

DIVORCE

TEXT: MARK 10:1-12

Introduction:

1. One of the most difficult subjects to preach about is divorce.
2. It is also a difficult issue to deal with because it can be very painful. We want to stay true to God's Word. And we want to let people know that when they repent of their sin and put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, God forgives them of each and every sin, and this certainly includes divorce.
3. And divorce is a sin. There is no way we can get around that.
4. Malachi 2:15, 16 says, "And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away."
5. Historically, churches have taught this – that God hates divorce. Pastors taught that divorce was sinful and forbidden by God and that it was not an option for Christians. However, today standards are being lowered and most churches have now accepted divorce.
6. A man was in the process of going through a divorce and he asked his attorney: "Do you think I will win?" The lawyer replied: "Of course not. In a divorce, nobody wins." [Especially when children are involved!]
7. In 1920, one out of seven marriages ended in divorce. Today it is one out of two.
8. I want for us as a church to know the mind of God when it comes to the important issues in life. And certainly marriage and divorce are very important issues.
9. Let me start out by saying that whatever happened before you were saved is forgiven by God. I am not trying to make Christians feel guilty about things that happened many years ago. If it were not for the grace of God, none of us would have a happy marriage.

10. However, there are far too many Christians getting divorced after they are supposedly saved, and that is why we must take a Biblical stand. I was preaching through the book of Malachi and I came to Malachi 2:16 where God says He hates “putting away” (divorce). A young lady came to me after the meeting and said, “I don’t care what you say; I’m going to get divorced and I’m going to get remarried!” And she did.
11. Listen, it is not what I say, it’s “What does God say?”
12. I want our young people to understand that marriage means one husband and one wife for one lifetime – “till death do us part.”

I. THE PHARISEES TRIED TO “TEMPT” OUR LORD (10:2).

1. Their motives were not right – “tempting Him” (10:2).
2. The reason this man thought he could get away with tempting our Lord was because among the Jews there were different views on divorce.
3. If our Lord said something that did not line up with one particular group, the Pharisees thought they would have Him in their trap.
4. Rather than spend much time on the various rabbinical views, let us consider the teachings of Scripture.
5. Marriage was established by God (Gen. 2:18).
6. Marriage makes possible the continuation of the human race (Gen. 1:28).
7. Man and wife literally become “one flesh” (Gen. 2:21-25; cf. Mark 10:6-9).
8. God’s original design was that one man and one wife spend one life together. God hates divorce (Mal. 2:14-16).
9. The Bible teaches that marriage is a divinely appointed union – God established it and only God can dissolve it.

10. Marriage is a physical union – man and wife become “one flesh” (10:8).
11. Marriage is a permanent union – Jesus had the last word when He said, “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Mark 10:9).
12. By the way, I went to a wedding last week and the preacher said, “What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” I was very disappointed. (It was in an independent Baptist church.)
13. The King James Version says, “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Mark 10:9). That’s clear enough.
14. If that is not clear enough for some, over 25 years later, the apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit said basically the same thing (I Cor. 7:10, 11).
15. Not only is marriage a divinely appointed union, a physical union, and a permanent union, it is also a union between one man and one woman.
16. Up until very recently it was unnecessary to have to say this but we are now living in “perilous times” when perverts and their liberal allies are “redefining” the family. They have to be reminded that it was Adam and Eve, not “Adam and Steve.”
17. Now that they have opened the door to so-called “gay marriage,” we can be sure there will be more wickedness coming down the pike: polygamy, bestiality, etc.

II. OUR LORD’S RESPONSE (10:3)

1. Our Lord brought them back to the law, “What did Moses command you?” (10:3).
2. They answered that Moses suffered (allowed or permitted) a man to divorce his wife if he gave her a written bill of divorcement, an official certificate (10:4).

3. Jesus responded by saying that this was not God's ideal – “But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (10:6-9; cf. John 4:16-18).
4. The problem is man's hard heart (10:5).

III. THE APOSTLES' RESPONSE (10:10)

1. Apparently this was difficult for the Lord's disciples to accept (cf. Matt. 19:10). What our Lord is plainly teaching is that divorce is wrong and that remarriage after divorce is adultery.
2. Many Christians chafe at this and look to the “exception clause” in Matt. 5:31, 32 and Matt. 19:3-9 for a way out.
3. The confusion over this apparent contradiction can be cleared away by realizing that Matthew is referring to severing the relationship during the betrothal period (cf. Matt. 1:19).
4. If our Lord was accepting divorce and remarriage, the disciples would not have reacted the way they did (cf. Matt. 19:10, 11).
5. Obviously they considered His position too strict – but to allow for divorce and remarriage when a partner is unfaithful is not strict at all. Most bad marriages are ruined by infidelity anyway so if that is what our Lord was saying, He would have been basically promoting divorce and remarriage (which is the norm today).
6. Furthermore, it pains me to say this – but there many wicked and carnal people who would gladly take advantage of the “divorce is OK when there is immorality” position.
7. They should consider what the OT teaches about adultery (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22).

8. It is interesting to note that in John 8, our Lord did not say that the law was wrong (cf. John 8:1-11).

CONCLUSION:

1. Paul's teaching is helpful: This was not Paul's command, but the Lord's (I Cor. 7:10).
2. If the wife departs there is to be no divorce and remarriage – they should attempt reconciliation (I Cor. 7:11).
3. Even if one is married to an unbeliever, divorce is not permissible (I Cor. 7:12-16).
4. I have heard of cases where an unbelieving partner was converted after the Christian mate divorced and remarried. Note: “speak I, not the Lord” (I Cor. 7:12) means that the Lord did not specifically address the situation.
5. Remarriage is allowed only when the mate dies (I Cor. 7:39).
6. The Biblical position shows God's concern for the sanctity of marriage and the family (families are destroyed by divorce), as well as for the protection of women. Despite all the double-talk, divorce was popularized by selfish men looking for a way to evade their responsibilities and take up with other (often younger) women.
7. America is truly in a “culture war” and the so-called “conservatives” are losing because many of them are on their second and third marriage – this leaves them very vulnerable to attack from the radical, pro-sodomites and pro-abortionists.