

# **JESUS ON DIVORCE**

## **Matthew 5:32-33**

**We need to understand Christ's teaching about divorce**

### **I. THEY SAID: REGULATE DIVORCE** (32)

A. A DIVORCE REGULATION: Deuteronomy 24:1-4

B. THE DEBATE REALITY

- What the scribes taught was hotly debated among themselves and their synagogues

C. THE DECREE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Paperwork is important - This was their primary focus
2. Details are important
3. Time is important: Moses required them to think this through
4. Women are important

D. THE DEGRADED RESPONSE

1. They were creating insecurity
2. They were legalizing lust
3. They were fracturing families

### **II. JESUS SAID: RETHINK DIVORCE** (33)

A. BECAUSE DIVORCE MULTIPLIES ADULTERY

1. The Responsibility: He causes her to commit adultery  
"Those who lead others into temptation to sin, or leave them in it, or expose them to it, make themselves guilty of their sins, and will be accountable for it." [Matthew Henry in Bible Works]
2. The Reality: Adultery will very likely happen
3. The Record: Jesus upholds the sacredness of the marriage bond

B. BECAUSE DIVORCE DEFILES SPOUSES

- Jesus focuses on the defilement in Deut. 24:14 and not the document nor the indecency

C. HOWEVER, DIVORCE FOR UNCLEANNES IS DIFFERENT

1. It doesn't cause adultery because adultery has already occurred
2. It does indicate an exception for an allowable divorce
3. Defining the "exception clause" is difficult

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### III. **JESUS LATER SAID: RETHINK MARRIAGE** - Matthew 19:3-9

#### A. REMINDING THEM OF GOD'S INTENTION (4-6)

#### B. CLARIFYING FOR THEM MOSES' PROVISION (7-9)

1. Given because of man's hardness
2. Not God's plan for the beginning

### IV. **JESUS DOESN'T SAY ...**

#### A. DIVORCE IS REQUIRED

1. Though Moses permitted it he nor any other biblical author required it
2. Hosea demonstrates faithfulness to a faulty marriage

#### B. REMARRIAGE IS PERMITTED

1. Though He acknowledges that it is likely, He does not affirm or approve of it
2. From His teaching here in Matthew 5:32-33, remaining unmarried is the only way to avoid adultery (it also leaves open the potential for reconciliation)
3. No NT passage commends remarriage, including I Corinthians 7

### V. **WISDOM SAYS ...**

#### A. CONSIDER ALL SCRIPTURES ABOUT DIVORCE

- Especially Gen. 2:18-25; Deut. 24:1-4; Mal. 2:13-16; Matt. 5:31-32, 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; Rom. 7:1-3 and I Cor. 7

#### B. DON'T CONDEMN THE DIVORCED

- Many divorced people have been deeply hurt and need support and encouragement

#### C. HOLD YOUR DIVORCE POSITIONS GRACIOUSLY

- There are many good and godly people who disagree on this issue

#### D. UNDERSTAND LEADERSHIP DILEMMAS

- Pastors and churches have to make decisions and policies that might specifically affect divorced people

**CONCLUSION: Divorce is a difficult issue ... Let us humbly seek to understand and apply God's teaching on this topic**