



10/23/25

Years ago, Tim talked about donuts in one of his messages. Yep. Donuts. He used the term to explain how we make rules for our rules and forget the purpose of the original rule. God's commands were given to help us obey Him in faith... the center of the pastry. But sometimes we make it all about the rule, rather than the relationship... focusing on the outside of the pastry. Then we make a rule to protect ourselves from breaking the command and forget what the purpose of the original command was... thus pulling out the center of the pastry and making it a donut. This is not good. God wants us to enjoy the whole pastry... He says in Isaiah 55:2, "Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in rich foods." When God gives a command, it is for our good, and even for our delight. I think I see a donut in today's passage.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Matthew 19:1-9 ~

Vs. 1-2 ~ "Now when Jesus had finished these sayings... He went to Judea." What sayings? He had just spoken of the importance of forgiveness... He takes bitterness and unforgiveness VERY seriously. I think it's interesting that Matthew had the teaching about divorce come on the heels of teaching about forgiveness. I think marriage can be the most damaging of all relationships and cause the most bitterness... because two really do become one in marriage. When that oneness is ripped apart whether in a lonely marriage or a harsh marriage or a broken marriage, it causes immense pain... and often immense bitterness.

When Jesus got to Judea beyond the Jordan, He did what the Pharisees couldn't stand... He healed people from the large crowds that followed Him. The Pharisees hated that He could genuinely heal people because it kept proving that He was no ordinary man. The fact that He was the Messiah was OBVIOUS, but when someone doesn't want to see the truth... they just won't.

Vs. 3-9 ~ The Pharisees were ALWAYS trying to test Jesus in hopes that He would fail. He never did fail. Even when they finally pronounced Him as a blasphemer and had Him killed, they had to do it illegally, using conflicting false witness testimonies to convict Him.

The Pharisees tested Jesus with a donut... one that they created to give themselves permission to do what was never intended by the Word, Jesus Christ. They asked Jesus, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" I imagine there was disagreement among people on this matter, and they were hoping to stir up accusations against Jesus, depending on who He offended with His answer.

Jesus answered the Pharisees the same way He answered the devil when he tempted Him. Jesus answered with scripture. "Have you (O Pharisees who are scholars of the Mosaic law) not read that He who CREATED them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate"?

People can come with all kinds of opinions... and if I argue my opinion against their opinion, it's just a bunch of opinions that have no real authority. It's just... whoever is the best debater wins. But no one can argue against the word of God. It's His word, His plan, His purpose, His rule.

God created man and woman for relationship, to be joined together in oneness and never separated. But then came the curse... and man and woman became all about SELF. They wanted to separate for all kinds of reasons. If we will just see God's word with the authority He has and say, "Not my will, but Yours be done," we will save ourselves so much pain!!!

Well... the Pharisees were appalled! Here comes the biggest part of the donut... "They said to him, 'Why then did Moses COMMAND one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?'" That's not what Moses wrote. In Deuteronomy 24, Moses gave PERMISSION for a man to divorce his wife... and Jesus explained WHY. Jesus said, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses ALLOWED you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." This was never the plan... it was only put in place because of hard hearts.

Okay... so does that now mean we have a loophole? God PERMITS divorce for whatever reason? No. He takes the covenant of marriage VERY SERIOUSLY. Jesus said, "And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery." Jesus said, Moses gave permission, but I say there is only one reason for two people who follow God to divorce... adultery... the explicit tearing apart of the covenant by becoming one flesh with someone else.

1 Corinthians 7 gives only one other reason why God would allow divorce... if a person is married to an unbeliever, and the unbeliever decides to divorce, God says, "Let the person go." The believer cannot leave the unbeliever. The unbeliever can leave the believer. The believer is called to be a missionary to the unbelieving spouse.

This is hard. God does not allow unbiblical divorce... but this does not mean that God wants us

to have terrible, unbiblical marriages. He wants to use our marriages to help us grow in holiness. Our marriages are a model of the relationship between Christ and the church. We are in covenant with God and that covenant cannot be broken. God wants us to view marriage the same. That's why it's so important not to jump into it without lots of prayer and commitment.

As shocking as this command was to the Pharisees AND even the disciples who said to Jesus, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry", this can be shocking to us today. But shocking does not make it untrue.

I have no intention of cheating on my husband or leaving him. So then, what principle can I apply to my life from this? First, I need to stay committed to the fence lines we have in place to protect our marriage... like not spending time alone with the opposite sex, not having private conversations with the opposite sex even through texts or phone calls, never talking with the opposite sex about personal things regarding my marriage, resolving conflict and not avoiding or attacking.

To keep a donut from occurring, I need to always keep an eternal perspective of my marriage. I need to be seeing any conflict as an opportunity to grow closer to the Lord and submit to Him more. I need to entrust myself fully to the Lord and believe that He has all authority, all power, and all love. I need to trust that He knows what's best for me and He does what's best for me... Let Him lead. Bring all my complaints and concerns to Him first.

Whether it's about my marriage or any other of His commands, I need to remember, "ALL scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man or woman of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17), even the work of loving and respecting my husband. God's word is my authority, not my feelings or opinions. O Lord, please help me to bow to You in EVERY aspect of my life, holding nothing back. You are in charge and in control. You who created this universe and all that is within it have all authority. Let me never take that for granted. I have fought against Your authority in so many ways. Please help me to surrender completely. Amen.