

Divorce Part of Ephesians 5 Marriage Section

Matt 19:3-12 Jesus entering region of Judea after leaving Galilee. He was healing.

Pharisees planned “setup” Jesus for a surprise attack. They thought they planned for “every outcome”!

They planned to ask him the “divorce” question because they knew Moses sanctioned divorce. Jesus possible responses:

No: Lambast him because Moses permitted it. How dare Jesus go against Moses!

YES: Pharisees would quote Gen 2:24 about “one flesh”.

Verse 3 Some Pharisees came to Jesus to **test** him. Pharisees asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?”

Why did Pharisees ask this question? Did they NOT know their bible? **GK Test:** to obtain information to be used against a person by trying to cause someone to make a mistake

Thought they could trip him up in the eyes of the people to discredit him

Divorce was a “well established” tradition or “religious right”.

Verse 4-6 Read focus on “**Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.**”

Separate GK: to separate objects by introducing considerable space or isolation—‘to separate, to isolate one from another. (Louv) IE: sever

Jesus takes them beyond and before Moses to God Himself.

Why should NO man break that union God created?

First: Why would anyone want to directly oppose God’s plan?

Second: How can damage NOT occur when a living creature is torn into two parts?

Example: King Solomon and the disputed baby. True mother gave in to save baby.

Verse 7 “Why then,” they asked, “did Moses *command* that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?”

GK: to give definite orders with authority

Pharisees thought they finally had Jesus.

Can you sense the sneers and smirks on their faces?

Deut 24:1 If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something

indecent about her, he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house,

GK: to allow or permit one to do an action.

Verse 8 Jesus replied, “Moses *permitted* you to divorce your wives because your **hearts** were **hard**. But it was not this way from the beginning. **9** I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, **except for sexual immorality**, and marries another woman commits adultery.” (Luke 16:18)

- Men were divorcing women for non-biblical reasons like burning breakfast!
- Romans 2:5 because of your stubborn and unrepentant hearts, storing up wrath
- Unforgiving nature? Eph 4:31-32

Verse 10 The disciples said to him, “If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.”

Verse 11 Read V11 Jesus’s reply.

“singlehood” is a special gift given to select people. I Cor 7 Paul echoes Jesus’ words about the advantages of staying single whether never married or divorced.

II Cor 6:14 --- IMPORTANCE

Make a wise decision after much prayer, reflection, searching out answers.

Why do I want to marry?

- I feel good around him or her. I don’t want to be alone!
- We both want to serve the Lord and honor him with our lives together as one person!

I Cor 7 Teaching on Marriage Background:

Corinth was a very indulgent area. They were really into “experiences”! Liked their emotional funny bone intensely tickled. From sexual immorality (son with father’s wife) to wild and crazy church services.

This chapter speaks to **groups of people** including: Married, unmarried, divorced, virgins, widows.

Purpose:

7:1-2 Matters you wrote about.

- Corinthians wrote questions about marriage and sexuality.
- Better to not marry to focus on serving the Lord, BUT since they had such little sexual self control...

Verses 3, 4, 5 Keeping Marriage Safe

When is it okay to use sex as a weapon or punishment on one’s spouse?

When is it okay to say NO to your spouse? (prayer) v5

What happens if one says no for other reasons? (Satan will tempt you) Ever wonder if a spouse may actually push their martial partner into an affair? The spouse cuts off their martial partner due to some less than biblical motive. They are endangering their marriage! Who pays the price? Both!

The spouse who says no will be asked by God why they did that? That same spouse will be hurt by the actions of their partner they help drive into an affair.

The spouse who looks in other places for sexual fulfillment. They may be filled with guilt and not feel comfortable around their spouse. This leads to a further cooling of the closeness of the martial relationship.

Down to Nuts and Bolts:

Same GK as unmarried Verse 11

Verse 8 Target Audience: Unmarried (someone NO LONGER married) and widows.

POTENTIAL QUESTION SENT TO PAUL:

For those of us who are no longer married, what should we do?

Stay single! **Stay GK:** Aorist Subjunctive Active More service for the Lord!

The stresses of the day making having a person you love dangerous.

Paul really ADVOCATES for singlehood!! **GOOD GK:** fine praiseworthy. Command?

Verse 9

If can’t control your desires, they SHOULD marry. What desires is Paul addressing??

Better to marry than burn! Burn in what way? with passion

Verse 10 Target Audience Married Folks (believers)

POTENTIAL QUESTION SENT TO PAUL:

How long do I have to stay with this jerk, I mean person?

Wife must NOT separate/leave hubby. Same GK as in Matt 19:4 Jesus says you can’t leave.

Verse 11

If she does, (**TWO Options**) ((Applies to men who leave/divorce spouse too)

- must remain “unmarried” (Same GK as Verse 8)
- be reconciled to spouse

Practical Application:

A believing spouse that leaves/divorces who marries again commits adultery. (Matt 19) This frees person who was divorced so that the divorced spouse is free to marry, but only in the Lord.

Duet 24:4 The divorced spouse can’t remarry original spouse even if s/he divorces the 2nd marriage.

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Verse 12/13 Target Audience Married Folks (unbeliever married to believer)

POTENTIAL QUESTION SENT TO PAUL:

I got saved while married. My spouse is NOT a believer. Do I have to stay with him or her? They are hindering my walk in the Lord!

Believer is **NOT allowed to divorce** the unbeliever if the unbeliever is willing/consents to stay married!

Practical Application:

If believer does leave, verse 11 applies: Must remain unmarried or be reconciled.

Verse 14 & 16 (Why of verses 12/13)

Unbelieving partner is “sanctified” through the believing spouse. God has believer in a place in which God can use s/he to work on the unbeliever! If believer leaves, who will witness to that spouse? Won’t everybody be mocking the believer for leaving? Won’t that tarnish the good name of Christ?

- **Titus 2:9-10** Make teaching about Jesus attractive!
- **I Peter 2:13-15** God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people

How does this all wash out?

- **Eph 5:25** Husband is Agape loving his unbelieving wife. She wonders why this guy that she treats like dirt still loves her? Opportunity to correlate that with God’s agape love for unbelievers.
- **I Peter 3:1-2** Read
- Wife is pooling her resources to help her husband. She Eph 5:32 treats him with respect. He wonders why she is supportive of him when he treats her with disrespect. Opportunity for the Spirit to work!

Verse 15 Target Audience (Believing Spouse)

If unbelieving spouse wishes to leave, LET HIM/HER GO!!!

Does God say here, “Play the hero and stick it out”? Does God say, “Remember the kids? Stay together for the kids’ sake?”

What’s better for the kids?

- Be in a hate and anger filled environment 24 hours a day 7 days a week?
- Be in a safe place for much of the week?

Believing spouse is **NOT BOUND**

Bound GK: Louw: to be firmly bound by an obligation or a relationship. Compare to I Cor 7:39 bound Romans 7:2 is same bound

Read Romans 7:1-3 “woman bound as long as husband alive. When he dies, she is released”

Released GK: to cause the release from an association with a person or an institution on the basis that the earlier obligation or restriction is no longer relevant or in force—‘to be freed, to be released.

GOD CALLED US TO LIVE IN PEACE.

Peace GK: Opposite of war and dissension. **Louw:** a set of favorable circumstances involving peace and tranquility **I Cor 14** God not a god of disorder but of peace

Verse 17-24 Don’t PANIC, live in the life in which the Lord saved you!

Live in the assigned area of your life. Just because you become a Christian, doesn’t mean you have to break away from everything. (ponder this)

When people got saved, some panicked over their situation. Do I quit my job, divorce my spouse, dump all my friends, etc?

ReREAD verse 24

More Marriage Insight from Paul

Verse 25 – 26 Target Audience Virgins

Judgement/opinion/advice

....Stay SINGLE!!!!!!

Verse 27 Target Audience: Marrieds and Unmarrieds (divorced)

Are you married/“bound” to a wife? **Bound GK:** firmly bound by an obligation or a relationship (Rom 7:1-2)

Don’t seek a divorce/release. **STAY MARRIED!!!**

Are you Unmarried/Released from a wife?

Released GK: to cause the release from an association with a person or an institution on the basis that the earlier obligation or restriction is no longer relevant or in force—‘to be freed, to be released.

Lenski: release is a general term that would include any form of loosening or dissolving existing marriage.

Don’t seek a wife!!!! Why? Pauls ongoing emphasis about how marriage can handicap serving the Lord along with the tumult of the times!

Verse 28 Target Audience: Virgins and Unmarrieds/Releaseds

If you or virgin do marry...

You have **NOT sinned**. Remember Verse 9? Better to marry than burn with passion!

Verse 39 Key Verse

Woman **BOUND** as long as husband lives. **GK: Bound** to be firmly bound by an obligation or a relationship

Husband dies, she is **free to marry** anyone **BUT** he must be in the Lord.

What have we learned about divorce?

1. God’s 1st choice is for marriage to create one person out of 2 and not to tear that 1 person into 2 pieces.
2. Sexual immorality is grounds for release from marriage.
3. If an unbeliever chooses to live with a saved spouse, you must not divorce them.
4. If an unbeliever chooses to leave the marriage, you are loosed and unbound from the marriage. Free to marry whomever you wish as long as the person is in the Lord.
5. If a person was not saved before marriage but is saved after being married, they are not living in sin by being married to unbeliever.

Still not sure where your divorce fits into all of this and where you stand?

1. My spouse already married.

- They committed adultery giving you grounds for “release” and being “unbound”.
- You are freed because biblically you are not allowed to remarry that remarried person if they divorce their second marriage.
- You **MUST** only marry in the Lord. Don’t be Unequally Yoked!!!

2. I already remarried.

- If your spouse divorced you and remarried, then you are released from that marriage completely.
- If you divorced your spouse for biblical reasons, you are good to go.
- If you divorced your spouse for unbiblical reasons, what should you do?
 - There is damage done in any divorce whether biblical or unbiblical. But, is divorce the unpardonable sin? What does I John 1:9 say? You can still glorify God with your present marriage! See Analogies
- Analogies to see how to deal with a present unbiblical remarriage from another perspective: 
 - Damage done to an **addict’s** body is often irreversible. But the addict must choose to pick a date to make a clean start and live a life from that time until they die to not live as an addict but as **SOBER!**
 - Person loses their **virginity**. Is their life over? Can they confess to the Lord? They can then say from a certain date onward I will no longer engage in premarital sex. Now they are a **spiritual virgin**.
 - Confess sin of marrying without biblical grounds. Start over anew living your marriage to His Glory!

Applications to our Lives

1. If you ever marry, make sure you don't **withhold sex from your partner** for anything other than mutual agreement for prayer as per I Cor 7:5.
 - a. If you do withhold, you are setting up your marriage for failure.
 - b. You are giving the devil a foothold into your marriage and lives.

2. **You are divorced.**
 - a. This does not mean your life is over.
 - b. The Lord can utilize you mightily to minister. II Cor 1:3-4.
 - c. Confess anything that needs confessed to the Lord. Then move on with your life.

3. **Marrying again.**
 - a. I Cor 7:28. "you have not sinned"
 - b. I Cor 7:39. "may only marry someone in the Lord"!!!

4. **Forgiveness.**
 - a. Does a spouse who commits adultery mean the marriage HAS TO END?
 - b. What if the innocent spouse forgives the adulterous spouse?
 - c. Prophet Hosea was commanded to take a prostitute for a wife. Purpose was an example of God's love and patience with Israel.

Notes:

Romans 7:1-3

Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? 2 For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. 3 So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.