

What About Divorce?

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

Matthew 19:1-10

Divorce Deceit

A wooden gavel is positioned in the bottom right corner of the frame, resting on a parchment document. The document features the words 'Divorce' and 'Deceit' written in a large, black, Gothic-style font. The parchment has a warm, yellowish-brown tone and shows some texture and creases.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

Matthew 19:3-6

And some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and saying, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?”

And He answered and said, “Have you not read that

He who created them from the beginning

made them male and female, 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’?

So they are no longer two, but one flesh.

What therefore God has joined together,
let no man separate.”

Matthew 19:6-10

They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to *give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?*” He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”

The disciples said to Him, “If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry.”

Main Point

In marriage God joins a man and woman in an inseparable unity designed to show forth the beauty of His covenant faithfulness that is most clearly seen in the gospel.

Important Observations

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

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then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

This is the commandment!

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His reason for divorcing her...

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Example Certificate of Divorce

"In (day), in (year) from the creation of the world, according to the common computation, in the province of __, I __ son of __, have voluntarily, and with the willingness of my soul, without constraint, dismissed, and left, and put you away, even you, __ the daughter of __ of the city __, who has been my wife heretofore; but now I dismiss you, and leave you, and put you away, that you may be free, and have power over your own life, to go away to be married to any man whom you will; and that no man be refused of your hand, for my name, from this day and for ever. And thus you are lawful for any man; and this is a writing of divorcement, and instrument of dismissal, and an epistle of putting away; according to the Law of Moses and Israel."

Important Observations from Jesus' Teaching

Matthew 19:3-8

And some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?" And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning *made them male and female*, 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*'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to *give her a certificate of divorce and send her away*?" He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way."

Their Question

Matthew 19:3-8

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The Divorce Debate

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Jesus' Surprising Redirection

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Their Misunderstanding

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Jesus' Correction

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Jesus' Rebuke

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and send her away?" He said to them, "**Because of your hardness of heart** Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way."

The Disciples' Surprise

Matthew 19:10

The disciples said to Him,
“If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this,
it is better not to marry.”

What about divorce?

What do we know for sure?

Divorce

What do we know for sure?

That God created humanity
as male and female.

Jesus' Declaration!

Matthew 19:3-6

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What do we know for sure?

That God created humanity as male and female.

That marriage is between
one man and one woman.

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What do we know for sure?

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That marriage is between a man and a woman.

That it is God who joins them and makes them one.

This is an inseparable unity.

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Inseparable unity!

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That marriage is between a man and a woman.

That it is God who joins them and makes them one.

This is an inseparable unity.

Divorce is due to hardness of heart.

Matthew 19:7-8

They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to *give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?*”

He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.”

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Moses permitted you to divorce your wives;
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Divorce came in with sin!

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What about divorce?

What do we know for sure?

What questions do we want answered?

Divorce

What do we want to know?

What was the “indecentcy”
to which Moses referred?

What is this?

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no

favor in his eyes because **he has found some indecentcy in her,**

and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

What is the context?

Deuteronomy 22:13-17

If any man takes a wife and goes in to her and then turns against her, and charges her with shameful deeds and publicly defames her, and says, "I took this woman, but when I came near her, I did not find her a virgin."

What is the context?

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again to be his wife, after **she has been defiled**, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

Numbers 5:19-20

The priest shall have her take an oath and shall say to the woman, “If no man has lain with you and if you have not gone astray into uncleanness, being under the authority of your husband, be immune to this water of bitterness that brings a curse; if you, however, have gone astray, being under the authority of your husband, and if you have defiled yourself and a man other than your husband has had intercourse with you...”

Numbers 5:19-20

The priest shall have her take an oath and shall say to the woman, “If no man has lain with you and if you have not gone astray into uncleanness, being under the authority of your husband, be immune to this water of bitterness that brings a curse; if you, however, have gone astray, being under the

authority of your husband, and if **you have defiled yourself** and
a man other than your husband has had intercourse with you...”

Even if the *indecentcy* was not sexual immorality, it was clearly something significant and not simply “any reason at all”.

What do we want to know?

What was the “indecentcy” to which Moses referred?

What is the “porneia”
to which Jesus refers?

Matthew 19:9

“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife,
except for sexual immorality,
and marries another woman commits adultery.”

Matthew 19:9

“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife,

except for **porneia**,

and marries another woman commits adultery.”

Porneia is a broad term referring to all sexual immorality including fornication, prostitution, incest, homosexuality, etc.

Porneia was likely Jesus' interpretation of "indecenty".

What do we want to know?

What was the “indecency” to which Moses referred?

What is the “porneia” to which Jesus refers?

Is divorce and remarriage
ever permissible?

This is *still* our question.

Matthew 19:3-8

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“Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?”

And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning *made them male and female*, 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*’?”

So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate. They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?”

He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.”

But this is still Jesus' redirection!

Matthew 19:3-8

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And He answered and said, "**Have you not read** that He who created

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And this is still God's desire!

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Moses permitted you to divorce your wives;

but **from the beginning it has not
been this way.**"

Jesus wanted them to see that,
“Is it lawful?” is the wrong question.

This is still the wrong question.

Let's chose to turn away from a search for justification and turn toward the pursuit of reconciliation.

DELETED

What about divorce?

What do we know for sure?

What questions do we want answered?

What implications should we press?

Divorce

What should we press?

That marriage must be held in high regard.

Matthew 19:3-6

And some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and saying,
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So they are no longer two, but one flesh. **What therefore God has
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This is *Holy* Matrimony!

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So they are no longer two, but one flesh. **What** therefore **God has**
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Hebrews 13:4

Marriage is to be held in honor among all,
and the marriage bed is to be undefiled;
for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

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and the marriage bed is to be undefiled;
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What should we press?

That marriage must be held in high regard.

That we should repudiate
“no fault” divorce.

No Fault?

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“Is it lawful for a man to **divorce** his wife **for any reason at all?**”

And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning *made them male and female*, 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’?*

So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

In a broken, sinful world there *are* causes of divorce; but as those who hold marriage in high regard, we ought to expect that there be a grievous cause.

Deuteronomy 24:1

“...**because** he has found some indecency”

Matthew 19:9

“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife,
except for sexual immorality,
and marries another woman commits adultery.”

What should we press?

That marriage must be held in high regard.

That we should repudiate “no fault” divorce.

That we should understand marriage in light of the gospel and treat it accordingly.

The LORD's Beautiful Covenant Union

Isaiah 54:5-6

For **your husband** is your Maker,
Whose name is the LORD of hosts;
And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel,
Who is called the God of all the earth.
For the LORD has called you,
Like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit,
Even like a wife of one's youth when she is rejected,
Says your God.

Marriage and the Gospel

Ephesians 5:25-32

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

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So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body.

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

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“This mystery” is the faithful one-flesh union between Christ and His Church that is displayed in faithful Christian marriage.

Conclusion:

**In a world of broken marriages,
we can learn to make Christian
marriage a powerful apologetic
for the gospel by meditating on
Christ and His Church.**