

**SERIES: GETTING TO KNOW JESUS**

**SUBJECT: DIVORCE AND MARRIAGE**

**SCRIPTURE: MARK 10:1-12**

**SERMON NO.21**

### **Introduction**

The majority of non-Christian and Christian marriages in the United States end in divorce.

**Unfortunately, many churches today condemns divorce.** The tragedy in doing this also condemns divorced people. If the church is going to be the church that loves and accepts people as Jesus did, we have to be on the same page with Jesus and the Bible when it comes to this issue of divorce.

**In God's Word, I find a redemptive word for those who have been scarred by divorce;** as well as a word of encouragement for those want to build a strong marriage that last. **God not only diagnoses the illness of marriage in the Bible, He also prescribes the cure.**

**I. JESUS PUT TO THE TEST (MARK 10:1-2).** And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again. 2 The Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? Tempting him. This was a loaded question. The Pharisees were trying to put Jesus in a no win situation, where He would come into conflict with the teaching of the rabbis.

**1. There were two schools of thought about divorce in Jesus' day.** Each one was led by a different, highly respected rabbi-either Rabbi Hillel, or Rabbi Shammai.

**1) Rabbi Shammai** taught that divorce was only permissible on the grounds of some sexual misconduct. This was the conservative view.

**2) Rabbi Hillel** taught that a man could divorce his wife for any reason. If she burned his bread, showed disrespect to him, or talked disrespectfully of his parents, or spoke to a man on the street in public, he could divorce her. One of Rabbi Hillel's students, Rabbi Akiba even said that if a man found another woman who was more attractive, he could divorce his wife to marry her. This was the liberal view.

**2. Rabbi Hillel school of divorce was the most popular in Jesus' day.** And that's why the Pharisees were bringing this up. They wanted Jesus to make an unpopular statement to the crowd, and therefore become unpopular with them. Because they knew he would side with the more conservative view. They thought, "Now we've got Him, He's going to discredit Himself."

**Jesus responded (Mark 10:3-4).** What did Moses command you?  
4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

**The Pharisees were referring to Deuteronomy 24:1** When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

**1) Jesus cut right to the heart of the matter (5).** For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. It is very important that we understand this response of Jesus...

**The issue was not indecent activity of the woman, the issue was the hardness of the hearts of men.** Hardness of heart simply means that a person is going to do whatever he pleases, regardless of what God says. The heart of man was especially hard during this period in history. Men were divorcing their wives for any reason at all, while thumbing their noses at God.

**2) Jesus reveals God's intention for marriage (Mark 10:6-9).** From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female, 7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; 8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. 9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Jesus goes back to creation to point out God's original intention regarding marriage. **At creation, God made one male and one female.** He did not create Adam and Steve or Alice and Eve! He did not create any extras, incase Adam and Eve didn't work out.. That was God's original intent. **Jesus' point is that it is still God's desire for one man married to one woman** until they are parted by death-or Jesus comes again.

**3) The Pharisees came to Jesus asking Him, "What do you think about divorce?"** And Jesus responded by saying to them, "What do you think about marriage?" **He revealed to them what God thinks about marriage.** two people becoming one, committed to one another, in a covenant relationship which lasts a lifetime.

But we still have the question: (10). **What about divorce?** Divorce is real, divorce happens. Is there any biblical grounds for divorce? *Jesus sets out to answer these questions in the next verses.*

## **II. WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT DIVORCE**

**(MARK 10:10-12).** His disciples asked him again of the same matter. 11 He saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. 12 If a woman shall put away her husband, and and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

**1. Biblical Exception (Matthew 19:9).** I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and Whosoever shall marry her which is put away doth commit adultery. In the Old Testament adultery resulted in death, so the marriage ended. *What Jesus is saying* is that if a man divorces his wife for anything other than adultery, and remarriage occurs, he then causes her to commit adultery and commits adultery himself.

**2. Paul addresses the issue of divorce (1 Corinthians 7), in detail from several viewpoints...**

**1) Single (1 Corinthians 7:8-9).** I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. 9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn. (with passion). What he's saying here is that if you are single and can remain single, do so. But if you have a need to marry, then that is OK.

**2) Two Christians married to each other (1 Corinthians 7:10-11)** Unto the married I command, yet not I, nut the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband. 11 But and if she depart, let her

remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. His command is, "Stay together." There is no good reason to leave. As long as there is no unfaithfulness, stay together. *However...*

**The Bible does not teach** that the wife has an obligation to stay in a home with an abusive man, or a man with an abusive wife who threatens his or her physical welfare or the welfare of the children. **But if he or she leaves under those circumstances, one of two things has to happen:** either reconciliation has to take place, or you remain unmarried. **There is no biblical reason why two Christians should divorce.**

**3) Then Paul addresses the issue of a mixed marriage,** that is a Christian who is married to an unbeliever. Now these mixed marriages could happen in a couple of ways. \*Two unbelievers could be married, and then later one becomes a Christian. The \*second way is that a believer could marry an unbeliever in direct contradiction to the Scriptures.

**The Bible teaches that we are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers.** That is God's command. God is trying to save us the misery of being locked into a marriage with someone who is **fundamentally different from us**, whose values are different, whose outlook on life is different, and whose goals are different.

While it is possible for God to do something to save that person, there is no guarantee it will happen. And you may be condemned to a life with a lot of misery.

**4) He continues about mixed marriages (1 Corinthians 7:12-15)**  
**But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put**

her away. 13 And the woman which hath a husband that believeth not, and if she be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. 14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. 15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. Paul expands the exception from marital unfaithfulness to include desertion by an unbelieving partner. **He says,** "If you are a believer married to an unbeliever, stay with them. God may save them." And he expands on this in verse 14, **For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.**

**5) In verse 15 he gives us the only other biblical grounds for divorce.** **But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage Under bondage to what?** Obviously, bondage to the law of marriage. **in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.** \*When an unbelieving partner leaves a believer, the believer is to let that partner leave.

**So, to sum it all up, there are only three things that release a Christian marriage partner from a marriage: 1) the death of one marriage partner; 2) sexual unfaithfulness by a marriage partner; and 3) the desertion and divorce by an unbelieving marriage partner. This is the plain teaching of Scripture. But while those are the biblical grounds for a divorce...**

### **III. WHAT ABOUT DIVORCE OUTSIDE THESE EXCEPTIONS?**

**1. Sin against God, and sin against their partner.** \*If there is the possibility, they need to go back and be reconciled to the one they

divorced. **If not, if one of them has remarried, then they must simply throw themselves on the mercy of God in repentance and ask for forgiveness.** In doing that, they must admit to God that their actions are what they are-sin. There was no biblical reason for it, and there is no excuse.

**The sin of divorce is no different than any other sin.** It is not the "unpardonable" sin. The sinner who comes to Jesus in sincere repentance will find forgiveness. And the rest of us must forgive those whom God forgives.

**God can heal and restore divorced persons and can use them in His Kingdom,** not as second-class citizens, but in the same way he uses all saved sinners.

### **Conclusion**

Divorce-proof your marriage. Christians who are committed to God first and then committed to one another can survive almost any storm.

As you put Jesus first, and as you both move together closer to Him, you will be pulled closer together. And God will give you a wonderful marriage that is founded upon the rock which cannot be moved.