

ALL SOCIETIES - MARRIAGE IS RECOGNIZED AND REGULATED INSTITUTION

MARRIAGE NOT A HUMAN INVENTION - GOD'S IDEA, NOT OURS

1) Creation Mandate

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 1:27-28

2) Companionship

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Genesis 2:18

3) Conjugal Relations

Since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. 5 Do not deprive each other

1 Corinthians 7:2-5

4) Children

Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him. Psalm 127:3

HIGH IDEALS INCREASINGLY THWARTED BY DIVORCE
IT IS ALWAYS A TRAGEDY

BEGIN - tender love, great expectations, unlimited possibilities

ENDS- pain, alienation, disillusionment, guilt, insecurity, anger
FOR COUPLE, CHILDREN, AND EXTENDED FAMILY

5 year Study - University of Virginia

MOST HURT BY DIVORCE - small boys, "their painful attempts to adjust lead them into a mutually destructive conflict with their mothers"

STUDY ON LONELINESS - main causes have origins in childhood

"children who were less than 6 years old when their parents divorced were by far the loneliest as adults."

MANY OF YOU HAVE FELT THIS PAIN- SPEAK WITH LOVE

difficult message - but church must sound a clear message

"Divorce" WORD MEANS "to throw away"

THROW AWAY SOCIETY - throw away family, promise, integrity

Idea of SANCTITY AND PERMANENCE OF MARRIAGE - LOST

USA NORM - sex before marriage, living together, abortion, divorce

CONTEXT OF MATT 19 - DIVORCE

Herodias LEFT husband Phillip to marry King Herod

// TABLOID Media - SENSATIONAL STORIES - ROYAL ROMANCE

John the Baptist had BEEN KILLED

1. PHARISEES - A Legal Approach: A Contract

a. A Right TO DIVORCE?

v. 3 Some Pharisees came to him to test him. "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife...?"

v. 7 Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?"

SOCIETY - Great Concern for our RIGHTS - DEADLY IN MARRIAGE

b. A Concession BECAUSE IN FALLEN WORLD - MARRIAGES FAIL

v. 8 Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard.

REASON - protect women from hard hearted men

MANY WOMEN KILLED W/ NO WAY TO END MARRIAGE

NOT A TEACHING OF PRINCIPLE - BUT GIVING OF AN EXAMPLE

Deuteronomy 24.1-4 If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, {2} and if after she leaves his house she becomes the wife of another man, {3} and her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies, {4} then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of the LORD. Do not bring sin upon the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

1) DOES NOT REQUIRE, RECOMMEND, ENCOURAGE DIVORCE

Main Concern is not with Divorce, or the Certificate Given

INTENDED TO FORBID A MAN MARRYING HIS FORMER WIFE

to protect a woman from a man who is cruel and careless

2) Divorce is not Encouraged - BUT IF IT HAPPENS - must be Just Cause

3) Divorce AND REMARRIAGE ARE ALLOWED - but not sanctioned

Ex - Woman goes from one marriage to the next

Polygamy in the OT was also allowed - BUT NOT SANCTIONED

ISLAM - all a man has to do to divorce one of 4 wives is SPEAK

JEWS - process of writing bill - HOPE TO BRING TO THEIR SENSES

c. An Abuse

v. 3 "Is it lawful...for any and every reason?"

EXCEPTION BECAME THE NORMAL PRACTICE

PROBLEM WITH LEGAL EMPHASIS -

- EMPHASIS IS ON THE RULES AND BOUNDARIES, how to get out?
- STATIC/ STALE - ARE YOU LEGALLY MARRIED / never gets more

Matthew 5:31,32 "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery."

Pharisees had distorted Law of God - Sermon on Mt. CORRECTIONS

DIVERSE INTERPRETATIONS IN JESUS DAY -

Rabbi Shammai - strict view, divorce only for unfaithfulness

Rabbi Hillel - liberal view, wife cooks a bad meal, quarrelsome, if you find a more beautiful woman, "anything which caused annoyance or embarrassment to a husband was a legitimate ground for a divorce suit."

ONLY FOR THE MAN - NO LEGAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN

Gal 3.28 "In Christ there is no male or female" - No Gender Superiority

DANGER OF A SELF-CENTERED ATTITUDE IN MARRIAGE

BEFORE JESUS ANSWERS THEIR QUESTIONS ABOUT DIVORCE
HE WANTS TO MAKE CLEAR WHAT MARRIAGE IS

BIBLE IS NOT A LEGAL RULE BOOK - BUT BOOK OF LIFE
NOT A CODE OF LAWS - BUT DESCRIBES RELATIONSHIPS
HOW TO HAVE WONDERFUL RELATIONS - God, man, wife, children

NOT TEACH ABOUT DIVORCE WITHOUT TEACHING ON POSITIVE

2. Jesus' Response: A Covenant

COVENANT NOT A CONTRACT -
HOW CAN I NURTURE IT, DEEPEN IT, MAKE IT FLOURISH?

a. Creation

v. 4 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'

QUOTES PART OF TWO VERSES FROM GENESIS -

Genesis 1.27 God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

EARTHLY MARRIAGE - Reflects OF HEAVENLY MARRIAGE
GOD of Israel - MARRIED ISRAEL at SINAI - Celebration WILDERNESS
JESUS CHRIST - BRIDEGROOM // CHURCH - HIS BRIDE
Image gives a new importance to the marriage bond

Genesis 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

NOT LEGAL CONTRACT BUT LOVING COVENANT

GOD IS WITNESS - COVENANT MEMBER - 3-WAY - JUDGE

b. Commitment v. 5 the two will become one flesh'

Proverbs 2.17 the covenant she made before God.

SECONDARY - PRIMARY COMMITMENT TO GOD HIMSELF

Geoffrey Bromiley "The radical mistake of the human race is that of pushing God into second or third of last place, and putting the will of self in the place of the will of God, of giving a higher value to other goals than to the purpose of God."

WEDDING POLICY - Minimum of 12 hours of premarital counseling
many calls - beautiful building - not interested in counseling

THINK NOTHING OF - studying to get drivers license, be a checker

CALL TO MARRY COUPLE THAT DAY - ALL ELSE ARRANGED! - NO PASTOR

WE MUST ENCOURAGE OLDER COUPLES TO MENTOR YOUNGER

c. Continuous LIFE LONG RELATIONSHIP

v. 6 So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

PEOPLE CAN - AND DO - SEPARATE WHAT GOD HAS JOINED
BUT THEY ARE WELL ADVISED BY JESUS NOT TO DO SO

1 Corinthians 7.10,11 To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

3. What God Thinks of Divorce

a. He Hates It

Malachi 2:11-17 the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. { 15 } Has not <the LORD> made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his...So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. { 16 } "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel

SOME MEN IN ISRAEL ABANDONED WIVES - FOR WOMEN WITH STRANGE GODS

GOD HATES DIVORCE - because he knows the pain it causes FOREVER

IT DOES NOT SAY THAT GOD HATES DIVORCED PEOPLE

Hebrews 13.4 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

MARRIAGE IS HONORABLE ESTATE - MUST BE HELD IN ONOR

b. Leads to Adultery

v. 9 I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, ...and marries another woman commits adultery."

Mark 10.11,12 "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

HARD SAYINGS - EQUALITY - LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

GOSPEL OFFERS NO EASY BLANK CHECK FOR DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

c. Rarely a Lesser Evil v. 9 except for marital unfaithfulness

FEW RARE CIRCUMSTANCES - DIVORCE CAN BE A NECESSARY EVIL

ONLY ALTERNATIVE IN AN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION

DOES NOT SAY THAT YOU MUST HAVE DIVORCE AFTER UNFAITHFULNESS

EXAMPLE OF HOSEA AND GOMER - chapter 3 buy her back

1 Corinthians 7.15,16 But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

DIVORCE FOR IMMORALITY & ABANDONMENT IS PERMISSIBLE
BUT NOT MANDATORY - NOT EVEN ENCOURAGED

EVEN WHEN BIBLICALLY JUSTIFIED - CASE BY CASE - REMAINS TRAGEDY

"It is the one exception that gives prominence to the illegitimacy of every other reason. Preoccupation with the one exception should never be permitted to obscure the force of the negation of all others."

BECOMING A XTIAN DOES NOT RELEASE YOUR PROMISE
BANK DOES NOT RELEASE YOU FROM LOAN PAYMENT

d. Humanly Impossible

vs. 10-12 The disciples said to him, "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry" {11} Jesus replied, "Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. {12} For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it."

Ephesians 5.18 be filled with the Spirit.

GOD'S HIGH STANDARD - STRANGE TO OUR SOCIETY - FOR OUR GOOD

FEW, IF ANY, HAVE FOUND LASTING ESCAPE & SOLUTION IN DIVORCE

CHURCH MUST SHOW FORTH THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY -

1. Positive biblical teaching on marriage & reconciliation - sermons, Sunday school, young people

Jesus -BEFORE answering questions about DIVORCE - TEACH MARRIAGE

2. Need for PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE, and IN marriage
COUPLES GROUPS, retreats, workshops

3. Need for Loving Support and Guidance for the Divorced

NO GREATER THAN OTHER SINS - FAR REACHING IMPLICATIONS

SCARS AND PAIN WILL OFTEN REMAIN FOR LIFE - KIDS TOO

4. Church should teach world how to RESOLVE CONFLICTS

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP - instead we are bad examples of fighting

e. Costly Grace not Cheap Legalism

JESUS CAME TO GIVE US A NEW LIFE

NOT HOW TO GET OUT OF MARRIAGE - HOW TO RESURRECT IT

John 8:32 you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

John 8:36 if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

John 10:10 I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

JESUS HAS COME TO BRING FREEDOM, NOT FOR DIVORCE, FOR MARRIAGE

NOT A NEW LAW, BUT A NEW POWER

LOOK FROM HIS TEACHING TO HIS REDEMPTION - Titus 2.11-14

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. {12} It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, {13} while we wait for the blessed hope--the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, {14} who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.