



Jesus On Divorce

Mark 10:1-12

Jesus On Divorce

- **Proposition:** God hates divorce and will not allow it among His people—with only two exceptions.
- **I. A Surprising Question about Marriage and Divorce (1-2)**
- **II. The Common Sinful View of Marriage and Divorce (3-5)**
- **III. Our Lord's Teaching on Divorce and Remarriage (6-8)**
 - A. God established the place of marriage as part of creation.
 - B. God established the parameters of marriage.
 - C. God established the priority of marriage.
 - D. God established the permanence of marriage.
- **IV. The Practical Application regarding Divorce and Remarriage (10-12)**

The Final Journey to Jerusalem



IV. The Practical Application regarding Divorce and Remarriage (10-12)

- A. Jesus' Application
 - In response to the question of remarriage, Jesus makes two balancing applications...
 - **1)** Remarriage makes a man guilty of adultery (11).
 - **2)** Remarriage makes a woman equally guilty of adultery (12).

A Summary of Jesus on Divorce & Remarriage

- In summary, this passage teaches this about divorce and remarriage...
- **1)** Divorce ends a marriage God designed to be permanent and is a sin against God.
- **2)** Remarriage following an unbiblical divorce brings the moral guilt of adultery.

IV. The Practical Application regarding Divorce and Remarriage (10-12)

- A. Jesus' Application
- B. The Exceptions
 - Scripture makes it clear that God does not consider all divorce to be sinful.
 - 1. Sexual sin with another entity.
 - Matt. 5:31-32; 19:9

Four Primary Christian Views

- 1) No Divorce & no remarriage
 - Catholicism; John Piper
- 2) Divorce but no remarriage
- 3) Divorce & remarriage for adultery and desertion by an unbeliever.
 - This is the historic, mainstream protestant view since the reformation.
- 4) Divorce & remarriage for a variety of reasons.

John Piper on Divorce

- 1) The exception clause doesn't appear in the other gospel records of Mark and Luke.
- 2) The exception clause applies only to the betrothal period.
 - Piper: "Except for immorality" [does] not refer to adultery but to premarital sexual fornication which a man or a woman discovers in the betrothed partner."

The Nature of an Exception Clause

- E.g., If anyone drives a vehicle in Texas and exceeds the legal speed limit, except for on-duty, public safety officials, he is breaking the law and will be subject to a fine.
- What happens if the condition is met?
 - If you are an on-duty public safety official and you drive a vehicle in Texas and if you exceed the speed limit, you will not be breaking the law, and you will not be subject to a fine.
- Applied to divorce:
 - If someone divorces his wife because of her sexual sin with another entity, and he remarries another, he is not committing adultery against her.

IV. The Practical Application regarding Divorce and Remarriage (10-12)

- A. Jesus' Application
- B. The Exceptions
 - Scripture makes it clear that God does not consider all divorce to be sinful.
 - 1. Sexual sin with another entity.
 - Matt. 5:31-32; 19:9
 - 2. Abandonment by an Unbeliever
 - 1 Cor. 7:12-15

Abandonment: the conditions

- The conditions necessary for this exception to be met...
- 1) One spouse is a Christian.
- 2) The other spouse is not a Christian.
 - How do you get the label of an unbeliever?
 - a) He doesn't profess or claim to be a Christian.
 - b) He claims or professes to be a Christian, but has gone through the entire process of Matthew 18, has remained unrepentant, and is now to be treated like an unbeliever whatever he may claim.
- 3) The unbeliever wants the marriage to end.

Application, for those...

- **1) Never Been Married.**
 - a) Have the gift of singleness—you are not a second class citizen.
 - b) Hope to be married – commit now to the idea of marriage for life.
- **2) Married with no divorce in your background.**
 - Commit to embrace the permanence of marriage in your own relationship.

Application, for those...

- **3) Divorced without biblical grounds.**
 - a) Sinfully divorced but not remarried.
 - Seek reconciliation with your former spouse, if possible.
 - 1 Cor. 7:10-11 - But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband (but if she does leave, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife.
 - If you are considering marrying someone who divorced unbiblically, and reconciliation is still possible, God considers you to be committing adultery against that former spouse.
 - Matt. 5:32 - but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.
 - Luke 16:18 - "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery."

Application, for those...

- **3) Divorced without biblical grounds.**
 - a) Sinfully divorced but not remarried.
 - b) Sinfully divorced, and have remarried.
 - Understand the magnitude of your sin according to Mark 10 – both the sin of divorce and of adultery by remarriage.
 - Express repentance toward God and seek His forgiveness.
 - Seek forgiveness from your former spouse, in a wise way that doesn't open you to temptation or accusation.
 - And commit heart and soul to be faithful to your current marriage.

Application, for those...

- **4) Divorced with biblical grounds.**
 - Although you are not responsible for ending the marriage, confess any sins that may have contributed to the problems in the marriage.
 - But don't allow false guilt about the divorce itself or your remarriage.
 - And if you haven't remarried, pursue any potential future marriage carefully and with the counsel of the elders.
 - For you to pursue marriage...
 - The person must be a Christian (1 Cor. 7:39).
 - The person must not be living in unrepentant sin (1 Cor. 5).

Resources:

- John MacArthur: *The Divorce Dilemma*.
- Jay Adams: *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the Bible*.
- John Murray: *Divorce*.
- Thomas Edgar: *Essays in Divorce and Remarriage: Four Christian Views*, edited by H. Wayne House.

Concluding thoughts:

- **1) The standard Jesus establishes here is a reminder of our need for the gospel.**
- **2) God hates divorce, so our Lord will not permit it among His followers with two exceptions.**
- **3) Your marriage matters to Christ.**
- **4) When it comes to those who are divorced, we must avoid self-righteousness.**