

Matthew 19


Matthew 19:1-12 - The King loves Marriage!

Scriptures:

¹ Now it came to  pass, when Jesus  had

Notes:

This marks the end of Jesus' Galilean ministry. From here on He is headed to Jerusalem and His appointment on the cross.

finished these sayings, *that*  He departed from

Galilee and came to the region of Judea

beyond the Jordan.

Scriptures:

² And great multitudes followed Him , and He 

Notes:

This is a consistent theme in Christ's ministry – people needed healing and Jesus healed them. What follows seems to be a common theme also. Wherever the power of God was manifesting, someone was standing up to resist it.


healed them there.

In the same way Satan tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden and Jesus in the wilderness, these guys slither up to Jesus to try to get Him to say something they can accuse Him of.

³ The Pharisees also came to Him, testing

G3985 - try to trap, attempt to catch in a mistake.

Notes:

Why did they believe they could trap Jesus with this question? It is because there were different opinions and beliefs regarding marriage in the culture and in the religious establishment. They were trying to see which group Jesus would align Himself with on this topic.

Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man

G1832 - is it allowed.

It is no different today. We are in an election year (2024) and candidates are being asked where they stand on those topics in which the country is divided. Today those topics include the immigration crisis, the war in Israel and Ukraine, the economy, and several others.

to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?"

G630 - to send away.

G156 -

Most of those topics are much more complicated than the topic they are confronting Jesus with here. But, in the end, the answer to all such questions is found in knowing God's heart, mind, nature, will, and Word. The better we know God, the better we can navigate the complicated issues of life and this world.

The question they are asking Jesus is based on the reality that some in the culture and religious establishment taught that a man could divorce his wife for almost any reason. As always, some would take that to the further extreme of ridiculousness and wickedness.

In Jesus' day there were conservatives and liberals in the Jewish religious establishment. They are telling Jesus to pick a side. This is a choice between lust and law. The liberals wanted complete freedom to do whatever their desires demanded. The conservatives wanted strict adherence to God's laws.

The sanctity of marriage has been under attack for a long time. Satan knows that if he can corrupt the concept of marriage, he can hinder the image of God's creation. Many treat it as a relationship of convenience. Some disregard it entirely. And some make a mockery of it. Glynn Wolfe, an American Baptist Minister, holds the record of being married 31 times from 1928 to 1996. His last marriage was a publicity stunt with Linda Taylor, the woman who holds the record for women at 23 marriages. When Glynn Wolfe died, no one claimed his body, and none of his former wives attended his funeral. And only one of his 19 children attended.

Scriptures:

Malachi 2:13-15 -

And this is the second thing you do:

You cover the altar of the LORD with tears,
With weeping and crying;
So He does not regard the offering anymore,
Nor receive it with goodwill from your hands.

14 Yet you say, "For what reason?"

Because the LORD has been witness

Between you and the wife of your youth,

With whom you have dealt treacherously;

Yet she is your companion

And your wife by covenant.

15 But did He not make them one,

Having a remnant of the Spirit?

And why one?

He seeks godly offspring.

"Therefore take heed to your spirit,

And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.

Scriptures:

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,*'

Genesis 1:27

5 and said, '*For this reason a man shall leave*

Genesis 2:24

his father and mother and be joined to his

G4347 – to be united to. "to cling ⇔ glue oneself to v. — to be emotionally or intellectually attached to someone; conceived of as gluing or attaching oneself to something else."

wife, and the two shall become one flesh ?

G4561 – body.

Notes:

When God created mankind, He did it on purpose and with a purpose. He also put men and women together for a purpose. And it was not just to eliminate Adam's aloneness (Malachi 2:13-15).

Notes:

Everything about verses 5 and 6 speaks of unity. Marriage is a picture of the unity of God. Just as the Trinity of three persons in One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, marriage is a tri-unity of three persons man, woman, and God. And just as the unity of God cannot be broken, the unity of marriage should not be broken. The doctrine of the Trinity and of marriage is one + one + one = one.

Marriage is a covenant relationship between God and a man and a woman for life. Once a covenant is established by God, only God can annul it.

God takes these covenants seriously. That is symbolized the description of the covenant God made with Abraham (Genesis 15:7-10; 17-21).

By passing through the sacrifices God was saying that should He violate the covenant that He should be cut in two like the sacrifices. God cannot break the covenant; therefore, the promises are certain.

When a couple enters the covenant of marriage, they are making a vow to God that He takes very seriously and only death should break that vow.

Scriptures:

Genesis 1:27-28a - So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it..."

^{67+ ♀}
6 So then, they are no longer two but one

Notes:

Marriage is not a human creation. It is God-ordained. And because we believe God is sovereign, we believe that when two people come together in marriage that God is involved. This is even true when unbelievers marry.

In the creation God made man and woman and blessed them and then gave them a mission ([Genesis 1:27-28a](#)). God created man and woman to be the objects of His love and grace and to worship Him and Him alone. When God told them to be fruitful and multiply, He expected them to procreate and fill the earth with God-worshippers that He could love through His grace. Marriage was the vehicle through which they would accomplish this mission.

To abandon marriage is to abandon God's mission and purpose for them. To break this covenant with God exposes them to the consequences of being out of God's will. The people of Malachi's time were experiencing those consequences ([Malachi 2:13-15](#)).

flesh. Therefore what God

has joined together, let not man separate."

G4801 – yoked.

G5563 -

Scriptures:

^P
7 They said to Him, "Why then

Notes:

did Moses command to give a certificate of

G1781 – order.

G975 – notice.

divorce, and to put her away?"

G630 – divorce.

Scriptures:
Malachi 2:16 -
For the LORD God of
Israel says
That He hates divorce,
For it covers one's
garment with violence,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
Therefore take heed to
your spirit,
That you do not deal
treacherously.

8 ^{nt} He said to them, ^P "Moses, because

of the hardness of your ^{P or A} hearts, permitted you ^P

G4641 - stubbornness, hardness
of heart, obstinacy, obduracy.
"unfeelingness ⇔
hardheartedness n. — a
resolute, unfeeling adherence to
one's own ideas or desires."

G2010 – allowed.

to divorce your ^P wives, [♀] but from the beginning [Ⓐ]

it was not so.

Notes:
Moses was dealing with people who
had little or no knowledge of God
and His ways. They had come out of
four hundred years in pagan Egypt
and all they knew were the ways of a
godless society.

What is hardness of heart? Another
word that might be used is
'unfeelingness'. To be hard of heart
is to be unfeeling toward someone
or something. In the case of
marriage, to be hard of heart is to be
unfeeling to your spouse and
unfeeling about God's will for your
marriage.

God has made His feelings clear on
the topic of divorce ([Malachi 2:16](#)).
To seek a divorce, knowing how God
feels about divorce is a sign of a hard
heart – a heart unfeeling toward
God.

If you take away hard-heartedness,
you take away divorce.

Scriptures:
Matthew 5:31-32 -
Furthermore it has been
said, 'Whoever divorces his
wife, let him give her a
certificate of divorce.'
32 But I say to you that
whoever divorces his wife
for any reason except
sexual immorality causes
her to commit adultery;
and whoever marries a
woman who is divorced
commits adultery.

Deuteronomy 22:22 - If a
man is found lying with a
woman married to a
husband, then both of
them shall die—the man
that lay with the woman,
and the woman; so you
shall put away the evil from
Israel.

⁹ And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife,

except for sexual immorality, and marries

G4202 –
fornication.

another, commits adultery; and whoever

marries her who is divorced commits

adultery.”

marriage. As they go through life walking humbly before their God and with each other standing on the truth of God's Word, they will be able to face the challenges and struggles life always brings. They will be able to weather the storms caused by sin through reconciliation and forgiveness. No matter how much damage has been done to a marriage, God has the power to heal it and make it whole and one again. And they will experience together the abundant life that Jesus promised. And the 'little ones' God has put in your life, whether they are children or just less mature believers will be strengthened and given a vision for God's will for their own life.

allowed for. Whatever is going on in the relationship, Matthew 18 must be applied before divorce is to be considered.

The sense of Jesus' words here are that if someone gets divorced, they are so stay single or be reconciled back to their spouse.

Marriage is hard. It is two sinners living in close proximity with one another. And if they have children, they are adding more sinners to the equation. Marriage is hard but God loves marriage. When two people humble their heart before God and each other, God can help them through the hard parts of marriage and cause His glory to shine forth to the whole world. God has given us the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and the church family to help us through the hard times. When we allow them to help us do the hard work of reconciliation and practice forgiveness, the world witnesses the power of God at work.

But, if the world sees Christians getting divorced, they will wonder if there is a God at all, since He couldn't fix a broken marriage.

Nothing in this universe declares the glory and power of God like two people committed to each other for life in the God-ordained covenant of

Notes:
Jesus also said this in the Sermon on the Mount ([Matthew 5:31-32](#)).

Notice, Jesus says, 'I say to you...'. Jesus is speaking with His authority as King of the kingdom of heaven. Indulgence had been given for a time, but now that time was past. Jesus speaks as the Holy Lawgiver. Jesus is claiming to have more authority than Moses.

Marriage is a covenant relationship between two people and God for a lifetime. Only God has a right to end that covenant.

The reason Jesus calls it adultery when people divorce is because they may be divorced in the world's eyes but in God's eyes, they are still 'one flesh'. The divorce happened because of hardness of heart of one or both people.

God's will is not divorce – it is oneness. This text on marriage follows chapter 18 for a reason. Matthew 18:15-18 teaches us the doctrine of reconciliation. God is seeking unity in the body of Christ, and in our marriages and family. Before divorce, every effort should be made to reconcile. And then the rest of chapter 18 teaches us the importance of forgiveness.

Almost all divorces could be prevented if people would just repent of their sins to one another and practice forgiveness.

Chapter 18 begins with a warning about causing on of Christ's little ones to stumble into sin. The literal interpretation of 'little ones' is children. It is always the children who suffer most when two people divorce. 'Little ones' can also be interpreted to be believers who are weak or immature in their faith. When two people divorce they are not the only ones who are affected. It can damage or wreck the faith of those who are not spiritually mature enough to handle it.

An exception is given for sexual immorality. While an exception is allowed that doesn't mean it is required. Reconciliation and forgiveness is always possible. But why does Jesus make this allowance for sexual immorality. When a spouse has sexual relations outside their marriage, they have done great damage to the relationship. In the OT, the consequence for adultery was death ([Deuteronomy 22:22](#)). Adultery brings death into the marriage relationship. Other things bring death into the relationship, like abuse, that might need to be

Scriptures:

10 His disciples said to Him, "If such is the

Notes:

This was a thought born out of their Jewish culture. Jesus just said that a man shouldn't divorce his wife for any reason. Their response is to say, 'Then it is better not to marry rather than risk being in a marriage where you are not happy.'

case of the man with [♂]his wife, it is better not

G4851 - be advantageous; (as an impersonal verb) it is good, it is better, it is beneficial.

to marry."

Scriptures:

11 But He said to them, "All cannot accept this

Notes:

When God created men and women, He gave them physical desires for intimacy that foster unity in marriage and result in procreation. A covenant marriage is the only relationship where God allows those desires to be fulfilled. Intimacy outside of marriage is fornication – it is sin! For most people it is best if they marry so that they can enjoy those God-implanted desires in a way that glorifies God.

saying, but only *those* to whom

G5562 -

But for some, not a lot, God has called to singleness by eliminating those desires. Only those who have been called and equipped to singleness should consider it a calling from God.

it has been given:

G1325 -

Scriptures:
Colossians 3:23-24 - And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

¹² For there are eunuchs who were born thus

G2135 -

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*."

Notes:

Singleness is not a sin. But only those who can accept singleness are called to do it.

In Revelation 7 144,000 Jewish evangelists are called by God to proclaim the gospel around the world during the Tribulation. The Bible describes them as virgin men. They are called to witness of Christ during a time of great suffering and persecution. God spares them the agony of worrying about spouses and children during that horrific time by calling them to holy singleness.

Jesus draws their attention back to the main point. It is not about marriage or singleness – it is about the kingdom of heaven. Whether you are married or single, your greatest desire ought to be the kingdom of heaven. And whether God calls you to marriage or singleness it is so that He can use you to proclaim the kingdom of heaven to the lost people of this world. If you are married, your marriage can do that. If you are single, your singleness can do that. Whether married or single, do it for the Lord and His kingdom (Colossians 3:23-24).

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