

“JESUS’ KINGDOM MANIFESTO”

BIG IDEA . . . Part 6: How to Ruin Your Love Life . . .

Divorce and Remarriage (5:31-32)

INTRO: In His Manifesto in the SOM (Matt. 5-7), Jesus Messiah-King, is stating His standards for kingdom living which exceed the standards of righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. In His life, death, and through His people Jesus fulfills the Mosaic Law. They had lowered the standard to what they could meet and measure by their self-righteous behaviors. He is explaining the true meaning of the Law and true righteousness. Matt. 5:21-48 in six practical life examples, Jesus describes how His righteousness exceeds that of the scribes, setting a higher (still not maintainable in human effort) standard to live by – True righteousness is first internal, in the heart, before it is external. Attitude behind the act is the issue (true in both testaments). Previously, anger in heart can lead to murder (vv. 21-26) and lust can lead to adultery (vv. 27-30) and ruin your love life. Today, continues that thought as Jesus addresses an issue common then and now – divorce and remarriage (vv. 31-32). Adultery and divorce are connected because Jesus teaches adultery can lead to divorce and divorce can lead to adultery. READ vv. 31-32 . . .

FAMILY IS UNDER ATTACK . . . 80% impacted by divorce

DIVORCE IS COSTLY – Stats: 1st 42%, 2nd 60%, 3rd 73%. Nominal Christians 20% higher rate than general population vs. devoted 35% less likely.

- Financially – assets, attorneys, court costs
- Personally – emotional, children, friends, parents
- Spiritually . . . The supreme tragedy of divorce is that it violates God’s law.

I. THE TEACHING OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES (v. 31)

- A. The Law said for “same indecency in her” (2 schools) “a certificate of divorce” is permitted (Deut. 24:1-4). Nowhere is divorce commanded or recommended or even approved, but allowed under certain circumstances. The “certificate”: stated the reasons for the divorce, made financial provision for the woman, and granted her freedom to remarry. According to Jewish law only the husband could divorce his wife. Many today, like those in the past, create our own standards for issues rather than obeying the truth. Our culture: No Fault Divorce on Irreconcilable Differences. Marriage IS about irreconcilable differences that compliment and strengthen.
- B. The Scribes said that Moses commanded a divorce (19:7). They had twisted Moses’ words – he allowed it but never commanded it. They

taught and practiced you can divorce for any reason as long as you did the paper work – and since Scribes were mostly lawyers that was easy. The certificates made their divorce righteous. Jesus corrects their perversion.

II. THE TEACHING OF JESUS (v. 32; 19:3-9)

- A. *It’s the Attitude behind the Act.* Similar to anger and murder. They believed if they avoided the act of murder/adultery they were righteous. Jesus says if anger or lust is in your heart, you are just as guilty. Jesus looks at our heart. ILL: getting a gift . . .
- B. *Jesus’ View of Marriage* – not a legal relationship but a covenantal one grounded in love (Gen. 1:27; 2:18-24).
- C. Five Principles:
 1. *What God joins together, let man not separate (Matt. 19:6).*
 2. *A certificate does not mean the marriage is over in God’s eyes and you are divorced*
 3. *Divorce is “Permitted” but not commanded after adultery.* Jesus’ only exception was unfaithfulness (v. 32; 19:9). Paul added desertion by an unbeliever (1 Cor. 7:12-16).
 4. *Always work toward reconciliation.* Scripture always stresses repentance, forgiveness, and restoration. Separation for reconciliation.
 5. *God hates divorce (Mal. 2:13-16).* He hates the sin (adultery, desertion) of the one causing the divorce. He hates the damage done to the children and the divorced. He hates the dissolving of a marriage He instituted. He hates the damage to His name. BUT, He never hates divorced people.

III. FORGIVENESS IS AVAILABLE (Heb. 4:15-16)

Divorce, even on unbiblical grounds, is NOT the unforgivable sin. No doubt consequences will run its course, but the sin is definitely forgivable. Even the adultery that causes divorce or the adultery that results from an unbiblical divorce when remarriage occurs can be forgiven by Christ (1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Jn. 1:9)

CONC: The Law is clear. God hates divorce. In His mercy and grace, He has made allowances because of the hardness of the human heart. Divorce is an awful tragedy, esp. when its between followers of Christ. SO costly in so many ways. But no matter the sins: anger, hate, adultery, divorce, sexual immorality, greed, envy, deceit, slander, arrogance, . . . even murder, God can make a tarnished vessel clean, useful and whole again. I’d say Jesus raised the standard.