

Family Issues: Marriage, Divorce and Children

Sermon 54 in the Matthew Series

Matthew 19:1-15

I. Initial Observations

A. Our Confession does not speak to the issue of Divorce and Remarriage.

B. To Those already involved in a Remarriage after a Divorce.

C. The Reason for Divorce

It's always because of sin.

Jesus says, "because of the hardness of your heart".

D. One more caveat

II. Exposition of the Passage -- Matthew 19:1-12

A. The Setting v. 1-2

B. The Question and the Answer 19:3, 9

1. The basis of the question.

2. The background to the question.

There were two rabbinical thoughts on divorce in that day.

Both schools believed in "divorce".

What they differed in was reasons allowed for divorce.

They differed over Deut. 24:1-4.

3. The Direct Answer to the Question -- Matt. 19:9

Jesus himself tells us the meaning of "uncleanness" or "indecent" in Deut. 24:1 by calling it "sexual immorality".

C. Jesus Teaching on Marriage 19:4-8

1. God's Intention for Marriage.

2. The Pharisee's follow up Question v. 7
They were interpreting Deut. 24:1-4 – as a “commandment”.

3. The Answer v. 8

Why an ALLOWANCE? -- Because of sin & Hardness of Heart.

D. The Shock of the Disciples 10-12

Three valid reasons for celibacy

1. Inability to have relations by birth.
2. Inability to have relations by force.
3. Those choosing a single lifestyle so they devote themselves to the work of the Lord.
That is the choice Paul made (for the present distress – persecution)
Peter chose a different path – and married a wife.

There are only two valid options -- Marriage or abstinence.

III. Children are a Blessing, not a Bother 19:13-15

He saw children for who they were – little image-bearers of God.
He saw them as a precious gift given by God!

Psalm 127:3 – Children are a heritage from the Lord – and the fruit of the womb is His reward.
They forgot the lesson taught in Matthew 18:1-5.

IV. Closing Applications

(Adapted from a sermon on marriage by Pastor Tyler Krug – of the RBCNashville)

1. God's design for marriage is – one man and one woman for one lifetime.
2. Marriage is a cultural institution – and has to do with society – but God's plan for marriage has not changed.
3. Divorce always involves sin and hardness of heart in one or both parties, and mars the picture of Christ and the church presented in Ephesians 5.
4. Given the glorious nature of marriage and the tragedy of divorce, let us be people who spend more time studying how to make marriages thrive and experience fullness of joy and less time discussing theologically acceptable ways to get out of the marriage that we are have.
5. Christ is the great husband of His church.
He provides for us everything we need for life and godliness.