



Matthew 19:1-12

We all have experienced pain and frustration relating to the topics of marriage, divorce, and singleness.

All of us have sinned in some way and fallen short of God's demands relating to sex and marriage.

Let's be particularly sensitive to one another in this regard.

As we allow Jesus's words to challenge and confront us, it is important that we remember Jesus's heart.

Jesus tells us the truth because he loves us.

He desires that we know the joy and freedom of glorifying our heavenly Father through our obedience.

Just as none of us is outside the target of his truths, so also none of us is beyond the hope he offers.

Kevin DeYoung:

“...challenge in preaching on this topic is that there are so many unique scenarios that don’t lend themselves to easy answers.

- *“Many of you will listen to this sermon not simply for theological information, but you’ll be listening to hear if I think God thinks your divorce was acceptable, or whether your parents’ remarriage was appropriate, or whether you are free to remarry now that you are divorced.*
- *“There are so many intricate, specific situations that I can’t possibly speak to all of them. These situations require tremendous wisdom because it’s not always clear what is the correct counsel...”*

Sandy Willson:

“We should not make decisions [about marriage, divorce and remarriage] in our own cases. We should look to the church.”



Our Purpose today....

study Matthew 19:1-12 in order to

1) increase our understanding of marriage, divorce
and celibacy as God's Word dictates

and

2) improve our handling of and respect for God's Word

Question 1

When Jesus leaves Galilee and enters Judea, the Pharisees confront him to test him (19:3). They pose to Jesus a series of challenging ethical questions, specifically pertaining to divorce (19:3, 7).

What do the Pharisees' strategy and specific questions reveal about their heart?

Question 2

In Jesus's response to the Pharisees' first question about the lawfulness of divorce "for any cause" (19:3), Jesus appeals to the Law (the OT).

Specifically, he alludes to Gen 1:27 and cites Gen 2:24.

Review Gen 1:26–28, Gen 2:18–25, Malachi 2:15.)

What is Jesus's main point here, in Matt 19:4–6?

Breakout room Questions

Why is it important to begin any discussion on marriage and divorce like Jesus did, i.e. with the Genesis account of creation?

What does this account show us about the correct use of Scripture?

Question 3

Following Jesus's initial response, the Pharisees follow up in a further effort to entrap Jesus by appealing to the Law themselves (Deut 24:1–4).

- a. What is the main intent of this law? What is Moses's (and God's) aim/purpose in giving these instructions in Deuteronomy?
- b. What is Jesus's main point in his response to the Pharisees' second test, in Matt 19:8–9?

Question 4

Various other biblical passages deal with issues relating to marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

- a. Jesus's instruction to his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:31–32)
- b. Paul's instruction to the local church in Ephesus (Eph 5:22–33)**
- c. Paul's instruction to the local church in Rome (Rom 7:1–3)
- d. Paul's instruction to the local church in Corinth (1 Cor 7:10–16, 39)**

Biblical Principles to consider:

1. Marriage is the sacred union between one man and one woman and God's intention is for marriage to last a lifetime.
2. Divorce is not always sinful. Is every divorce the product of sin? Yes. Is every divorce therefore sinful? No.
3. Divorce is permitted, but not required, on the ground of sexual immorality.
4. Divorce is permitted, but not required, on the ground of desertion by an unbelieving spouse.
5. When the divorce was not permissible, any subsequent remarriage (to someone other than the original spouse) results in adultery.
6. In situations where the divorce was permissible, remarriage is also permissible.
7. Improperly divorced and remarried Christians should stay as they are, but repent and be forgiven of their past sins and make whatever amends are necessary.

Question 5

The disciples express astonishment over Jesus's response to the Pharisees (Matt 19:10).

- a. In particular, what astonished the disciples (19:10)?
- b. What main point does Jesus make in response to his disciples' question (19:11–12)?

Breakout room question

How can the church show both tenderness and courage with regards to the issues of marriage, divorce, and singleness?

What are some examples of how a believer might **unwisely** communicate the biblical principles of Matt 19:3–12, especially to a non-Christian or someone who has experienced severe pain associated with marriage and/or divorce?

- Identify at least three pitfalls to avoid.

Question for later contemplation:

How might an un-Biblical view of marriage, divorce, singlehood be a precursor to other issues such as homosexuality, abortion, transgenderism, etc?