slave of, reduce to bondage.” It is a different word than bound.

b) **Bound** (Ro 7:2, 1 Cor 7:39) means “to bind, fasten with chains, to throw into chains, put under obligation, of the law, duty etc.”

c) The “**sanctification**” of the unsaved spouse (1 Cor 7:14) means that God still recognizes the marriage as legitimate. He was not commanding them to divorce as in Ezra’s day. When God says the unbeliever is sanctified he did **not** mean this would save his soul. **Salvation is only by faith.** While marrying an unsaved person is wrong, divorcing them is also wrong. Instead, a Christian must strive to win his or her lost spouse to Christ (1Co 7:16). (1 Peter 3:1-2) "**Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; [2] While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear."

3) Christians are to marry only Christians. This is true...
   a) When remarrying after spouses’ death (1 Cor 7:39).
   b) When marrying the first time (2 Cor 6:14).
   4) For a divorced Christian, remarriage is not a biblical option. If you have already done so, confess it to the Lord and with His help, make the best of your marriage.

**Conclusion:** Let’s ask God to help us learn from history. A Christian should NEVER marry an unbeliever. Mixed marriages are never happy marriages. Though God allowed divorce in Ezra’s day in a special situation to preserve the purity of the line of Christ, Jesus condemned divorce. Divorce today never solves problems, it always creates more. Also, remarriage after a divorce disobeys God and causes many difficult situations.

   God’s way is not always the easy way or the pleasing way, but it is always the **BEST** way.

**Song:** Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord - 337
a) Their ancestors had sinned in Israel (9:5-7).

b) Ezra’s peers were also guilty (9:10-13).

2) God had graciously spared a remnant (i.e., small portion).

a) They were so few that Ezra refers to them as a “nail” in God’s holy place (9:8).

b) It was only of God’s mercy that he spared them (9:9).

3) They were abusing God’s grace again. (9:14-15)

2. The Solution – Dissolve Mixed Marriages

a. Ezra’s broken heart sparked revival

1) He confessed, wept and worshipped (10:1)

a) Revivals often begin with one person truly getting right with God. Confess sin and obey God.

\[
\text{R.A. Torrey once said, “I can give a prescription that will bring revival – revival to any church, or community, or any city on earth. First: Let few Christians get thoroughly right with God. If this is not done, the rest will come to nothing. Second: Let them bind themselves together to pray for revival until God opens the windows of heaven and comes down. Third: Let them put themselves at the disposal of God for His use as He sees fit in winning others to Christ. That is all.”}
\]

b) You could spark a revival in our church. Perhaps God will begin a revival in your heart?

2) The people followed Ezra’s example.

b. Forsaking their sin offered hope

1) They proposed to put away heathen wives (10:3-5).

a) This was necessary to keep the Messianic line pure.

b) Though it does not apply to us, it does serve as a warning and reminder of God’s holiness.

2) They fulfilled their promise (10:19)

3. The Application for Today

a. We do not fit the context of Ezra 9-10.

1) We are not Jews preserving the line of Christ.

2) We have not received a special edict from God as they.

b. In Jesus’ ministry He spoke boldly against divorce.

1) He limited divorce to during engagement.

a) In the next verse, note carefully the use of words fornication and adultery. Fornication is before marriage, adultery is after marriage. Jesus could not have been approving of divorce for adultery after marriage.

b) (Matthew 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."

2) Jesus reinforced original marriage vows.

a) Divorce was never God’s original intent. (Matthew 19:5-8) "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."

b) God has always planned marriage to be for life.

3) Jesus forbad divorce after marriage. (Mark 10:11-12) "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery. [12] And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."

a) This parallel passage to the “exception” verse was written to the Gentiles who did not have a binding betrothal period as did the Jews. No exception is given to Gentiles – and that applies to us.

b) Even in the case of unfaithfulness, forgiveness and restoration are God’s solution – not divorce.

c. Paul also addressed divorce among Gentiles.

1) He said that marriage is for life (Ro 7:2-3, 1 Cor 7:10-11)

2) If an unbelieving spouse departs strictly over spiritual differences, the Christian is not condemned (1 Cor 7:13-16).

a) Bondage comes from a word meaning, “to make a