

The Permanence of Marriage

Mark 10:1-12

- I. The Pharisees asked Jesus if divorce is allowable (Mark 10:1-4).
 - A. The Pharisees asked Jesus if divorce was lawful – attempting to discredit him by drawing him into a current debate (10:1-2).
 - B. Jesus asked them what Moses taught and they replied that he allowed it (10:3-4; Deuteronomy 24:1).
- II. Jesus answered that God designed marriage to be permanent (Mark 10:5-9).
 - A. Jesus explained that Moses wrote to regulate hard-hearted abuse of divorce (10:5; Deuteronomy 22:13-19; 24:1-4).
 - B. Jesus said that they should go back to the original permanence of marriage at creation (10:6-8).
 - We must love our spouse in a way that reflects that we know he/she is really God's permanent choice for me.
 - C. Jesus stated that they should stop separating those whom God joined together in the covenant of marriage (10:9).
 - We should not seek for a way out of marriage, but for a way through our difficulties.
- III. Jesus said that remarrying after divorce is adultery (Mark 10:10-12)
 - A. Later in private the disciples discussed with Jesus His strong view on marriage (10:10; Matthew 10:10-12).
 - B. Jesus told them that divorcing and then remarrying is adultery (10:11-12).

[See next page for notes on other views, passages and applications]

Supplement for 8-10-08 Sermon

An “**Exception clause?**” – Matthew 19:9 (the same context as Mark 10) and Matthew 5:32 record that Jesus allowed for remarriage in cases of “immorality.”

- **View # 1 – Divorce and Remarriage are not allowed today** – Mark 10:11-12, Luke 16:18 and 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 make no exception for immorality and Matthew is to be understood in light of Jewish culture.
 - If Jesus’ words in Matthew make an exception, then the other scriptures seem to be misleading, especially since the original recipients of those books in the 1st century wouldn’t know of the major exception.
 - Possible explanation: Matthew seems to be uniquely written to Jews while Mark, Luke and 1 Corinthians were written to Gentiles. In Jewish marriage customs a couple was considered “married” when they were betrothed and a “divorce” was needed to break off betrothal if there was immorality before the wedding (Joseph and Mary – Matthew 1:18-20). So Matthew records that Jesus acknowledged this “exception” for immorality that actually preceded marriage as we know it. Thus, there really was no exception for Gentile cultures or for us today.
- **View # 2 – Divorce and remarriage are allowed today**, but only in the cases of unfaithful spouses (based on Matthew 5:32; 19:9). Some include desertion as grounds for divorce based on 1 Corinthians 7:15.
- **Remarriage at ODBC:** The pastoral staff of ODBC does not perform remarriages based on View # 1. Church members and other leaders are not obligated to agree.
- **Various Issues and Applications based on View # 1**
 1. God’s grace applies to every decision we ever make wrongly – including divorce or remarriage.
 2. Divorced and/or remarried people are not second class Christians (and are completely welcome at ODBC).
 3. If we are remarried now, God’s will for our present marriage is for us to stay married.
 4. If we are divorced now, we should seek to adopt a single lifestyle and serve God confidently in our situation.
 5. If we are in a difficult marriage we should seek ways to obey and glorify God in that difficulty and not seek a divorce.
 6. If our spouse insists on divorce, we are not obligated to fight it (1 Corinthians 7:15).
 7. If there is abuse, physical separation may be necessary.
 8. God’s will is that remarried couples love each other and serve God obediently together. God can bless and use us even more greatly sometimes because of what we’ve been through.