

I. Introduction and Review.

II. Unlawful Divorce and Remarriage is Adultery.

**A. The Jewish Teachers Corrupted the Teaching of the Law. 5:31 Dt. 24:1-4**

1. They Taught that Divorce was Allowed, So Long as Procedures Were Followed.
2. They Broke Their Marriage Covenants so that Their Desires Could be Gratified with a Different Woman. *As in Our Day*

**B. Jesus Corrects The Abuse of Divorce. 5:32 19:3-9 Gen. 2:24**

1. Marriage is Designed by God as a Permanent Covenant of Companionship. 19:4-6
  - a. Death alone is to end a marriage.  
The survivor is then free to remarry. I Cor. 7:39 Rom. 7:2 I Tim. 5:14
  - b. God hates divorce! Mal. 2:14-17  
God's Ideal is Higher than what the Law Allows. Mt. 19:8
2. Divorce was Permitted Under the Law Only Due to Hardness of Heart.
  - a. Moses never commanded divorce. 19:7
  - b. Deuteronomy 24 was not written to give grounds to justify divorce.
  - c. Divorce was permitted, primarily as a safeguard to the one who was put away.
  - d. Moses provides a deterrent to divorce: Once you send her away, you can't get her her back if she has since remarried.
3. Sinful Divorce Leads to Adultery. 5:32 19:9
  - a. He assumes that the one who is divorced will remarry.
  - b. Such remarriage is a breach of the 7th commandment because the first union was unlawfully severed.
4. Jesus Exercises His Authority as Lawgiver to Modify the Mosaic Law.
  - a. The grounds for divorce are defined and narrowed.
  - b. The death penalty for adultery is abrogated. John 8:7
  - c. Polygamy will no longer be tolerated under the New Covenant. 19:5

**C. Don't Make Pharisaical Excuses for Divorce.**

1. *My Spouse is an Unbeliever. I Cor. 7:12-13*
2. *I'm Doing it for My Kids. I Cor. 7:14*
3. *My Spouse is a Major Disappointment.*
4. *We are Incompatible and have Irreconcilable Differences. I Want Some Peace. 5:9*
5. *This Relationship is too Difficult.*
6. *My Marriage is too Constraining. I Need My Freedom.*
7. *I Didn't Realize What I was Getting Into When I Got Married.*
8. *We Weren't Married in a Church.*
9. *My Spouse Mistreats Me. I Pet. 3:1-2*
10. *I Owe it to myself to be happy. God Wouldn't Want Me to Stay if I am Unhappy.*
11. *We are No Longer "In Love"*
12. *I Married the Wrong Person.*
13. *All My friends tell me that I ought to leave him/her.*
14. *God will Forgive Me. I John 2:3ff*
15. *We're Not Getting a Divorce We're Getting a Legal Separation or an Annulment. I Cor. 7:3-5,10 Mt. 19:6*

**D. Be Careful not Contribute to Any Divorce by Your Acts or Counsel. Matt. 19:6**

1. Guard Your Marriage.
2. Don't Become Involved with a Married Person.
3. Don't Give Bad Advice.

III. Can One be Lawfully Divorced and Remarried?

**A. The Problem of the Exception. 5:32 19:9**

1. Divorce and Remarriage are Clearly Forbidden in Most Situations.
2. All Divorce is a Sinful Violation of God's Ideal; however, not All Divorced Persons are Guilty of that Sin.

**B. Divorce is Permitted on the Grounds of Sexual Promiscuity. 5:32 19:9**

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1. Sexual Unfaithfulness Breaks the Marriage Covenant.
    - a. Under the Old Covenant, the adulterer would have been executed, thereby, the innocent party. Deut. 22:22
    - b. This is the Ground on Which God Divorced Israel. Jer. 3:8
    - c. The Word Jesus Uses (*porneia*) Encompasses Adultery and Other Sexual Sins. 1:19 15:19 I Cor. 5:1 6:18 Col. 3:5 Lev. 18 Rev. 2:14,20 Jude 7
  2. Even in this Case Divorce is Merely Permitted, not Commanded. Hosea 2
    - a. Where there is repentance, forgiveness and restoration is preferable. Luke 17:3
    - b. The wronged party cannot be compelled to give up the right to divorce.

**C. The Person Who has been Abandoned by an Unbelieving Spouse is Also Free.**

I Cor. 7:15-16 Rom. 12:18

1. He or She is the Victim of the Other Party's Having Severed the Marriage Covenant.
2. The Believer is No Longer Bound to Fulfill the Marital Duties.
3. What if a Believer is Abandoned by a Professing Christian? Matt. 18:15-17

**D. Those Who are Lawfully Divorced are Free to Remarry. I Cor. 7:27-28**

1. They are Not Under Any Obligation to Remarry. I Cor. 7:27-28
2. Usually it is Best to Wait.

**E. Other Questions:**

1. Do These Exceptions Contradict Jesus' Teaching Against Divorce?
 

The exceptions occur when the other party breaks the marriage covenant.
2. Do These Principles Apply Equally to Men and Women? Mark 10:2ff I Cor. 7:10ff
3. Is Separation Ever an Option? I Cor. 7:10,5
4. What if One has Unlawfully Divorced and not Remarried? I Cor. 7:10-11
 

Those Who are not Lawfully Divorced have no Right to Remarriage.
5. What if One has Unlawfully Divorced and Remarried?
  - a. It is too late to go back. Deut. 24:1-4
  - b. Confess your sin to God and to those whom you have hurt.
  - c. Live faithfully in the situation in which you find yourself. I Cor. 7:20,24
6. What is the Role of Government in Marriage and Divorce?
  - a. States which fail to allow divorce on biblical grounds harm the innocent party!
  - b. Laws (No fault divorce) which promote quick and easy divorce without fixing blame and protecting the innocent party are unjust and harmful to the family.

IV. Concluding Applications

**A. For the Married:** *Don't Rush Out of Marriage.*

1. Divorce on Unbiblical Grounds will not Allow You to Escape Anything!
2. Commit to Working Out Your Problems. No Marriage is Beyond Repair.
3. Strive for God's Ideal in Your Marriage. Eph. 5:22-33 I Pet. 3:1-7
 

Prevention is Better than the Cure.

**B. For the Single:** *Don't Rush into Marriage.*

1. Many Make a Bad Choice Which will Bring Years of Sorrow.
2. Choose Your Love Carefully! I Cor. 7:39 9:5 II Cor. 6:14 Prov. 31:30 Dt. 7:4-5

**C. For Those Who have Sinned.** *Divorce is not the Unforgivable Sin.* Mt. 12:31