



November 5, 2017

## Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage: 3 Inquiries, 3 Answers

*Matthew 19:1-15*

Matthew 19:1-12 contains three inquiries about marriage, divorce and remarriage (MDR) and three divine answers from the lips of Jesus.

The scourge of divorce:

The setting of Jesus' answers, vs. 1 & 2.

- These two verses mark an important transition in Jesus' ministry.
- Leaves Galilee, crosses the Jordan, enters Judea (Perea) ... He is making His way to Jerusalem to suffer, die, and rise on the third day (Matthew 17:21).

1) Inquiry #1, vs. 3 – “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?”

- Loaded question ... would He CONTRADICT Moses?
- Two schools of thought: Shammai – no divorce at all and Hillel – divorce for almost any reason! Both were not scriptural.
- The answer, vs. 4-6.
- The Pharisees, as well as our culture, see marriage as merely a contract. Jesus presents it as a binding covenant before God, made by a man and a woman. One man, one woman, for a lifetime! That was God's plan from the time of creation, predating sin and the entry of the Mosaic Law.
- “Leave and cleave” – God's ideal for ALL GENERATIONS following Adam and Eve.
- God's command, Genesis 1:28 – this has never been rescinded. Seems so simple, until sin entered the world. One man, one woman, one flesh, united in body, soul, mind and spirit.

2) Inquiry #2, vs. 7 – “Why then did Moses command ...?”

- The Pharisees totally disregard what Jesus says, and bring up Deuteronomy 24.
- But Moses never “commanded” Israel to divorce their wives.
- The answer – vs. 8 & 9. Why? Because of the hardness of “your” hearts, Moses permitted it!
- Never in God's plan (Malachi 2:16). God hates divorce ... divorce and separation is always the work of man.
- That said, read vs. 9 again!

- Same answer as the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:32).  
“...except for the cause of unchastity”, immorality ... *porneia*, a broad term that encompasses all illicit sexual activity within the confines of the marriage relationship. God’s standard? Total abstinence outside of marriage, total fidelity within marriage.
- Jesus says divorce for any other reason causes the person to be an adulterer if they remarry.
- Marriage and family are the very PILLAR and BACKBONE of any successful society. Take out the fear of God and the standard of His Word, and watch the society crumble. (Example? The USA.)

3) Inquire # 3, vs. 10 – The disciples, if this is the way it is, maybe it is better not to marry?

- The disciples had been raised in that liberal atmosphere.
- But two people living according to God’s Word will be immeasurably blessed in marriage!
- So, is it better not to marry? Vs. 11-12, Jesus’ answer.
- 1 Corinthians 7:8-9 – remain single if you are so gifted ... if you can accept ... *chóreo* ... embrace wholeheartedly.
- Examples vs. 12

So, today we’ve been given a lot to consider on MDR. Just as a closing caveat, look at vs. 13-15.

Jesus is totally devoted to marriage and the family. It’s been His plan and purpose from the beginning of creation. No wonder Satan works so hard to destroy it! So, be on your guard!

### **Suggested Devotional Reading**

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- Monday:** God’s original plan – Genesis 1, 2  
**Tuesday:** The plan attacked – Genesis 3  
**Wednesday:** Marriage – Ephesians 5:18-6:4  
**Thursday:** Teach your children – Deuteronomy 6:1-15  
**Friday:** What if we ignore God – Deuteronomy 8:11-20  
**Saturday:** Memorize Matthew 5:32, 18:9; Malachi 2:16

### **TABLE TALK**

Read together Deuteronomy 8:11-20. Now consider our culture ... what are some of the signs that we are now in the process of perishing? (vs. 19-20)