

08/16/26

Pastor John W. Brown

Calvary Chapel Central Phoenix

Chapter 19:01-12 DIVORCE AND ADULTERY

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **Matthew 18** – showed us that the Lord has a “process” for keeping peace amongst Christians.
1. **Step # 1** - If someone personally has offended us, we are supposed to go to him or her first one-on-one.
 - a) If they listen – we have gained our brother or sister and the friendship, – as well as the restoration of that individual.
 2. **Step #2** - If they will not listen, we are to take 2 or 3 people with respectable Christian walks and approach the person again.
 - a) If they listen... – again all has been gained!
 3. **Step #3** – If they do not listen after the 2nd attempt with witnesses, we are to bring the matter before the leadership of the church and let them pray and decide the best solution.
 4. And finally – (**Step #4**) – if they will not listen to any on those – they are to be treated as a “heathen” or a “tax-collector” – and that would translate to someone who doesn’t have a relationship with the Lord.
 - a) And of course, a Jew had nothing spiritually in common with a Gentile!
 - b) They would not even eat with them for fear of defilement.
- B. So, this process is very serious business! And the result for the one in sin and will not repent, is a loss of his/her church and Christian fellowship.
1. We get a feel for this in **1 Corinthians 5:1–5 (NKJV)** — **1** It is actually reported *that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father’s wife!* **2** And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. **3** For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. **4** In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, **5** deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.
- C. Christians are supposed to handle their differences, not in public courts, but within the community of believers:
1. **1 Corinthians 6:1–4 (NKJV)** — **1** Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? **2** Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? **3** Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? **4** If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to

judge?

- a) And I think our last study could be summed up with **Romans 12:9–21 (NKJV)** — **9** *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.* **10** *Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;* **11** *not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;* **12** *rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;* **13** *distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.* **14** *Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.* **15** *Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.* **16** *Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.* **17** *Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.* **18** *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.* **19** *Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.* **20** *Therefore “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”* **21** *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

- (1) And I find all this extremely important that all of this is immediately on the heels of the disciples arguing about which one of them was the greatest!

D. Now – the topic turns to divorce and remarriage.

II. **MATTHEW 19:1–3 (NKJV)** — **1** **NOW IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN JESUS HAD FINISHED THESE SAYINGS, THAT HE DEPARTED FROM GALILEE AND CAME TO THE REGION OF JUDEA BEYOND THE JORDAN. 2 AND GREAT MULTITUDES FOLLOWED HIM, AND HE HEALED THEM THERE. 3 THE PHARISEES ALSO CAME TO HIM, TESTING HIM, AND SAYING TO HIM, “IS IT LAWFUL FOR A MAN TO DIVORCE HIS WIFE FOR JUST ANY REASON?”**

A. Please notice who the question of from = the Pharisees!

1. Notice also that scripture tells us it was “to test Him” – meaning they were hoping that His answer would somehow discredit him in some way.
 - a) You see people were as divided on the subject then as they are today.
 - (1) One camp believed that a man could divorce his wife for virtually any reason that displeased him.
 - (2) The other believed that divorce could only happen in the case of adultery.
 - (a) The Pharisees know that whichever way Jesus answers – one of the factions are going to be displeased with Him!
 - (i) So, Jesus reminds them of the “original plan.”

III. **MATTHEW 19:4–6 (NKJV) — 4 AND HE ANSWERED AND SAID TO THEM, “HAVE YOU NOT READ THAT HE WHO MADE THEM AT THE BEGINNING ‘MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE,’ 5 AND SAID, ‘FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH?’ 6 SO THEN, THEY ARE NO LONGER TWO BUT ONE FLESH. THEREFORE WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER, LET NOT MAN SEPARATE.”**

A. This is from **Genesis Chapter 2** and if you look closely, you will see that the Lord is saying that marriage was originally intended to be heterosexual, monogamous, and for a lifetime!

1. Well, the Pharisees think they have Him now. Look at their next question.

IV. **MATTHEW 19:7 (NKJV) — 7 THEY SAID TO HIM, “WHY THEN DID MOSES COMMAND TO GIVE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE, AND TO PUT HER AWAY?”**

A. This is from **Deuteronomy 24:1–2 (NKJV) — 1 “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 uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, 2 when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man’s *wife*,**

1. What they are saying is: that Moses said it was OK, so how could it be wrong.
 - a) Please notice the “**some** uncleanness in her”.
 - (1) That seems a little arbitrary doesn’t it?
 - (a) Why is she just had a bad day?
 - (b) Why if the husband has just had a bad day?
 - (c) Why if the “uncleanness” is on the husband’s part from sleeping with his “other” wives?
 - (i) Jesus helps the understand what God’s original meaning was:

V. **MATTHEW 19:8–9 (NKJV) — 8 HE SAID TO THEM, “MOSES, BECAUSE OF THE HARDNESS OF YOUR HEARTS, PERMITTED YOU TO DIVORCE YOUR WIVES, BUT FROM THE BEGINNING IT WAS NOT SO. 9 AND I SAY TO YOU, WHOEVER DIVORCES HIS WIFE, EXCEPT FOR SEXUAL IMMORALITY, AND MARRIES ANOTHER, COMMITS ADULTERY; AND WHOEVER MARRIES HER WHO IS DIVORCED COMMITS ADULTERY.”**

A. Jesus’ answer – Moses only “allowed” it **because of your hardness of heart.**

1. By Moses’ time, sin had so distorted men’s view and hardened their hearts that divorce had become a common practice.
2. Moses only “allowed” it as a matter of civil law – but it was never the Lord’s original plan.
 - a) Notice the word “**I**” in **verse 9**! So – here the Lord restores the original plan for marriage.

3. There is ONE legitimate reason given for divorce and that is adultery. Not speculated adultery but proven adultery!
 - a) So, based on what the Lord has said – if divorce happens for any other reason and remarriage takes place – that relationship is in the true sense – adulterous.
 - (1) Look at the next question:

VI. MATTHEW 19:10 (NKJV) — 10 HIS DISCIPLES SAID TO HIM, “IF SUCH IS THE CASE OF THE MAN WITH HIS WIFE, IT IS BETTER NOT TO MARRY.”

- A. Basically, the question is, *“If you gotta live with them the rest of your life, wouldn’t it be better not to marry ‘em in the first place?”*
 1. This should give any and everyone considering marriage - pause.
 - a) These guys are saying, *“Well, if I can get rid of her anytime I want, I would be better off not marrying in the first place and just stay single!”*
 - (1) Can you imagine how fewer divorces there would be if men and women took this seriously BEFORE they got married?
 - b) Once again – this shows us how common divorce had become.
 2. And Jesus tells them there were only a few who could get through life without the need for marriage.

VII. MATTHEW 19:11–12 (NKJV) — 11 BUT HE SAID TO THEM, “ALL CANNOT ACCEPT THIS SAYING, BUT ONLY THOSE TO WHOM IT HAS BEEN GIVEN: 12 FOR THERE ARE EUNUCHS WHO WERE BORN THUS FROM THEIR MOTHER’S WOMB, AND THERE ARE EUNUCHS WHO WERE MADE EUNUCHS BY MEN, AND THERE ARE EUNUCHS WHO HAVE MADE THEMSELVES EUNUCHS FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN’S SAKE. HE WHO IS ABLE TO ACCEPT IT, LET HIM ACCEPT IT.”

- A. Jesus applied this to eunuchs because they had no physical need for sex or marriage.
 1. And to put it plainly - a eunuch was a man that had been castrated!
 2. Now I know it is probably my weird sense of humor, but it seems to me that Jesus is saying to these men who can’t imagine staying with one wife for the rest of their lives, “You do have a choice – you can just cut it all off if you want!”

VIII. AND I WANT TO CLOSE WITH THIS

- A. I am sure there are some of you here that are saying, “What do I do now – because I didn’t do it right!”
 1. In a world where the divorce rate amongst Christians is as high or even higher than those who don’t know Jesus – I am sure there are those who have not done this properly – but we must remember that we serve a God of forgiveness.
 - a) Adultery is a sin – and for those who can’t go back and undo things:

- (1) The Lord always looks at the heart so here is what I suggest:
- (2) True confession, true repentance, and accepting the Lord's true forgiveness
 - (a) And if you are not truly repentant, and you are not willing to be faithful - Jesus has given you an alternative - although somewhat painful.