also subject to the Texas Business Organizations Code (the “TBOC”) and the Articles of Incorporation of The Church.

Section 3. Governance of The Church. These Bylaws contain provisions for the regulation and management of The Church. While the governance of The Church is covered in both The ECO Polity and Discipline and The Church’s Bylaws, a number of details are not addressed in those documents. The Church’s Policies and Procedures Manual is intended to provide more specificity regarding day-to-day practices of The Church. The Policies and Procedures Manual may be amended at any time by a majority vote of the Session.

Section 4. Meetings of the Congregation. Meetings of the congregation shall be called by the Session, or when requested in writing by one fourth of the active members on the roll of the congregation. An annual meeting of the congregation shall take place in The Church building each year at a time designated by the Session, at which meeting the congregation may hear reports and plans from the Session and other church organizations, and transact business as appropriate. The congregation shall review the adequacy of the compensation of pastors upon report of the prior review by the Session or a Session committee. Special meetings may be called by the Session for purposes appropriate to an annual meeting or such other business as may be proper for congregational consideration, e.g., matters related to electing officers, calling pastors, pastoral relationships, buying, selling, or mortgaging real property, and permissive powers of a congregation. The business to be transacted shall be restricted to that which is specified in the call. At the annual congregational meeting, the congregation shall be provided a written report concerning a review of The Church’s activities for the prior year.

Section 5. Notice of Congregational Meetings. Public notice of the meetings shall be given in printed and verbal form on at least two successive Sundays prior to the meeting, which can take place following worship on the second Sunday. When the meeting is called for the purpose of electing a pastor, the notice shall be given in printed and verbal form at least ten days in advance, which shall include two successive Sundays.

Section 6. Moderator of Congregational Meetings. The Moderator of Session (or his/her designate) shall moderate the meetings of the congregation, and may make such rules for the conduct of congregational meetings as he or she regards as reasonable. When The Church is without a pastor, the executive pastor shall preside. If it is impractical for a pastor or the moderator of the Session to preside, a member of the Session may be invited to preside.

Section 7. Secretary. A clerk of the Session shall serve as secretary of meetings of the congregation. If a clerk is not present or is unable to serve, the congregation shall elect a secretary.

Section 8. Minutes of Congregational Meetings. The minutes of the congregational meeting recorded by the secretary shall be attested by the moderator and the secretary and recorded in the minute book of the Session.

Section 9. Quorum for Meetings of the Congregation. The quorum of a meeting of the congregation shall be the moderator, the secretary, and at least 10% of the active members of the congregation. The secretary shall determine that a quorum is present. Only active members may vote, regardless of age.

Section 10. The Nominating Committee. The congregation shall form one or more Nominating Committees for the purpose of electing Ruling Elders ("Elders") and Pastors. Each Nominating Committee shall be elected by the congregation, with a slate of nominees proposed by the prior Nominating Committee. The policies and procedures for the Nominating Committee are set forth in The Church's Policies and Procedures Manual.

Section 11. The Session. The congregation shall elect Elders normally divided into three equal classes, one class of whom shall be elected each year for a three-year term. An Elder having served his or her three-year term shall be ineligible for re-election to the Session for a second full term for a period of at least 12 months. The Session shall form such committees as necessary to carry out its work, as set forth in The Church's Policies and Procedures Manual. A quorum for a Session meeting shall be the Moderator of Session or other presiding officer and at least one-third of the Elders actively on Session, except for the reception and dismissal of members when the quorum shall be the Moderator and two members of the Session, and except for the serving of the elements of the Lord's Supper to those isolated from the community's worship which can be extended by two or more ordained officers of The Church. Vacancies of the Session may be filled at a special meeting of the congregation or at the annual congregational meeting, as the Session may determine.

Section 12. Dissolution and Distribution. Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, after payment or provision for payment of the Corporation's liabilities have been made, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the District Court of Harris County.

Section 13. Restrictions. No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that The Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other purposes not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from the federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 14. Amendment to the Bylaws. The Session of Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church adopted these Bylaws on August 22, 2016. These Bylaws shall become effective immediately upon their adoption by The Church in a regularly constituted meeting and shall supersede the pre-existing Bylaws. These Bylaws may be amended by Session, subject to the Certificate of Formation and the laws of the State of Texas, by a majority vote of the Session members present, provided that the proposed changes in printed form shall have been distributed at the same time as the call of the meeting at which the changes are voted upon.