"No Grounds for Divorce"

Matthew 19:1-12

8/26/2018

INTRODUCTION:

Are there grounds to justify a divorce?

Answer: NO

Evidence:

I. THE SERMON OF JESUS

Reveals no grounds for divorce (vv. 3-9)

Jesus taught:

A. Marriage is unchangeable (v. 4, 8b)

B. Marriage is binding (v. 5)

In God's Word, the Bible, -

The permanence of marriage is evidenced by:

1. **The Bonding of "WEDLOCK" (Gen. 2:24)**
   (Marriage is an inseparable union)
2. **The Meaning of a "COVENANT" (Malachi 2:14)**
   (Marriage is a Covenant)
3. **Christ's Relationship to His BRIDE (Eph. 5:22-32)**
   (Jesus will never forsake His wife, the Church)

C. Marriage is God's work; Divorce is man's work (v. 6)

D. Divorce was tolerated, never commanded or justified (v. 7-8)

II. THE MEANING OF "FORNICATION"

Reveals no grounds for divorce (v. 9)

What is meant by "fornication"? *Two popular, plausible views:*

A. View #1 - Adultery

B. View #2 - Unfaithfulness during the "betrothal" period

III. THE REACTION OF THE DISCIPLES

Reveals no grounds for divorce (v. 10)

Jesus allowed no grounds for divorce after marriage!

--How did Paul interpret Christ's teaching about divorce? (SEE: I Cor. 7:10-11)

--How did Paul interpret the Law's teaching about divorce? (SEE: Rom. 7:1-3)

How to Avoid a Tragic Divorce

1. Don't rush into a marriage to begin with. Make sure before you marry that your spouse is saved and loves the Lord.

2. Be convicted that God says: *Marriage is for life.* (Rom. 7:1ff)

3. Do not allow conflicts to go unresolved.

4. Meet your mate's needs.
   --physically --emotionally --sexually (I Cor.7)

5. Guard yourself against anything you might read, hear, or see that causes discontentment

6. Be faithful to your spouse

7. Fulfill your God-given roles in the marriage.

8. Cultivate a close walk with Christ as a couple.

9. Realize that love is not a "feeling" or a "romantic emotion" but it is action based on a commitment!

10. Consider the word "divorce" the dirtiest word in the English language. It should never be considered as even a remote possibility!

"No Grounds for Divorce"

Matthew 19:1-12

8/26/2018

INTRODUCTION:

Are there grounds to justify a divorce?

Answer: NO

Evidence:

I. THE _____ OF JESUS

Reveals no grounds for divorce (vv. 3-9)

Jesus taught:

A. Marriage is _____ (v. 4, 8b)

B. Marriage is _____ (v. 5)

In God's Word, the Bible, -

The permanence of marriage is evidenced by:

1. **The Bonding of " _____" (Gen. 2:24)**
   (Marriage is an inseparable union)
2. **The Meaning of a "_____" (Malachi 2:14)**
   (Marriage is a Covenant)
3. **Christ's Relationship to His _____ (Eph. 5:22-32)**
   (Jesus will never forsake His wife, the Church)

C. Marriage is _____ work; Divorce is _____ work (v. 6)

D. Divorce was _____, never commanded or justified (v. 7-8)

II. THE MEANING OF " _____"

Reveals no grounds for divorce (v. 9)

What is meant by "fornication"? *Two popular, plausible views:*

A. View #1 - Adultery

B. View #2 - Unfaithfulness during the "betrothal" period

III. THE _____ OF THE DISCIPLES

Reveals no grounds for divorce (v. 10)

Jesus allowed no grounds for divorce after marriage!

--How did Paul interpret Christ's teaching about divorce? (SEE: I Cor. 7:10-11)

--How did Paul interpret the Law's teaching about divorce? (SEE: Rom. 7:1-3)

How to Avoid a Tragic Divorce

1. _____ to begin with. Make sure before you marry that your spouse is saved and loves the Lord.

2. Be convicted that God says: *Marriage is for* _____. (Rom. 7:1ff)

3. Do not allow _____ to go unresolved.

4. Meet your mate's _____.
   --physically --emotionally --sexually (I Cor.7)

5. Guard yourself against anything you might read, hear, or see that causes _____

6. Be _____ to your spouse

7. Fulfill your God-given _____ in the marriage.

8. Cultivate a _____ with Christ as a couple.

9. Realize that love is not a "feeling" or a "romantic emotion" but it is action based on a _____!

10. Consider the word "divorce" the dirtiest word in the English language. It should never be considered as even a remote possibility!

"No Grounds for Divorce"

Matthew 19:1-12
8/26/2018

INTRODUCTION:

God's plan and purpose for marriage.

"Marriage is a unique union of one man and one woman. It is so intimate that on the earth nothing is its equal." God saw that it was not good for man to be alone, and that man needed a "Help meet" or a helper suitable to himself, his counterpart. Man needed someone to fellowship with him, someone to rejoice with him, someone to plan, share and experience with him the wonders of God and His creation. In Genesis 2:23-24 is presented the ideal which God intended in the marriage relationship. Eve was "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh," said Adam. I Corinthians 11:8-9 states that "Man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man--neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." A principle that started in the Garden of Eden has gone down through the ages: Man was to leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and the two became one flesh (Gen. 2:24). This "leave and cleave" principle illustrates that God instituted marriage and that it was to be a monogamous, heterosexual and complete union of two persons.

God instituted marriage for four basic reasons:

1) To complete the man which He had created ("help meet" - Gen. 2)
2) To promote sexual purity (I Cor. 7:2)
3) To begin a new family unit (Gen. 2:18-24)
4) To propagate truth and godly principles from one generation to the next (Deut. 6:67)

What makes a marriage?

1. A covenant (a vow before witnesses - Mal. 2:14). This is the premiere essence of a marriage
2. A consummation (sexual union - Gen. 2:24; I Cor. 6:16)

*In the "vow" the two become one by verbal commitment, whereas in the consummation the two become one by a holy physical act.

One of the most plaguing menaces of all time is divorce.

Today many men change wives like changing socks.

Divorce is commonplace without the couple even considering the tragic effects of it.

What are the tragic effects of divorce upon the COUPLE?

1. The divorce usually ends up causing unresolved bitterness, loneliness, and insecurities.
2. If the couple has any conscience at all, the divorce results in guilt, emotional torment, and sorrow.
3. The remarriages that occur after divorce usually adopt the "baggage," unresolved conflicts, and problems of the previous marriage(s).
4. Most who fail in their first marriage fail in their second (the divorce rate for second marriages is higher than first marriages).

What are the tragic effects of divorce upon the CHILDREN?

1. Children become the major victims of the emotional scars divorce brings.

   --Innocently caught in the cross-fire of family feuds, the children often blame themselves.

   --They are often forced to side with one of the parents (usually the one who has major custody).

   --They will never have an example (model) of God's ideal for the family ("Preliminary data indicate that children of divorce, particularly women, have a higher chance of getting divorced themselves than children of intact families) (Newsweek, Jan. 13, 1992, p. 49).

   --Family closeness is hurt (in-laws and grandparent relationships are affected).
2. Divorce teaches children that one's vows, promises, or covenants are not binding.
3. Divorce teaches children that running from a problem is the answer to solving it.
4. Divorce teaches children that Mommy or Daddy are more concerned about themselves (what they want; what makes them happy) than they are concerned for the children and the effect the divorce will have on them. [What a selfish society we live in!]

Contemporary "grounds" for divorce:

1. "I don't love him/her anymore"
2. Physical/Emotional Abuse(Separation is allowed - I Cor. 7:11; not divorce)
3. "Incompatibility"

4. Adultery (unfaithfulness)

Are there grounds to justify a divorce?

Answer: NO

Evidence:

I. THE SERMON OF JESUS
Reveals no grounds for divorce (vv. 3-9)

v.3 ***"The Pharisees"*** - A Jewish Religious sect that believed they were "self-righteous"

"Every cause" - Pharisees wanted to tempt Jesus to contradict his previous statement in Matthew 5:32.

"For every cause" = the phrase alluded to the contemporary ideas about justifiable divorce in Bible days -

Two major views (schools of thought) toward divorce
(two interpretations of Deut. 24:1 - "some uncleanness"):

--Shammai (conservative) -only grounds for divorce was adultery

--Hillel (liberal) - anything that could be interpreted as uncleanness
(if the wife spoiled his dinner, or went out with unbound hair, or was caught speaking to men in the streets, or if she became overweight or unattractive and he found someone more beautiful)

[Because of man's sin nature, this opinion became the prevailing view in Christ's Day]

Jesus taught:

A. Marriage is unchangeable (v. 4, 8b)

v. 4 - "Have you not read" - a statement proving their ignorance; note this statement put the authority on the Scriptures, not tradition, custom, or religious interpretation of the Law.

Jesus purposely skips over the dispensations, Mosaic Law (Dt. 24), etc.
(Jesus appeals to the beginning of God's institution of marriage and implies

that nothing has changed since then)

"He which made them" – Since Jesus made all things, He is the ultimate authority on marriage! Jesus is God (v.6)

"male and female" - incidently, in today's society its important to note that the names of the first couple were Adam & Eve and <u>not</u> "Adam and Steve"!!!

B. Marriage is <u>binding</u> (v. 5)

"cleave" - to glue, cement, or permanently bond together

In God's Word, the Bible, -
The <u>permanence</u> of marriage is evidenced by:

1. The Bonding of "<u>WEDLOCK</u>" (Gen. 2:24)
(Marriage is an inseparable union)

a. The <u>Cleaving</u> of Marriage (v. 24a)
b. The <u>Oneness</u> of Marriage (v. 24b)
c. "Till death do we part" (Romans 7:2-3)

2. The Meaning of a "<u>COVENANT</u>" (Malachi 2:14)
(Marriage is a Covenant)

--Definition of a "Covenant"

--Examples of "Covenants" in the Bible
a). Gen. 15:6-18 - Abrahamic Covenant (cp. Jer. 34:18-19)
b). Matt. 26:28 - The New Covenant

a. The marriage covenant is an <u>irrevocable</u> <u>Vow</u>
Observe the nature of vows:
1). Numbers 30:2 - Your words are extremely important
2). Deuteronomy 23:21 - God holds you accountable
3). Example: Jephthah's vow - Judges 11:30-39

b. The marriage covenant is an <u>unconditional</u> <u>Vow</u>
"For better or for worse, for richer or for poorer"

3. Christ's Relationship to His <u>BRIDE</u> (Eph. 5:22-32)
(Jesus will never forsake His wife, the Church)

a. The Church is <u>one</u> with Christ (Eph. 5:30; I Cor. 6:17)
b. The Church is the "Bride of Christ" (Rev. 19:7-9)

c. The Church has the promise of <u>eternal security</u> (Mt. 16:18; Jn. 10:28-29; Titus 1:2; Heb. 13:5)

4. God's Attitude about <u>DIVORCE</u> (Malachi 2:16)
(God hates divorce)

a. "He may not put her away all his days"
(Deut. 22:19, 29)

Suppose you were to pursue a divorce and you received a letter in the mail. It read: "I hate divorce. Signed, Jehovah God"

C. Marriage is <u>God's</u> work; Divorce is <u>man's</u> work (v. 6)

"no more" No longer. Once married, they will never again be two separate, independent singles (in God's eyes)

"What...<u>God</u> hath joined" God ordained the principle of the 2 becoming 1 and this principle applies to all people (saved & unsaved).

*Some might say: *"Well, I don't think God ever meant us to be married."* (Perhaps you did marry outside of His desired will, but now that you are married, you are "one" and God intends for your to not break that unit.

*Perhaps others would say: *"God did not put us together because we were not married in a church"* (Where in the Bible does it say you must be married in a Church? A marriage is a covenant or vow in the presence of witness: A justice of the peace marriage is just as legitimate as a Church wedding)

"What God does man is not to undo"

No one can ever say: "<u>God</u> is leading me into divorce"

The state may give a marriage license, and offer grounds to break that marriage, but is God to whom you will give account for the choices you make.

D. Divorce was <u>tolerated</u>, never commanded or justified (v. 7-8)

v. 8 - "In this verse, Jesus takes the word "commanded" used by the Pharisees (v. 7) and changes it to "suffered" (Meaning: tolerated, put up with.

Just because God "tolerated" it, doesn't mean He approved of it or that it was His intention [cp. Israel was permitted to have a "King" prematurely (I Sam. 8), and was given Quail to eat against God's will for them (Num. 11).

See: Deut. 24:1ff - The reason a <u>written</u> bill of divorcement was required was not to make divorce easier but to put a "legal check upon reckless and tyrannical separation. Divorce was getting out of hand so Moses was regulating an existing practice. Moses was not laying down grounds for divorce as evident by the hypothetical, vague language in vv.1-3.

The implied regulation did not offer grounds for divorce but, in the Hebrew text, God was giving a hypothetical example to make His point in verse 4.

[Note: The Hebrew is not an imperative as the KJV implies but is hypothetical as the NASV translates: *"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 write her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out from his house...." (NASV)*

[Note: v. 9 - "And I say unto <u>you</u>" (Jesus' disciples -v. 10) When this verse is compared with Mark 10:10, you discover that Jesus' discussion with the Pharisees ended with verse 8. They never heard verse 9, which was given privately to Jesus disciples "in the house" (Mk. 10:10). So Jesus left the Pharisees with the conclusion that there was no allowance whatsoever for divorce.]

II. THE MEANING OF "FORNICATION"
Reveals no grounds for divorce (v. 9)

"Whosoever" - the most general, inclusive, unconditional term that Christ could have used. This verse applies to everyone who is married. No one is excluded.

"Put away" = divorce
"he may not *put her away* all her days" (Dt.22:28-29)
Joseph was "mindful to *put her away* privily"
Paul wrote: "let not the husband *put away* his wife" (I Cor. 7:11)

"His wife" - under Jewish law, only a husband was allowed to do the divorcing.

"Saving for the cause of fornication" - those exempt from the verdict of "adultery" are those whose spouse has committed "fornication."

What is meant by "fornication"? Two popular, plausible views:

A. View #1 - Adultery

This professor does <u>not</u> believe that Jesus meant "<u>adultery</u>". Why not?

1. He did not say "adultery"; he said "fornication."

2. Those words are two totally different words with totally different meanings.

   "Adultery" = moicheia (extra-marital sex)
   "Fornication" = porneia (pre-marital sex) - I Cor. 7:2; Jn. 8:41)

3. The two words are distinguished - Gal. 5:19; I Cor. 6:9

   The word "adultery" is distinguished from the word "fornication" in these verses -
   Mt. 19:9 - "fornication . . . adultery"
   I Cor. 6:9 - "fornicators . . . adulterers"
   Gal. 5:19 - "adultery . . . fornication"

4. If Jesus meant adultery, it would have been most natural for Him to say it, since he uses the word adultery 2 other times in this verse!

5. The penalty for adultery was death not divorce

   Under the Mosaic Law, one would not need to divorce his wife if she had committed adultery, because the penalty for this was death (Deut. 22:22) (he could not be going to a divorce court, but to a grave yard)

6. Such a view says that "one wrong justifies another" ("sin justifies sin") Where is forgiveness in this view?

B. View #2 - Unfaithfulness during the "betrothal" period

This professor believes Jesus is referring to unfaithfulness during the betrothal period.

Marriage was never to be entered into carelessly or lightly by a Jew who wanted to honor God. They did not rush into a marriage, but did formulate a binding agreement known as the "betrothal"

What was the betrothal period? SEE: paper on Divorce, p. 16, Pentecost

Jewish marriage custom in Bible times:

1. Legal contract between the fathers of bride and groom) (contract called a "Betrothal")

2. Betrothal was considered as equally binding as marriage (Deut. 22:23-27).

3. Couple were called husband and wife during "Betrothal" period (EX: Mary and Joseph - Mt. 1:19-20)

4. The marriage itself was not completed and consummated until at least 12 months later. Reasons for such a waiting period:

   a. The period gave sufficient time to reveal whether or not the woman had been immoral previously
   b. Preparations made for new home (EX: Jn. 14:3)

5. Betrothal could only end by a legal divorce

   Matthew is the only Gospel that records Joseph, the "husband" (1:19)

"espoused to Mary" (1:18) as being minded "to put her away privily" (1:19)

Proof of Betrothal view:

1. **Grammatical Proof** - the word "fornication" refers to pre-marital sex

   John 8:41 - "We be not born of fornication" (they were mocking the virgin birth of Christ, insinuating that because His mother was pregnant before marriage, He was illegitimate).

   I Cor. 7:2 - In context Paul is speaking to unmarried persons.

   I Cor. 6:18 - "He who committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." This illustrates that fornication in this text had to be involving an unmarried person, because a married person would be charged with adultery (sin) against his spouse and not merely against his own body.

2. **Historical context** - The phrase "except it be for fornication" is only found in Matthew (5:32; 19:9). Ironically not in Mark 10:11-12 and Luke 16:18. Why?

Matthew was written to the Jews.

Proof:

1. The theme of Matthew present Jesus as the promised Jewish Messiah (the king of Israel)

2. Matthew uses more references to the O.T. than any other Gospel writer (esp. O.T. fulfillments of Messianic prophecy).

3. Matthew uses Jewish words and customs which are not explained as they are in other Gospels (cp. Matt. 15:2-5, Mk. 7:2-4).

The exception clause is only found in Matthew's gospel, written to Jews (mt. 5:32; 19:9) and not in Mark 10:11-12 and Luke 16:18, written to Gentiles who didn't understand the Jewish concept of the betrothal (Mt. 5:32; 19:19; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18)

3. **An example**: Joseph was called a "husband" (Mt. 1:19) "espoused [betrothed] to Mary (1:18), who found out that she was pregnant before their marriage, so he decided to "put her away [divorce] privily" (1:19)

"Adultery" - This professor believes that the "adultery" committed is an "adultery" in the eyes of God (who views marriage as permanent).

The adultery would have to be a "spirit of adultery" and not the "letter of adultery". In other words, if the adultery was literal, then the second marriage would have to be dissolved, since they would be "living in adultery."

The real sin was in the divorce itself, more to than the remarriage. The remarriage prevents reconciliation.

NOTE: Those who are guilty of "adultery":

--The original husband (Mt. 19:9)
--The man who marries her (her new spouse)(Mt. 19:9; 5:32)
--The wife (divorcee) - "causeth her" (Mt.5:32)

III. THE REACTION OF THE DISCIPLES

Reveals no grounds for divorce (v. 10)

The shock of the disciples reveals that Christ's view of divorce was radically different than anything they had ever heard before.

v.10 The Disciples in effect say: "If there is absolutely no way out, it is good to remain single!)

v.11 ***"To whom it is given"*** - Celibacy is a gift given by God to some. Some people have no desire to marry (Paul commended singleness - I Cor. 7).

v.12 For those who cannot *"receive"* (accept) not having a matte, should be prayerful, careful, and Biblical in selecting a marriage partner.

CONCLUSION:

Jesus allowed no grounds for divorce after marriage!

--How did Paul interpret Christ's teaching about divorce? (SEE: I Cor. 7:10-11)

[Note: The word *"bondage" (v.15) is "doulos"* (to be in bondage as a slave to serve and meet needs) whereas, *"bound"* (v.27) is *"deo"* (which means to fasten with chains or to be tied together.]

--How did Paul interpret the Law's teaching about divorce? (SEE: Rom. 7:1-3)

A believer is never justified to pursue a divorce. If the unbeliever departs, that's one thing (I Cor. 7:15), but a believer is never to leave his/her unbelieving spouse.

Romans 7:1-3 - The only legitimate way out of the marriage bond is death (No exceptions).

How to Avoid a Tragic Divorce

1. Don't rush into a marriage to begin with. Make sure before you marry that your spouse is saved and loves the Lord.

2. Be convicted that God says: *Marriage is for life.* (Rom. 7:1ff)
   [Even though you think you married the wrong person at the wrong time for the wrong reasons,
   you are married and it is right to remain true to your commitment. One wrong does not justify
   another wrong.]

3. Do not allow conflicts to go unresolved.
   --Practice forgiveness
   --Don't go to bed angry
   --Talk! Learn to communicate. *"Speak the truth in love."*
   --Seek Godly advice.
   --Learn to say the words: "I love you." "I was wrong." "Please forgive me

4. Meet your mate's needs.
   --physically
   --emotionally
   --sexually (I Cor. 7:1ff)
   [Note: Beware of an over-demanding, time-consuming vocation.
   You need to spend time together.]

5. Guard yourself against anything you might read, hear, or see that causes discontentment (Beware of Satan's attempts to breed covetousness). Don't compare your wife or husband to any other wife or husband to make a point (Example: "Mary's husband faithfully mows the grass every Saturday. Why can't you?"). God didn't give you to _____; He gave you your husband or wife, so you should be grateful, and quit looking at the greener grass at someone else's home!

6. Be faithful to your spouse (Illicit sex [adulterous affairs] pulls down and destroys a couple's trust and respect for each other).

7. Fulfill your God-given roles in the marriage.

8. Cultivate a close walk with Christ as a couple. *"A family that prays together, stays together."* Sincere prayer is the surest way to release Satan's strangle-hold on your marriage.

9. Realize that love is not a "feeling" or a "romantic emotion" but it is action based on a commitment! In fact, "love" is a commitment (i.e. a decision to be loyal to your responsibility).

10. Consider the word "divorce" the dirtiest word in the English language. It should never be considered as even a remote possibility!