

Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage (Lesson 3)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Let's quickly review what was covered in the first two lessons of this series.
 - a. We outlined three major objectives for this study.
 - b. We gave three reasons for why this study is so important.
 - c. We discussed both the wrong way and the right way to settle issues related to especially divorce and remarriage.
 - d. Finally, we read all the passages that bear most directly on the subjects of marriage, divorce, and remarriage.
2. What we want to do in this lesson is accomplish objectives 1 and 2.
 - a. To see marriage the way God sees it, so in turn see divorce the way God sees it.
 - b. The answer the same question Jesus was asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?" (Matthew 19:3).

BODY:

- I. Let's look, then, at what happens when you get married, according to God.
 - A. You LEAVE father and mother to CLEAVE (be joined) to your spouse.
 1. Genesis 2:21-24; Matthew 19:5 (KJV, ASV: "cleave"; ESV: "hold fast").
 - a. Proskollao: "to glue to, i.e. (fig.) to adhere: cleave, join" (Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionary).
 - b. When two separate pieces are glued together, they become one piece— "no longer two but one flesh" (Matt. 19:6).
 2. And "one flesh" refers to more than just the sexual union.
 - a. Ephesians 5:28-31.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 6:15-17.
 3. But back to the thought of leaving and cleaving, think absolute commitment, like the one you've made to the Lord.
 - a. See Acts 11:21-23.
 - B. You are making a COVENANT with each other and WITH GOD.
 1. You make promises to each other; you exchange vows with one another—and God is your witness!
 - a. Malachi 2:13-15; Proverbs 2:16-17.

2. Romans 1:31 (“untrustworthy” (NKJV) or “covenant-breakers” (KJV, ASV).

C. God joins you together, and so you are now bound to each other.

1. “What God has joined together (suzeugnumi), let not man separate” (Matt. 19:6).
 - a. Suzeugnumi— “to fasten to one yoke, to yoke together” (The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon).
2. “For the woman who has a husband is **bound** (deo) by the law to her husband **as long as he lives**” (Romans 7:2; see also 1 Corinthians 7:39).
 - a. Deo— “bind, be in bonds, knit, tie...”
3. Marriage is often called “tying the knot.” That’s the proper view; just remember God is the one who ties it.

II. Understanding what happens when you get married leads us to several conclusions.

A. Be very careful who you choose as a spouse.

1. This is someone to whom you will cleave, someone with whom you make a covenant, someone to whom God binds you for the rest of your life.
2. And so it better be someone who’s more than just good looking, someone who’s got considerably more to offer than a just a great sense of humor, or a wonderful personality.
3. What you’re looking for is someone with great conviction, conviction in the things that matter most—in other words, a devoted disciple of Jesus Christ. Who better to understand the commitment involved in this marriage relationship?

B. Neither spouse should even think about getting a divorce.

1. For all the reasons given earlier (the commitment involved, the covenant, the fact that God has joined us together).
2. Because God “hates divorce” (Malachi 2:16).
 - a. He hates because it involves breaking a promise. Remember the covenant, and what Romans 1:31 says about “covenant breakers.” The same passage in Malachi says they had dealt “treacherously” with their wives.
 - b. He hates it because it’s a violent act. It hurts innocent people—spouses, children, parents, friends. The hurt in divorce cuts very deeply, and the scars never go away.

- c. He hates it because it causes others to blaspheme the gospel of Jesus Christ. Husbands and wives should reflect the relationship between Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:22-33), and so as they conduct themselves properly, they are teaching the gospel. But what message do they send when one says to the other, “I don’t want to be with you anymore”? Think about all the obligations you have toward one another that you will NOT meet if you get a divorce.
- 3. Because divorce itself is sinful unless it is for the cause of fornication (sexual immorality).
 - a. “But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery...” (Matthew 5:32).
 - b. “What God has joined together, let no man separate” (Matthew 19:6)—that’s a direct command. He then gives the lone exception: “Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery...” (Matthew 19:9).
 - c. “A wife is not to depart from her husband...and a husband is not to divorce his wife” (1 Corinthians 7:10-11).
- 4. Because divorce often leads to more and more sin.
 - a. We’ll talk more about this in the next lesson, but let’s quickly read two passages: Matthew 5:32; 19:9.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Looking ahead to lesson #4...
 - a. We will attempt to visually illustrate what is taught in the following passages: Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:1-4; 1 Cor. 7:10-15.
- 2. Please read those carefully in advance.