

# MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE (III)

## *Bible Teaching Concerning Divorce and Remarriage*

### Introduction

- 1) **Divorces and remarriages** are serious and widespread issues in our society and world
  - a) Typical marriage has about 50% chance of ending in divorce; some divorced more than once
  - b) Over half of older (35-65+) divorced individuals remarry; less for younger (under 35)
  - c) Affects many other people – children, extended families, neighbors
  - d) Historical course of society: *embarrassment-tolerable-acceptable-normal* → wrong direction!
- 2) Denominations of men and some brethren avoid this subject or adapt to modern thinking
- 3) We need to return to a study of God’s word for the truth about divorce and remarriage
  - a) Absolute divine Bible truth can be learned and understood on this subject – God has spoken!
  - b) Differences among brethren does *not* mean that Bible truth is unknowable or unclear (Eph. 5:17)
  - c) Differences and divisions are not solved by seeking unity-in-doctrinal diversity (2 Jn. 9)
  - d) Unscriptural teachings and practices not allowed as conscientious liberties (Rom. 14:3; 16:7)
  - e) Must endeavor to remove emotion and personal bias from our minds and seek God’s will

### **I) Permanence of Marriage (“for life”)**

- A) Jesus taught that a divinely joined marriage of an eligible man and woman is *not* to be “separated” by man (Matt. 19:3-6)
  - 1) Should be taught, emphasized, and obeyed to the glory of God and for a happy home
  - 2) A “marriage” of a male-male, female-female, multiple mates, or human-nonhuman is not joined by God (according to His will), and therefore not a lawful marriage
- B) A “marriage bond” exists between a man and woman joined together by God (1 Cor. 7:27)
  - 1) Gk. *deo* – to tie, bind; a lawful bond of marriage exists for life (Rom. 7:2)
  - 2) One can act against the marriage bond by unlawfully “putting asunder” the marriage (by human divorce laws), but sinful actions do not change the will and judgment of God
    - a) Marrying someone else is committing adultery (Rom. 7:3 sexual infidelity)
      - i) Note that one can be “married” and still be the husband/wife of another person
    - b) Must remain unmarried or reconcile to husband/wife (1 Cor. 7:10-11)
      - i) Note that one can be “unmarried” and still said to have a “husband” or “wife”
  - 3) Even when a marriage is put asunder unlawfully, the divine marriage law that bound the couple still exists that condemns the sinful divorce and forbids the forming of any other bond of marriage

### **II) Divorce – “From the Beginning it was not So”**

- A) Law of Moses (Deut. 24:1-4; *keritut* – a cutting [off a marriage by a writing])
  - 1) Wife sent away due to “uncleanness” (indecency)
  - 2) Permitted because of “hardness of hearts,” but not “from the beginning” (Matt. 19:7-8)
    - a) Divorce is a result of disobedience and was never part of God’s original plan
- B) God “hates” divorce (Mal. 2:16); it covers one with violence – separation of what God joined!
- C) Disputes about divorce continued into NT times (Matt. 19:3; schools of Shammai and Hillel)

### **III) New Testament Teaching**

#### **A) Divine Command Forbidding Divorce and Remarriage**

- 1) *Luke 16:18; Mark 10:11-12* (*apoluo* – depart, divorce, putting away)
- 2) *1 Corinthians 7:10-11* (*chorizo* – depart, put asunder; *aphiemi* – to bid go away or depart)

- 3) These scriptures give the basic rule – **no** divorce permitted by God, and any subsequent remarriage results in **adultery** (violation of marriage vow of faithfulness)
  - a) One can be unlawfully divorced (1 Cor. 7:10-11) and unlawfully married (Rom. 7:2-3a)
    - i) If unlawfully divorced, **one must remain unmarried or reconcile** (1 Cor. 7:11)
    - ii) If unlawfully married, **repentance demands separation** (Acts 26:20; Mk. 6:17-18; cf. Ezra 9-10)
- B) **“Except for Fornication”** (“except” = *if and only if; the only lawful cause for divorce*)
  - 1) **One exception** – putting away for the “cause” (reason) of fornication (sexual immorality)
    - a) *Porneia* – fornication, any illicit sexual intercourse
    - b) *Matthew 5:32* – innocent party *not* held responsible for guilty mate’s post-divorce adultery
    - c) *Matthew 19:9* – innocent party **not** commit adultery if remarry after putting away guilty mate
    - d) Must determine from Scripture whether a marriage or divorce is “lawful” or “unlawful”
- C) **Who may scripturally marry?**
  - 1) A person who has never been married (Matt. 19:4-6)
  - 2) One whose mate has died (Rom. 7:2-3)
  - 3) Innocent person who has put away a mate for the cause of fornication (Matt. 19:9)

#### Conclusion

Brethren should unite on the law of Christ about marriage, divorce and remarriage:

***Marriage is for one woman and one man for life, the one and only exception being that an innocent mate may put away a spouse guilty of fornication and have the right to marry another.***

Not all will accept this, but we must humble ourselves before the authority of God, accept the truth, and obey it to please God (Matt. 19:10-12).