

## Marriage Ordained from the Beginning and Fulfilled in Christ

<sup>31</sup> **“Now it was said, ‘WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY IS TO GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE’; <sup>32</sup> but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* reason of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.**

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the destructive nature of sin, and what failure to cut it off can mean in terms of damage to our \_\_\_\_\_ by talking about divorce. It helps us to understand first what the Law \_\_\_\_\_ said, then to understand what the Pharisees were \_\_\_\_\_ so we can put Jesus’ words in context.

Deuteronomy 24:1-5--The first thing that we have to notice is that God looks at \_\_\_\_\_ as between one husband and one wife. It’s purpose is for them to go and build a life \_\_\_\_\_ and raise a \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ together in relationship & honoring God and each other.

Malachi 2:13-14-God looks at the breaking of the covenant with a wife by dealing falsely with her as a break in the \_\_\_\_\_ with Him, summarizing His feelings in v.16 saying **I hate divorce.**

God’s Law in Deuteronomy were directed at a people who already had about 550 years of cultural development as a tribally-based society. They were already \_\_\_\_\_, and the way that they’d set it up was that men could divorce their wives, but not visa versa. They looked at marriage largely as a \_\_\_\_\_ arrangement. God could have included the commandment “thou shall not divorce”, but He didn’t. Why? Probably because the Hebrews wouldn’t have \_\_\_\_\_ it, and in a fallen world there are some \_\_\_\_\_ when God would permit divorce. But, look at God’s attitude throughout the Bible. It is always to \_\_\_\_\_ divorce and to urge people to \_\_\_\_\_ in their marriage. in Deuteronomy 24:1 there is no commandment from God to divorce, and no condoning, there is only the \_\_\_\_\_ to a very special set of circumstances.

The problem was that men were \_\_\_\_\_ after other women and coveting all the stuff that a new marriage to a richer or more beautiful or more socially upwardly mobile woman could bring them. So they were finding \_\_\_\_\_ and trumped up charges against them so that they could divorce their wives and do what they wanted. It was extremely unfair to the wives, and was causing much \_\_\_\_\_ for them and their children, as indeed divorce still causes today.

Notice the two conditions that God has put on divorce in Deuteronomy. First, the wife must have done something \_\_\_\_\_. It’s clear from Jesus’ words later that God was saying “sexual immorality” here. Marriage was a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship. That means that in order to prove indecency in the wife, it had to be witnessed by at least \_\_\_\_\_ people. Without an admission of guilt, in front of two witnesses, or a pregnancy that could not have been by the husband, it was going to be nearly \_\_\_\_\_ for a husband to prove. And the husband has to be willing to put her at risk of \_\_\_\_\_ by bringing in witnesses and establishing it legally, since the legal penalty for adultery was death.

Second, the woman not only had to be guilty of indecency, but it had to be such that “she no longer found favor in his sight”. He has to make the \_\_\_\_\_ of whether he’s able to forgive, or whether it is worth murder of the marriage, and potentially \_\_\_\_\_ his wife’s life. It’s no wonder that Jesus ties these two \_\_\_\_\_ of anger leading to murder and lust leading to divorce together. It’s as if God is saying, if the person is able to forgive, let them forgive, but if the person is \_\_\_\_\_ to kill the other person over it, it’s better that they divorce. Divorce was \_\_\_\_\_ to be difficult, to encourage couples to stay together. And, of course, in Christian households, it should never come to something like this in the first place. If we’re supposed to be seeking God \_\_\_\_\_ within our marriage. 1 Peter 3 gives us a picture of what this looks like **8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, loving, compassionate, and humble; 9 not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you would inherit a blessing.**

Both Jesus and Moses mention a certificate of divorce, or a bill of divorcement. The common term for divorce was shilluach 'ishah "the sending away of a wife". And the less scrupulous among the Hebrews were using this to treat women \_\_\_\_\_, and ignore their obligation to their children.

Mathew 19:3-9- **3 Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?"** Of course, the more \_\_\_\_\_ view was that divorce could be granted for the flimsiest of reasons. But Jesus does what He always does, and brings this back to God's \_\_\_\_\_ intent. He says in Mathew 19:4 **4 And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female,** Eve was made for Adam as a companion like him, fit for him, and this is the marriage \_\_\_\_\_ ordained by God; marriage between one man and one woman, in a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ relationship for life. Notice, here also the key aspects of marriage. \_\_\_\_\_ their family, \_\_\_\_\_ to their relationship with each other and to God only, and the two becoming one flesh. God tells us as believers only to marry another \_\_\_\_\_. 2 Cor 6:14 says **Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?** In other words, this is the \_\_\_\_\_ criterion for who you should marry, as a believer. And the second problem with the Pharisees doctrine is that they were teaching that God \_\_\_\_\_ divorce in the circumstances in which they said He allowed it. But nowhere do we read this. Mathew 19:7 **7 They \*said to Him, "Why, then, did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?"** They were looking at this as a commandment, when Moses had allowed it as a \_\_\_\_\_ to the fact that they wouldn't follow the command "thou shalt not divorce". And so, Jesus clarifies this for them saying in verse 8: **8 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 then, in verse 9, He clarifies God's point of view in terms of even what He allows **9 And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."** and in Mathew 5:32 **32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.** So, putting these verses together we find that a marriage may be legally dissolved by the courts, but the biblical relationship is still regarded as more \_\_\_\_\_. And so, divorce is a bad situation all-around. Much of the time one, or both of the divorced couple are going to end up committing adultery, from a biblical perspective. And the \_\_\_\_\_ of divorce are born by the man, woman and children. God requires that we \_\_\_\_\_, and turn from our ways and obey Him. He requires that we \_\_\_\_\_, and make things as right as they can be. And He requires that we \_\_\_\_\_ from our mistakes, and not \_\_\_\_\_ them. If you're married, \_\_\_\_\_ your mate that God has given you.

Regard, uphold and defend marriage as the basic God-ordained institution of our society, and the basis of our \_\_\_\_\_ in families. Marriage and family relationships are fundamental to our \_\_\_\_\_ of our relationship with God, and our relationships with each other.

Marriage matters to God. The marriage relationship that was initiated in Genesis 1, is concluded with the marriage supper of the lamb in Revelation 19:7. **7 Let's rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has prepared herself."** **8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.** We are the church, the Bride of Christ, and He has loved us enough to give Himself for us. So we have to honor the marriage relationship, and point to \_\_\_\_\_ to biblical marriage as a picture of fidelity to God. Making sure that we honor, uphold and defend the biblical concept of marriage, until the type is fulfilled, and He gathers His \_\_\_\_\_ together for the Marriage supper of the lamb, and we can rejoice and be glad with Him together with all of the saints over the last 2,000 years.