

The Gospel of Matthew #45

Sermon on the Mount: Six Examples of the Right Use of the Law:

3. Easy and hard divorce

WHEN IS DIVORCE OKAY?

Matthew 5:31-32

I. What is the command?

Pharisees: give a certificate of divorce

Hey, divorce happens. Just regulate it, so it's not messy.

Jesus: No!

a) Deut 24:1-3 is a series of "IF" clauses.

The command is that the wife cannot remarry the first husband

b) The point is to *restrict* divorce

c) Divorce always involves adultery

- Result
- Cause

II. What are the biblical grounds for divorce?

A. "Porneia": unfaithfulness

Cf. Matt 19:3-12

B. Abandonment: I Cor 7:15

So divorce is never to sever the marriage bond, but only to regularize the severing that has already taken place for the sake of peace

Note: divorce of a Christian is never done between the two of them alone. It is done in community and the process of Church discipline.

III. Divorce and the Gospel

Divorce changes relationships and makes life more complex.
It does **not** deal with the root issue: the **heart**

Jesus does not say that the innocent spouse *must* divorce if there has been unfaithfulness.

There is the heart of God that pursues the adulteress:

- Hosea
- Ezekiel 16

We all are adulterers and adulteresses (James 4:4)

God reconciles us who were His enemies (Col 1:21-22)

He then betroths us to Christ (II Cor 11:2-3) Who will marry us on the Day of His Return (Rev 19:6-9)

WE live now in the Hope of that perfect marriage of our dreams with Him

Marriage today will only thrive when lived in larger community

Marriage without the back door of divorce forces us to examine our hearts in painful but glorious ways to come to the cross in brokenness and hope

To the God Who will never break His covenant of marriage with you

Strong forgiveness of an unfaithful spouse is a powerful display of the Gospel of supernatural grace

Two sinners living in deepening intimacy, not a grudging cold war of mutual recriminations, is a powerful display of the Gospel that changes hearts, not just informs beliefs

We all need to come to Jesus for this. That is His point. And His invitation.

If you are not in another class, I invite you to discuss this and every sermon with me in Aux Cl #5 at 10am, between services.