

Divorce and Remarriage

Scripture Reading: **Matthew 19:3-9**

Introduction: There are times when things must be preached on that...

- May not be well received
- May not be easily understood
- Or may be sore spot with some in the congregation

I have been hired to preach the truth and a true preacher of God's Word will not preach what the masses want to hear, but rather what they need to hear, which the TRUTH of Gods Word.

- **Acts 20:27**, "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God"
- **II Timothy 4:1-4**, "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

So it is with today's lesson on divorce and remarriage. This is not an easy topic for a new preacher to bring before a congregation, but a needed lesson nonetheless.

It was Paul who stood before his peers after being baptized into Christ's death and preached God's Word and so it is with me today as I labor to bring out an unpopular and highly debated subject.

The purpose of this lesson is to focus on the truth as taught by Jesus in **Matthew 19:9(Ask congregation to read along with you)**

I want to approach this lesson by breaking it into three 'T's'.

- The Temptation
- The Truth
- The Test (Arguments against the Truth)

LESSON:

I. THE TEMPTATION

A. The Question: **Matthew 19:3**, "Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?"

1. The Pharisees asked the question to tempt Jesus
2. Their motive was not pure, but they wanted Him to choose sides in the dispute at hand.

B. The Jews had two schools of thought concerning divorce and remarriage.

1. The School of Hillel.
 - i. This school taught that a man could divorce his wife for even the slightest of offenses, based upon what Moses said in **Deuteronomy 24:1**, "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out from his house,"

2. The School of Shammai.
 - i. This school taught that a man could only divorce his wife on the grounds of adultery, this too was based on **Deuteronomy 24:1**.
- C. Once again this question posed to Jesus was designed to entrap. To get Him to choose a side in the dispute between the two schools of thought.
1. If Jesus responded by saying that a man could not put away his wife for any reason He would offend the School of Hillel.
 2. And if He said a man could put away his wife for any reason He would offend the School of Shammai.
 3. They clearly wanted Jesus to choose someone's side concerning Moses' teaching in Deuteronomy 24:1.
- D. Jesus avoided the dispute by returning to God's original plan in Genesis and not to Moses' teaching in Deuteronomy.
1. **Genesis 1:27**, "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."
 2. **Genesis 2:21-24**, "So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."
 3. Gods' original design did not embrace divorce, but emphasized that the marriage relationship was to be permanent. Thus, "they shall be one flesh."
 4. God is not the author of divorce, but of marriage and has always been against divorce.
 - i. **Malachi 2:16**, "For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."
 - ii. Thus the statement in **Matthew 19:6**, "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."
- E. Their response: Why did Moses command to give a writing of divorce and to put her away? (Matthew 19:7)
1. Again they sought to entrap Jesus by saying this was a command of Moses.
 2. Again, Jesus points out, this was not a command as one may put it but a sufferance. In other words God tolerated or permitted it.
 3. **Matthew 19:8**, "He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way."

II. THE TRUTH (Matthew 19:9) I want to break the verse down to better to understand it.

A. "Whosoever"—This is a universal term and makes no exceptions!

1. To argue that this term applies only to Christians or only to Jews under the old law is to make exception where God does not.
2. The context of the term reveals that this was God's plan from the very beginning, therefore 'whosoever' applies to everyone.

B. "Shall put away his wife"—

1. This put away clearly refers to divorce
2. Matthew 5:32, “but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

C. “Except it be for fornication”—This is the only exception to Gods Law concerning divorce and remarriage, save the death of a spouse as in Rom. 7:3.

1. Fornication is a term which means unlawful sexual relations and is an all encompassing word that includes heterosexual, homosexual, and even bestiality, all of which are condemned by God.

D. “And shall marry another, committeth adultery” – This clearly shows us that a marriage may take place and be acceptable according to the laws of the land, but not acceptable in the eyes of God.

1. Read w/ in Mark 6:17-18—John the Baptist told Herod, who had married his brothers wife, “It is not lawful for you have your brothers wife.”
2. This clearly emphasizes that unless one is remarried b/c his or her spouse was guilty of fornication, or because his/her spouse has passed away, they friends according to the scriptures are committing adultery.

E. “And whoso marrieth her that which is put away doth commit adultery.”—To marry a woman or man who do not have proper grounds for remarriage, is to openly commit adultery.

1. It should be pointed out, if the party that is put away is the guilty party that is if they had been guilty of fornication which led to divorce, then the guilty party who committed the adultery does not according to the scriptures have the right to re-marry.
2. And anyone who marries the one who caused the divorce due to fornication then commits adultery.

III. **THE TEST—Arguments against the Truth.**

A. There is no disputing Gods Word, yet many attempts to put their own words or ideas to Gods commandments.

B. There are those who say... Baptism cleanses an adulterous marriage.

1. It is contended by some when a couple is baptized who have been living in an adulterous marriage relationship, they then feel free to remain in that adulterous relationship, and everything is ‘alright.’
2. We need to be reminded of what the purpose of baptism is for:
 - ii. To cleanse us of all our past sins—Acts 2:38
 - iii. To put on Christ—Galatians 3:27
 - iv. To be saved—Mark 16:16
4. Its true baptism washes away our sins PROVIDED we truly repent of those sins.
5. For Example: If one is in an adulterous relationship on Saturday night and is baptized on Sunday morning and then returns to that adulterous marriage relationship, then they have not truly repented.
6. Illustration to prove the point: A thief is baptized and returns to a life of crime following his baptism, has he truly repented? NO!!!!
7. IF IT WAS SIN BEFORE BAPTISM IT IS STILL SIN AFTER BAPTISM.
8. If a marriage was adulterous before baptism, it still is after baptism.

C. There are those who say, --There needs to be an exception when children are involved.

1. When children are born into an adulterous marriage, they are the consequence of that sin, but in the same breath it is not their burden to bear.
2. The presence of children does not excuse the situation.
3. It is a hard pill to swallow, yet we must obey the commandments of God.

D. **I Corinthians 7:20**, “Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called”

1. It's contended by some that a person should remain with whomever they are married to at the time of their conversion even if it is adulterous.
2. They are missing what Paul is saying here.
 - a. Paul has an honorable calling in mind
 - b. Surely Paul didn't mean for a murderer to stay a murderer after they become a Christian any more than for one stay in an adulterous relationship after conversion.

In Closing: Who may get married?

1. Those never married before
2. Those who've spouses have died
3. Those who've spouses have committed fornication and/or are now living in an adulterous relationship (i.e. remarried to another)

God speaks very plain on this matter, but we tend to complicate matters when we put an “I think it should be this way” or an “I don't agree with what the Bible says so I'll do it my way.”

We may not like a “thus saith the Lord,” but if we are to honor and obey the Most High God, we must respect His written Word.

The Lord commands this day if you are subject to the invitation to come to Him.

PCAWSAS.