

3/22/20

### Marriage And Divorce

**Matt. 19:1-12, #12**

The tragic condition of the American society regarding marriage and divorce has become a way of life and what was the norm at one time, marriage for life, has become a thing of the past.

There are many factor that are responsible for our decaying and unstable society, but the number one factor has to be the epidemic of divorce.

The tendency to be lenient on the subject marriage and divorce from the pulpit today is due to the fact that much of the church is married and divorce and there is a fear of offending people, for even in the church some people have been married two, three times or more as Christians.

\* The standard for our lives is the Scriptures not the standard of society!

What Men and Women Really Believe About Marriage, The Day America Told The Truth:88-89

1. Marriage in the 1990's just didn't mean what it always used to mean and this was true across America in every single region.
2. The majority of men and women believed in their hearts it was a good idea to live together before marriage.

3. Almost half of all Americans took the thought one step further: nearly half said that there was no reason too ever get married, even when children were involved, only 32 percent believed a person should do all in a bad marriage for the kids sake.

4. 44 percent of Americans agreed that most marriages would end in divorce, so 59 percent of all Americans believed that it was a smart idea to draw up a prenuptial agreement, just in case.

5. Americans used to have the reputation of marrying for love, whereas people in other lands married for family connections, dowries, or other more worldly reasons. Not any more: Only one in three Americans gave love as their primary reason for marrying in the 90's.

George Barna wrote, *The Frog in the Kettle*, giving the attitude towards marriage, sex and children in the 90's.

1. He said the traditional family is dead and we have become a nation of friendless adults, "Marriage is an outdated institution".
2. The average American family in 1990 consisted of a married couple with one child, in which both parents were employed. At least one of the parents was likely to have been divorced, or would be divorced.
3. There was also a growing trend toward partners having children without being married.
4. In 1990, about one of every fifteen children were born out of wedlock. (pp.66)

5. Half of all adults under the age of 30 lived with someone before they got married.

6. 60% of recently married adults stated they lived with their new spouse before getting married.

\* Unmarried people living together quadrupled since 1970-90's.

\* Census Bureau statistics suggest that people who cohabitate before marriage are even more likely than others to get divorced.

I want you and I to understand the seriousness of marriage and the fact that you can not blame anyone but yourself for entering a marriage.

1. Our marriages are more than for our own self interest for they produce the families that make up society.

2. The happiness of my and your marriage is not the primary reason for marriage, but marriage is to produce a healthy and orderly society, honoring it's Creator, happiness is a by-product.

We want to look at Matthew's section on marriage, divorce and remarriage by the very words of Jesus to be clear on what Scripture teaches. Matt. 19:1-12

19:1 Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, that He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.

2 And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.

3 The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"

4 And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,'

5 "and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"

6 "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

7 They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"

8 He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

9 "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

10 His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

11 But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given:

12 "For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it."

We want to look at seven things in this section about marriage, divorce and remarriage. Matt. 19:1-12

I. The setting of marriage and divorce. vs. 1-2

- II. The subject of divorce from marriage. vs. 3
  - III. The sound teaching on marriage. vs. 4-6
  - IV. The selfish demand in divorce. vs. 7-8
  - V. The single reason for divorce and remarriage. vs. 9
  - VI. The scary consideration of marriage and divorce. vs. 10
  - VII. The sane perspective for being single or married. vs. 11-12
- I. **The setting of marriage and divorce. vs. 1-2**
- A. Jesus has just finished the teaching on forgiveness, which reveals man's selfish and wicked heart. Matt. 18:21-35, vs. 1a-b
    - 1. This is no coincidence for unforgiveness is one of the biggest reasons for divorces.  
\* Matthew is addressing the Jew.
    - 2. The section is unique of Matthew with the intent of the Holy Spirit regarding the evil servant who would not forgive the little owed to him in view of the great amount forgiven to him by his master.
    - 3. Jesus moved out from Galilee down to Judea by crossing over the Jordan, so as not to go through Samaria.
  - B. Jesus is departing from Galilee towards Jerusalem by way of Perea on the east side of Jordan. vs. 1c

- 1. This is the way the Jews would travel, so as not to go through Samaria.
  - 2. The other way was down the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, on the Via Mares.
- C. Jesus returns to the ministry of the multitudes and healed them there. vs. 2
- 1. Mark tells us He was also teaching them. Mk. 10:1
  - 2. Jesus was always with the people meeting their needs.

*The setting of marriage and divorce was forgiveness!*

- II. **The subject of divorce from marriage. vs. 3**
- A. The Pharisees came testing Jesus to trap Him. vs. 3a-b
    - 1. This is not the first or last occasion that the Pharisees came to test Jesus.
    - 2. Their motive was to try and trap Jesus regarding the Law.
    - 3. Jesus was perfect and it drove them crazy.
  - B. The question posed to Jesus regarded divorce, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?" vs. 3c-d
    - 1. Shammai taught adultery was the only reason, he was the conservative.

- a. A woman could never divorce in Israel except for a man being impotent, lack of providing and leprosy.
  - b. The Jewish community had the highest view of women, but still it was a low view, to bear children and she was never taught the Law.
  - c. Christianity has exalted the woman to such a high view that she is said to be protected and provided for by her husband, as Christ the church.
2. Hillel taught that a man could divorce his wife for any reason, he was the liberal.
    - a. If she burned your beagles.
    - b. If she spoke to a man in public.
    - c. Today we called it, “irreconcilable reasons”.
  3. Rabbi Akeba said that if you saw a woman more beautiful than your wife, she would become unclean before your eyes and that was a reason for divorce.
    - a. All of this demonstrating the selfishness of man’s heart.
    - b. Ever since the fall, man seeks personal liberty, rather than responsibility, the permissive agenda.
    - c. We witnessed the breakdown of morals from the 60’s on promoting free love and no right and wrong, which destroyed innocence, undermining the stability and permanence of marriages and society.

- d. The 70’s, 80’s and 90’s blossomed these so called “freedom seeds” into life-styles of moral confusion, material bondage and self-destruction not valuing marriage and the family.
- e. The multiplicity of sexual partners and homosexual and bi-sexual life-styles that have been embraced by our society have only increased the epidemic and death through AIDS, not to mention the numerous STD that are out of control and not even mention today.
- f. One man and one woman is always the best formula for true happiness and the greatest safety as God declared from the beginning.

***The subject of divorce from marriage was a liberal interpretation!***

### **III. The sound teaching on marriage. vs. 4-6**

- A. Jesus in response pointed back to God’s original design in creation, He created male and female, distinct and different in kind, Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve. vs. 4
  1. The question, “Have you not read”, is a rebuke about their ignorant arrogance, the record was there for all to examine, male and female.” Gen. 1:27; 5:2

- a. Today our perverted society is promoting all kinds of sick alternate life styles, that are neither alternate nor honored by God.
  - b. If you work for the telephone company you never connect a phone with two male jacks or female jacks!
2. The record of Genesis is clear, God's creation and design of male and female can reproduce according to it's own kind.
- a. Homosexuals and lesbians can not reproduce a child.
  - b. Yet our society respects and protects their right to adopt or be artificially inseminated to have a child.
- B.** Jesus declared the purpose and design of God for male and female was marriage. vs. 5
1. Marriage is the reason a man leaves his father and mother's home.
- \* The word leave "kataleipo", means to separate and sever the former relation, but it does not mean abandonment.
2. Marriage joins a man to his wife and they become one flesh.
- a. One household, a new unit and intimacy to perpetuate society, in the oneness of the two sexually, resulting in children of the two of them.
  - \* That is why it is called "Holy Matrimony", it is a sacred

- commitment for life that is not to be treated as something common!
  - b. One household distinct from the one you left.
  - \* The marriage ceremony is before God and witnesses, declaring that you are selecting this one person from all others for your devotion in holiness and fidelity till death.
3. Oneness so much that within time you begin to be more like each other, your expression, mannerisms, though you still have your individual personality.
- \* Then you look over and you see these traits in your children also.
- C.** Jesus declared that male and female can never be two after marriage, "but one flesh". vs. 6
1. Sex constitutes one flesh, a physical and spiritual union, but it doesn't constitute or demand a permanent union before God, apart from marriage. vs. 6a
- \* It is the only sin against your own body!  
1Cor. 6:17-18
2. Marriage is a divine institution that binds you permanently "as one flesh", that makes you one in the eyes of God, giving you the privilege of sexual oneness by the vow. vs. 6a
- \* You become one at the alter and celebrate the oneness in your honeymoon bed!

3. What God joins together, no one is to separate. vs. 6b-c
  - a. The word joined “prokollao” means to glue, the two being one. vs. 5
  - b. The phrase “has joined together” “suzeugnumi” means to fasten to one yoke, to united.
  - c. The word separate “chorizo” is used for divorce in the context and means to depart or to place room between.
    - \* Marriage is a devotion to be obedient and disciplined by denying self!
4. The sad thing today in marriages is too few have any history together, rather they have accumulated years by several marriages.
  - a. History with one person through the difficult times, raising children, being bound together, as one, as to no other person.
  - b. History that can look back on God’s grace and both of your obedience to make the marriage work, rather than calling it quits.
  - c. It is one thing to say to each other, “Lets go see the kids” and another to say, “Lets go see my son or daughter”.
  - d. Whatever you think you can handle mentally, you will not be able to handle it, emotionally and practically!

*The sound teaching on marriage has never changed!*

#### **IV. The selfish demand in divorce. vs. 7-8**

- A. Jesus is confronted by the Pharisees with the concession, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?” vs. 7
  1. The concession is found in the book of Deuteronomy. Deut. 24:1-4
    - \* They thought the text would trap Jesus!
  2. The concession within the Law was a decent provision, so as to not have society all fractured by all manner of divorce.
    - \* It recognized the reality of divorce, but it did not condone or make it easy!
  3. The provision was for some uncleanness found in the woman, but it is not specified and had come to be used liberally, for any and very cause.
    - a. The word uncleanness “ervah”, means the nakedness of a thing, indecency or shameful exposure.
    - b. The only other place this noun form “ervah” appears is for keeping the camp clean of excrement, so Yahweh not see some unclean thing. Deut. 23:13-14
  4. The passage could not refer to adultery, for the penalty was death. Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22-24

5. The provision was to protect the woman from being abused and not live under an unfavorable conditions and to have a legal document for her release from the marriage before two witnesses.
6. The provision of Deuteronomy was really a warning to the husband to consider well what he was giving up because he could not take her back once she remarried, even if the second husband died, for he had divorced her without sexual unfaithfulness and caused her to become sexually defiled by her second husband.

\* It was to discourage divorce, not a bill of divorce!

**B.** Jesus revealed the reason for the concession given to man by Moses. vs. 8

1. The reason, “Because of the hardness of your hearts.” vs. 8a-c
  - a. The unforgiving servant in the parable is the number one reason for hardening one’s heart. Matt. 18:21-35
  - b. Man’s heart is evil and the source of all evil. Jer. 17:9; Matt. 15:18-19
  - c. The heart of our society and some believers is love for self, not others.
    - \* The unwillingness to forgive and humble myself, like Christ!

2. The concession was to regulate some control and soundness in Israel’s society, “permitted you to divorce your wives.” vs. 8d
  - a. He permitted “epitrepo”, allowed, in hope that having to go through legal proceeding would cause the man to think through the long-term consequences.
    - 1) People today only think of the immediate release and freedom!
    - 2) NO-fault divorce of the 70’s devastated our nation, offering no protection to women and children!
  - b. The allowance of divorce would not become the norm and marriage would not lose it’s seriousness in life, and those who were divorced would live with a sense of guilt and shame, instead of not being bothered by their break-up.
    - \* Social guilt and shame are good in certain things, it tells us what we did is wrong!
  - c. I am not saying that you are to live with guilt, if you have been divorce, provided it is a Biblical divorce, for Christ has made us new creatures, but we better not move on in life, think nothing of our divorce!
3. The ideal and original plan and design of God did not include divorce. vs. 8e
  - a. The beginning pointed to the creation of Adam and Eve. Gen. 2

- b. They were to be one spiritually, sexually and socially one, not two.

*The selfish demand in divorce is the hardness of heart!*

**V. The single reason for divorce and remarriage. vs. 9**

- A. Jesus declared He is the ultimate authority on marriage and divorce. vs. 9a-c
  - 1. Jesus said, “I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality”, this is the only reason allowed for divorce, sexual unfaithfulness.
    - a. The word sexual immorality “porneia” translated fornication has a broader meaning than just sex before marriage, it refers to all kinds of sexual sin.
      - \* The word pornography comes from it.
    - b. The context of our text is marriage, therefore the meaning is adultery.
      - 1) The word divorce “apoluo”, means to release, put away or send away and used by Jesus in all other passages of divorce. Matt. 5:32, 19:3, 7, 8, 9; Mk. 10:2, 4, 11, 12; Lk. 16:18
      - 2) The word is used of being relieved of one’s occupation, permission to leave a country and a veteran released from his long service.

- c. Adultery is violating the covenant of companionship in marriage by having sex with another, who is not your mate, while being married. Mal. 2:14
  - \* This is the single reason for a Biblical divorce according to the words of Jesus, the ultimate authority, “I say to you”.
- d. Paul confirms this, the responsibility of both believers is to not depart “chorizo”, if there has been no adultery, but to reconcile. 1Cor. 7:10-11
  - 1) The same word is used by Jesus, “Let no man separate “chorizo”, depart. Matt. 19:6d
  - 2) The believing husband or wife is not to divorce “aphiemi”, to send away and remarry, when there is no sin of adultery. Matt. 19:6d; 1Cor. 7:10-11
  - 3) There is no provision in the Scriptures for Christians separating, for the context of Matthew, Mark, Luke and First Corinthians is divorce!
- e. Paul speaks of another reason for the believer who is married to an unbeliever and the unbeliever departs “chorizo” divorces the believer or abandons them. 1Cor. 7:15
  - \* But the believer is not to divorce “aphiemi” the unbelieving wife or

- husband, if they are willing to live with them. 1Cor. 7:12-13
2. Some have attempted to interpret “porneia” by Jesus to mean sex before marriage, the person not being a virgin.
    - a. If you take this interpretation you would be revealing the hardness of your heart to forgive and that your motive to marry the person was not love, but an ideal.
    - b. Also if the person is a Christian, you would be denying the forgiveness of all their sins by their new birth.
    - c. Now, if you have fallen short, sexually, you need to be honorable and tell the person you are going to marry, to not undermine trust in the marriage or living a miserable life.
    - d. You never know how a person is going to response!
  3. Also, if it means fornication, sex before marriage, then Jesus didn’t answer their question because sex before marriage is sin against the person’s own body and God. 1Cor. 6:17-18
    - a. But put yourself in a person’s shoes who is lied to and deceived, it has a great sense of betrayal and devastation, yet the guilty party should not just treat the dishonest omission lightly and simply use their Christianity to dispel the issue.

- b. You need to explain truthfully what is needed to resolve the deception and betrayal, for the good of the marriage to regain trust for the future.
    - \* An unbiblical divorce leads to adultery.
- B.** Jesus declared the guilty party can not remarry. vs. 9d-f
1. If there is no adultery to violate the covenant between the husband and wife and divorce and one or both remarry adultery is committed, they are to reconcile, “and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”
    - a. The one initiating the divorce causes the innocent party to commit adultery and the one who marries her or him. Matt. 5:32
    - b. Jesus is saying He does not recognize a civil divorce between believers, they in fact commit adultery!
    - c. You are married and not to date!
  2. If the innocent party wants to exercise their right to divorce, due to adultery, they can for this is their Scriptural allowance.
    - a. If they choose not to divorce their mate, but rather to forgive them in view of the repentance, this is also their option, but once chosen you can not renege on it in

- the future for what is forgiven is forgotten, as it does for us.
- b. The innocent party is not commanded to divorce, it is an option allowed, God prefers reconciliation, if at all possible!
  3. The guilty party who commits adultery, if they remarry commit adultery and the person who marries them.
    - a. Here in is the potential problem, some individuals may divorce with this very idea, “Well I will just repent after and remarry my girl friend”, well that decision is made before God not man, He knows the motive of the heart in superficial or false repentance. Mal. 2:13-17; Matt. 5:31-32
      - \* Genuine repentance does forgive the sin of an unbiblical divorce, it is not the unforgivable sin, but you live with the consequences, the baggage and qualifications for service!
    - b. So remarriage is allowed, only to another believer, when there is the **death** of a mate, **divorce** for adultery and **abandonment** of the believer by an **unbelieving** mate. 1Cor. 7:12-16, 39; 1Tim. 5:14
    - c. The prohibition of Deuteronomy that a wife could not go back to her first husband if she was released from her second marriage, is not applicable today.

- 1) If they were unbelievers, they are forgiven for their past.
- 2) If they were believers, repented and forgive each other, then they can remarry.
  - \* Debbie and Richard remarried ten years after their divorce by the grace of God!

***The single reason for divorce and remarriage is adultery!***

**VI. The scary consideration of marriage and divorce. vs. 10**

- A. The disciples of Jesus were in agreement with Hillel, the liberal.
  1. They were shocked at what Jesus said.
  2. They were of the mind “for every cause”.
  3. They were liberal in their thinking.
- B. The disciples considered that if that be the only reason for divorce, “adultery”, “it’s better not to marry.”
  1. The problem with this is that not all have the gift of celibacy. 1Cor. 7:17, 20
  2. The average person is created for marriage and family and are to confine their sexual contentment with their own husband and wife. 1Cor. 7:1-6

3. A person is not to enter into marriage lightly, but fully consider the seriousness and permanency of marriage, till death!

*The scary consideration of marriage and divorce is that marriage is for life!*

## VII. The sane perspective for being single or married. vs. 11-12

- A. Jesus declared not all have the gift of being single, “But He said to them, “All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given.” vs. 11
  1. God distributes to each a gift. 1Cor. 7:17-24
  2. God declares no one is superior to the other, knowing your gift will allow you to serve without distraction. 1Cor. 7:25-40
- B. Jesus declares various types of singles. vs. 12
  1. Eunuchs who are born by physical compulsion, “from their mother’s womb.”
  2. “Eunuchs who are made by men”. for security over a harem.
  3. Eunuchs by choice “for the kingdom of God.”
    - a. By the gift.
    - b. By the commitment, be it for the rigor or danger, to not impose it on a mate.
  4. Sexual passions do not go away just because you are married and if you marry just because you are burning in lust, you will

find that lust does not go away, even if you are married.

- a. Marriage is binding not by sex, but God’s divine institution of marriage.
- b. Marriage can only be dissolved by adultery or death.
- c. Marriage is not superior to singleness, only a different call.
- d. Marriage is binding for life.

*The sane perspective for being single or married is to know your call!*

### **Illustration**

In a 1986 Ladies Home Journal report, 350,000 readers revealed that 83.4% of unfaithful wives divorced. (Case Against Divorce-pp. 27) “The increasing prevalence of divorce and working women has turned child care into a major growth industry. Here again we can see the shift in people’s priorities. In the 60’s and earlier, the dominant goal in life for most mothers was to raise healthy, happy, well-adjusted children. Today, the goal of most parents (men and women) is to be personally fulfilled in all walks of life.

*\* This was 34 years ago!*

“Dietrich Bonhoeffer, sitting in a Nazi prison cell, once wrote a wedding sermon for a niece who was about to be married. In it he said, 'Marriage is more than your love for each other. It has a higher dignity and power, for it is God's holy ordinance, through

which he will to perpetuate the human race till the end of time.”

“In your love you see only your two selves in the world, but in marriage you are a line in the chain of the generations, which God causes to come and to pass away to his glory, and calls into his kingdom. In your love you see only the heaven of your happiness, but in marriage you are placed at a post of responsibility towards the world and mankind. Your love is your own private possession, but marriage is more than something personal - it is a status, and office.”

### **Conclusion**

I pray you and I understand what Jesus taught on marriage, divorce and remarriage, in view of these seven points.

- I.** The setting of marriage and divorce is forgiveness!
- II.** The subject of divorce was a liberal interpretation!
- III.** The sound teaching on marriage has never changed!
- IV.** The selfish demand in divorce is the hardness of heart!
- V.** The single reason for divorce and remarriage is adultery!
- VI.** The scary consideration of marriage and divorce is that marriage is for life!

- VII.** The sane perspective for being single or married is to know your call!