

Marriage, Divorce, And Remarriage

Matthew 19:3-4

- Verse 3. “The Pharisees also came unto him, **tempting him**, and saying unto him, **Is it lawful** for a man to put away his wife for every cause?”
- Verse 4. “And he answered and said unto them; **Have ye not read** that he which made them at the beginning **made them male and female**”

Matthew 19:5-7

- Verse 5. “And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother; and shall **cleave to his wife**; and **they twain** shall be one flesh.”
- Verse 6. “Wherefore they are **no more twain**, but **one flesh**. What therefore God hath joined together, **let not man put asunder**.”
- Verse 7. “They say unto him, Why did Moses then **command to give a writing of divorcement**, and to put her away?”

Matthew 19:8-9

- Verse 8. “He saith unto them, Moses because of the **hardness of your hearts** **suffered** you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.”
- Verse 9. “**And I say unto you**, **Whosoever** shall put away his wife, **except it be for fornication**, **committeth adultery**; and **whoso marrieth** her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

Opening Remarks:

- Few subjects are more **controversial** than that of marriage, divorce, and remarriage.
- It has always been thus. cf. Matthew 14:4
- A controversial subject among Christians.
- Few subjects have caused me more personal agony.
- But what happens to ourselves, or others, does not affect what the Bible teaches – but it can affect **our attitude** toward Bible truth!

Examine Text:

- **The Question**: “**is it lawful** for a man to **put away his wife** for every cause,” Matthew 19:3.
 - Jesus left Galilee and came into coast of Judea.
 - The **Motive** behind the question – “tempting him.”
 - Two Schools of thought:
 - **Shammai**, Deut. 24:1 was interpreted to mean a man could not release his wife unless he found some indecency in her.
 - **Hillel** – very lax, anything that caused displeasure to the man was sufficient cause for divorce!

Jesus Reply – “**Have ye not read?**”

- Jesus referred them to what they had read.
- He referred them to “**the beginning**,” Genesis 2:18,21-24.
- Note: For Adam God created Eve, not Steve. It was not a homosexual relationship. It was not lesbianism, or Polygamy! It was a case of **one wife and one husband** cleaving to one another.

Jesus’ Reply (Continued)

- “**What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder**,” Matthew 19:6
 - This depicts the sanctity and permanency of the marriage bond.
 - Shows that there are **three parties** to a lawful marriage.
 - One man
 - One woman
 - And God!

The Pharisees’ Reply to Jesus’ Answer:

“Why did Moses then command you to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?”

They referred Jesus to Deuteronomy 24:1-4.

The “uncleanness” of Deut 24:1 was something different from adultery. Deut. 22:20-22.

Deuteronomy 24:2, “If ... she becomes the wife of another man,” NIV.

Not discussing the right to divorce, but what to do in **the event of divorce!** Illus. I John 2:1.

Jesus’ Explanation of the Mosaic Decree, verse 8

- Moses ... “**suffered**...because of the hardness of your hearts.
 - God did not “command” a writing of divorce; rather divorce was a temporary concession to their hardness of heart; he regulated their stubbornness!
- “**But from the beginning it was not so**,” verse 8.
 - Jesus pointed them back to the beginning.
 - It was “**from** the beginning” not **at** the beginning!

“And I say unto you...” verse 9!

- Jesus asserted His **supremacy over Moses**, and re-enacted the original law of Marriage.
- **The general rule** when one divorces and remarries: Note verse 9 without the exceptive clause; also Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18.
- “**Except**,” verse 9, means “**if**” and only “**if**.”
- “Committeth adultery” is **linear action**.

Adultery is **Sinful!**

- In the 10 commandments it was ranked next **to murder**, Exodus 20:13,14.
- Under the Law of Moses it was punishable by **death!** Leviticus 20:10.
- It is a work of **the flesh**, Galatians 5:19-21.

The Reply of the Disciples:

- Verse 10: "His disciples say unto him, if the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry."
- They saw the severity of Jesus' teaching; they knew Jesus went further than Moses.

Jesus' Reply to the Disciples:

- Verse 11: "All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given."
- Verse 12: "For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

Three Classes of Eunuchs:

- Those who were eunuchs from their mother's womb. cf. Acts 8:26-27.
- Those which were "made eunuchs of men," cf. 2 Kings 20:17-18; Daniel 1:3-4,6.
- Eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven.

The **Sinfulness** of Divorce:

- It is a putting asunder of what God has joined together, Matthew 19:6.
- It is something God hates, Malachi 2:14-16.
- There is only one Scriptural cause – fornication, Matthew 19:9.
- It often leads to adulterous second marriages, Matthew 19:9; 5:32.

Re-Marriage

- **Two Groups of people** may Scripturally re-marry:
 - Peoples whose mates are deceased, Romans 7:2-3.
 - Individuals who put their mates away for the cause of fornication, Matthew 19:9.
 - This is permission granted to the "innocent party;" God does not authorize a license to sin! cf. Proverbs 13:15

What Should we do about Christ's law on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage?

- Should we tighten it? 1 Timothy 4:1-3
- Should we make it more lax? Romans 6:1
- Should we allow preachers and elders to set it aside? Galatians 1:8-9.
- **We Should:**
 - Study it, Acts 17:11.
 - Obey it, James 2:12.
 - Teach it, Matthew 28:20

Conclusion:

- What Jesus taught concerning Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage constitutes “a hard saying.”
- There were some who walked no more with Jesus because of His teaching which they perceived to be a “hard saying,” John 6:60,66.
- But we should have the attitude of Peter – you have the “words of eternal life,” John 6:67-68.