

Destroying Divorce Among Disciples, Conclusion

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. We hear a great deal of furor over the complexity of this issue, including statements accepting multiple conflicting applications of Matthew 19:9.
 - 1. The difficulty is generated, not by what is written in scripture, but by what brethren have written about scripture.
- B. God made His word understandable - Eph. 3:2-4
 - 1. Baptism is immersion for the remission of sins - Acts 22:16; Col. 2:12
 - 2. Necessarily follows that in a matter that greatly impacts morality and salvation as does MDR that God would make Himself especially clear.
 - 3. Baptist woman in AR on Matt. 19:9 - "I guess I am going to hell."
- C. Purpose for this study
 - 1. Teach sound doctrine in order to inform and arm you. I have no other agenda. You decide what to do with the lesson

I. WHAT IS WRITTEN IN GOD'S WORD?

- A. Matt. 19:3-9 - exegete
 - 1. Marriage is a covenanted relationship that consists of:
 - a. Statement or indication of intent or agreement to marry - Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5
 - b. An oath or vow - Gal. 3:15
 - c. Formal ratification - whatever is recognized by contemporary culture as the celebration of a binding covenant
 - 1) Gen. 15:17, 24:22-53, 29:22-27; Jer. 34:18; Matt. 25:1
 - 2) Heb. 9:16-18; Mal. 2:14; 1Sam. 20:8
 - 2. Likewise with divorce:
 - a. Right purpose – fornication
 - b. Right intent – to put him away for fornication
 - c. Right action – whatever is recognized civilly, socially, or culturally as ending a marriage. (It is not relevant whether or not one is successful in court; one is called to action, not results.)
 - d. Example - Joseph and Mary: He was planning to put her away privily. He had what he believed was the right purpose (she was pregnant, implying fornication), the right intent (he wanted to put her away), and the right action (put her away privily implies an action of some sort was expected). He was Divinely prevented from taking this action.
 - 3. In every instruction from God, there are three elements that must be present for the successful keeping of that imperative:
 - a. Right authority - God must be the source
 - b. Right intent - man must purpose to obey by faith
 - c. Right action - man must act on his faith as Divinely instructed
 - 4. Illustrate with baptism - can one intellectually repudiate his sins?
 - a. Apply to MDR - One cannot intellectually keep an instruction that mandates action.

B. Questions

1. "What did Jesus mean by divorce in verse 9?"
 - a. The same thing He meant by it in verse 8, and the same thing the Pharisees meant by it in verses 3 & 7.
2. "Can a person who was put away for no scriptural cause remarry if the mate fornicates or remarries after the divorce?"
 - a. What is Jesus Christ's clearly stated order?
 - 1) Fornication by the guilty mate
 - 2) Divorce by the innocent mate
 - 3) Remarriage by the innocent mate only
3. "What if the guilty mate beats the innocent to the courthouse?"
 - a. In instructions that require the cooperation of other persons for a successful outcome, disciples are required to make the effort.
 - b. God does not condemn one for results outside of the realm of his responsibility - Mark 16:15; Gal. 6:1
 - c. One need not succeed in getting the divorce. He is called to action in such matters, not results.
4. "But isn't the civil divorce and civil remarriage meaningless?"
 - a. Rom. 7:2-3 - The apostle Paul taught that while God does not approve, He still acknowledges the fact that one has divorced and remarried.
 - b. God said, "Let not man put asunder." He did not say, "Man cannot possibly put asunder."
5. "But what if the innocent mate is put away against her will, and she maintains the marriage in her mind? Can she intellectually repudiate him five years later when he remarries and becomes an adulterer?"
 - a. Where is it written? This is a scenario invented by men in violation of God's marriage law.
6. "You are taking away her right to marriage. You are making laws where God did not."
 - a. What is written in God's law -- His avowed understandable law?
 - b. I cannot take away a right God has not granted.

C. Sin causes pain.

1. Victims of theft, drunkenness, assault, or murder deserve happiness, but must live with the consequences of another's sin.
2. I grieve with those good people who have been betrayed by an unscrupulous mate and find themselves in sad circumstances for life.
3. But I will not attempt to relieve their present sorrow by developing a new doctrine on MDR at the expense of their eternal happiness in heaven.

Conclusion: (Illustration of arranged marriages; they make it work)

A. In a world enamored with sin, we must maintain purity in our homes.

1. We must not give in to the temptation to fornicate.
2. We must never adopt the world's standards for marriage.
3. We must never believe that marriage is anything but a lifetime, permanent commitment.
4. Divorce must be destroyed among disciples.

B. "What God has joined together, let not man separate."

1. Teach your children well.