

DIVORCE
MATTHEW 5:31-32
9-10-23

I. PHARISEES QUESTION

Matthew 19:3 - "And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, 'Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?'"

1. Rooted in the prevalent teaching of the day – Rabbi Hillel

~ This view saw divorce "for any cause."

II. JESUS' RESPONSE (Matthew 19:5-6)

1. Defines Marriage

- ~ God is the one who created Marriage.
- ~ Marriage is one man and one woman for life.
- ~ Marriage is a covenant before God.
- ~ Marriage is a big deal to God.

III. PHARISEES RESPOND

Matthew 19:7 - "They said to him, 'Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?'"

1. Pharisees misinterpret The Mosaic Law as grounds for divorce

Deuteronomy 24:1 - "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house..."

IV. JESUS RESPONDS

1. Divorce is not a divine endorsement but a concession for our sinful human hearts

Matthew 19:8 - "He said to them, 'Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.'"

2. Jesus gives grounds for "scriptural divorce"

Matthew 19:9a - "And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality..."

Matthew 5:32a - "But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery..."

- ~ Sexual immorality
- ~ Abandonment

1 Corinthians 7:15 - "But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace."

3. Jesus highlights remarriage

Matthew 19:9b - "...and marries another, commits adultery."

Matthew 5:32b - "...and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

V. WHY DOES GOD HATE DIVORCE SO MUCH?

1. Divorce violates a vow that was made before God

~ This violation communicates a low view of God's design.

2. Divorce hurts the picture of marriage

~ God designed marriage to be a beautiful picture of His love for us.

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did you think about the message this week? What challenged you in scripture?
2. God describes His relationship to His people in marital terms. How does knowing this help us understand Jesus' teaching on marriage and divorce?
3. Why do you think the world thinks so little of the marriage covenant?
4. If marriage is so important to God, how should we help others prepare for marriage?
5. How does knowing marriage is important to God encourage us to love our spouse?
6. As a church how can we encourage God's original design for marriage? What are some practical things?
7. Why is it a good thing that Jesus so strongly prohibits divorce? What does it communicate about Him?
8. Jesus' teaching on divorce comes directly on the heels of His teaching on lust. How are these two connected?
9. Respond to Pastor Brandon's statement, "When we forsake God's design, we will always create problems for ourselves." What are some ways we have forsaken God's design in our world? How do we encourage others to see God's original design for these things?