

**Introduction:**

- So far in the passages we have covered from Mt. 5 we have looked at:
  - Living Righteous...Life Beyond Anger. Murder vs. Anger
  - Keeping the Command vs. Keeping the Heart - Adultery. Adultery vs. Lust
  - In both passages we finished with these truths: One, God is looking at the heart while man looks at the outside. Two, both the sin of anger and lust are devaluations of the worth of a person. The devaluing of something God has called precious. Three, **Here is where the value of human life begins – in the heart** – and when human life is devalued in any way it is an affront to the God who created that life. This is what the Pharisees were missing and this is what Jesus wanted the people to “get.
- *For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.* Mt 5:20
  - Jesus then starts these five sayings, “*you have heard but I say*’ portions of scripture. By doing so, He is after the heart of the people and not just the behavior. He is after the people to find righteousness that is of the heart and not just of the behavior.
  - The first two have come directly from the 10 Commands. The next two come from the law of Moses. I believe Jesus is being intentional with his choice of laws to drive home the point...that a changed heart is way better than a changed behavior.
  - Tonight we are going to tackle one more “you have heard but I say” portions dealing with divorce.
- *““You have heard the law that says, ‘A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.’ But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.”* (Matthew 5:31-32, NLT)
- Mt 19:3-9

**I. It's All About Relationship - Gods view**

- A. *“Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.”* (Genesis 2:18, NLT)
  1. The essence of marriage is companionship. Marriage was instituted by God because Adam was alone, and God said that was not good. God created us with a built in need for companionship.
  2. The primary purpose for God creating Eve was not to be Adam's helper but to be his companion. In the same manner, Adam was to provide companionship for Eve as well. The idea of companionship in marriage is seen in Malachi 2:14. The essential meaning of the word "companion" is that of a "union or association." Therefore, a companion is one with whom one enters into a close union or association. Habar-Hebron, place of association. To be a companion does not imply that the wife is inferior/servant to the husband. It means that she is actually what makes him complete. Eve was not Adam's "better half or bitter half", she was his other half...what completes him.
- B. *“This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.”* (Genesis 2:24-25, NLT) God gives us four foundational laws for marriage. Almost

all divorce can be traced back to one spouse or the other, or both, failing to adhere to one of these four laws.

1. Law of Priority "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother..." When God brought Adam and Eve together in the garden, He did so with the intent that their relationship would be more important than any other human relationship. The word "leave" means to "loosen or relinquish." When God said that a man was to "leave" his father and mother when he married, He meant that a man was to relinquish the highest position of commitment and devotion [Relationship] previously given to his parents in order to give that position to his wife.
  2. Law of Pursuit "...and shall be joined to his wife..." The Hebrew word for "joined" means "to pursue with great energy and to cling to something zealously." The secret to staying in love is work ("work" implies effort not drudgery)! Marriage only works when we work at it. One of the greatest misconceptions concerning marriage is that if we marry the right person, we'll not have to put any effort into making the marriage relationship successful, it will just "happen." Many couples have stopped working at their marriage and consequently their marriage has stopped working for them.
  3. Law of unity. They shall be one. Not making room for division.
  4. Law of purity. They lived with no shame.
- C. The importance of marriage
1. It is a perfect picture of Christ's relationship with His bride, the church. That is what marriage is supposed to be.
  2. It is a spiritual matter having to do with covenant relationship. (Proverbs 2:17; Ezekiel 16:8; Malachi 2:14).

## II. The Original Intent

- A. *"Jesus replied, 'Moses permitted divorce only as a concession to your hard hearts, but it was not what God had originally intended.'" (Matthew 19:8, NLT)*
1. In God's original plan for marriage, there was no provision for divorce. The original intention was one man for one woman for all of life. Jesus said it...
  2. Matthew 19:8, *"from the beginning it was not so."* That is, from the beginning, when God first instituted marriage, divorce was not an issue.
- B. Then why divorce? Where did it come from? Why did it happen?
1. The answer to these questions is simple, S-I-N. Sin is destructive, and with the rise of sin came the fall of marriage. Sin is the cause of divorce.
  2. As we just concluded in the previous point, God never intended for divorce to happen. He didn't want it, He didn't will it, but it did happen. How did it/divorce happen?
  3. Divorce was not a command by God, but rather a concession. God never instituted divorce, He just regulated it.
    - a) Malachi 2:16a God hates divorce.
    - b) God did permit it Matthew 19:7-8
      - (1) Note the Pharisees use of the word "command" and the Lord's use of the word "permitted." They ask the question *why did Moses command divorce?*

(2) Moses DID NOT command the Old Testament Jews to divorce their wives. Moses "permitted" them to do so, but notice that it was on account of the hardness of their hearts/ back to sin. Mt 19:7-8

C. Divorce is only permitted because of sin and is not a part of God's original plan for our marriages.

### III. Back to the Heart

A. As we look at this passage today, it helps us to realize that Jesus was dealing with issues of the heart, not simply outward appearances. God Himself said in 1 Samuel 16:7 "The LORD does not look at the things man looks at He looks at the heart.

B. Anger, lust, Jesus has just addressed those two now he indicates that immorality and unfaithfulness in marriage were issues that began in the heart.

1. When Jesus talked about anger in vs 22, He related it to the value He has placed on people

2. When Jesus talked about lust in v.28 He related it to the value He has placed on people.

3. When Jesus talks about divorce in 32 He is once again relating it to the value of people and the valuing of people has to do with relationship.

a) Jesus shows how "respectable men" were committing heart-adultery by abandoning their wives under the guise of allowable divorce as provided in the Law of Moses. Not only do they devalue the woman they are lusting after, they devalue their wife and family by abandoning them.

b) The matter of the heart Jesus is addressing here is how we value others. If we can remember that every person on this earth was created in God's image and has value, perhaps that will affect the way we treat one another.

### Conclusion:

- Some of the nastiest, ugliest words ever heard are often exchanged between two people who at one time said they loved each other. Problems, pressures, financial worries, kids, in-laws, disagreements, and many other things can really test the commitment between a husband and wife.
- There is no room for selfishness in God's kingdom. Guard the sanctity of marriage. Marriage is designed to provide a lifetime bond between one man and one woman. It also provides a safe haven in which children can grow and learn to love God and man.
- Jesus came to help us do what we could never do ourselves. Jesus demonstrated God's love for us by coming to this earth and dying as a sacrifice for us. We had no strength to help ourselves, but God stepped in and made a way through Jesus.
- I'm pretty sure this is what Jesus was saying when He said, "*However you treat the lowest person is how you are treating Me*" (my paraphrase of Mt. 25).