

Reasons why divorce is wrong

By: David C. Mills

Answering this question could not be easier. Marriage is forever because God said so. The Bible is very clear, Mathew 19:6 states that: *“Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder.”* What else needs to be said? *“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh.”* (Genesis 2:24). They are no longer two, but one. This is also mentioned in Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:7 and Ephesians 5:31. No one could ever split themselves in half, and in this passage God is clear as to the permanency of marriage. What God has done, let no man undo or divide. Marriage is ordained by God and is intended to be a lifelong commitment. It is neither a human nor temporary arrangement.¹

MARRIAGE

The most characteristic use of marriage and the family by Our Lord is that in which He describes the kingdom of God as a social order in which the relationship of men to God is like that of sons to a father, and their relation to each other like that between brothers.²

DIVORCE

The Scripture doctrine of divorce is very simple. It is contained in Matt 19:3-12:³ *”The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”*

¹ Ashbrook, John E, *Family Fundamentals* (Here Stand Books), pp. 4-5

² International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1996, Marriage

³ International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1996, Divorce

Divorce is a sin that violates the covenant relationship and is contrary to God's plan.⁴ Malachi 2:14 states: "*Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.*" Again, marriage is ordained and witnessed by God between the couple and is intended to be a lifelong covenant. "*What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*" (Mark 10:9).

Not only is divorce a sin, but is one that only leads to more sin. Mark 10:11 states: "*And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her,*" and adultery as defined in Exodus 20:14 is a sin. However, not only does he sin against her but he also makes the third party an adulterer. "*But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.*" (Matthew 5:32). I see no mention of an innocent party in remarriage, so not only will divorce lead the involved individual to further sin, but they will also be a stumbling block and barrier between another and God. God never intended for marriage to cease.

Divorce also diminishes the example set forth by God. Ephesians 5:22-32 states: "*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*" In verse 32 Paul points out that he is speaking concerning Christ and the church. The marriage covenant is being compared with Christ's relationship with the church. The seriousness of this is extraordinary. Just as a union is made between a husband and wife, so is a union formed when a sinner trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation. And Jesus said in John 10:28: "*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*" Once His, always His. Once married, always married.

Aside from the damage that divorce causes the individual and its obvious deviation from God's example, it also destroys the testimony of a believer. Again, Ephesians 5:27 states: "*That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*" Being a divorced believer (as opposed to one who was divorced prior to accepting the

⁴ Laney, J. Carl, *The Divorce Myth* (Bethany House Publishers, 1981), pp. 148

Lord Jesus Christ as their personal savior.) could cause difficulty when witnessing if it appears that the believer disregards the commands clearly set forth by the God they are testifying about. A public sin has public consequences!

Another unfortunate consequence of divorce is that it hinders the believer's ability to serve. 2 Peter 3:14 states: "*Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.*" As well as, 1 Timothy 3:2 "*A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife,*" 1 Tim 3:12 "*Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife,*" and Titus 1:6 "*If any be blameless, the husband of one wife.*" Divorce within a believer's life will prohibit their ability to act in a leadership capacity, as well as drastically limit their ability to be a servant for Christ.

Divorce is not only the standard for the believer, but also the unbeliever. In Matthew 19:3 and Mark 10:2 Jesus is teaching the unbelieving Pharisees the standard for marriage. Apparently, God's standard is not only for the church, but for society as well.⁵

In closing I quote Proverbs 5:18-23, "*Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love. And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings. His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.*" God has promised to bless our marriage if we are faithful. With so many advantages to obeying God's Word, it does not make sense to disobey and suffer the consequences. We are unable to hide from God, for he sees all and will reward each person accordingly.⁶ Again, marriage is ordained by God and is intended to be a lifelong commitment, it is neither a human nor temporary arrangement. Marriage is forever because God said so.

⁵ Laney, J. Carl, *The Divorce Myth* (Bethany House Publishers, 1981)

⁶ Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblesoft