

# BibleSanity.org – Remote Bible Study

## The Sermons, Parables, and Teachings of Jesus Christ

*Session 9 – The Sermon on the Mount, Part Four, October 11, 2022*

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### **Lust, Adultery, Divorce, and Remarriage**

In Matthew 5:27-32, Jesus discusses adultery, including aspects of adultery related to divorce.

#### **Matthew 5:27-28**

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: (Exodus 20:13) But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

(also Exodus 20:17 ...Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife...)

#### **Matthew 5:29-30**

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

#### **Matthew 5:31-32**

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: (Deuteronomy 24:1) But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Regarding vs 27-28: Jesus is using the Law to teach about Sin. As discussed last week, sin is a matter of the intents of our heart, where the Law only concerns actions taken. As hatred relates to murder, so lust relates to adultery.

Verses 29-30 is a serious warning which is clearly expressed.

Verses 31-32 Open up some serious questions regarding adultery in relation to divorce. This discussion repeats later in Jesus' ministry as related in Matthew 19:3-9, Luke 16:18, and Mark 10:2-12, with Mark including a private dialogue with the disciples.

**Matthew 19:3-9**

The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

**Luke 16:18**

Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.

**Mark 10:2-12**

And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.

And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.

And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

**The intent of these laws is to protect divorced women**, not to empower men to divorce them at will!

Remember that Jesus is addressing the sin which the Law is addressing, and it is the nature of sin to be both destructive and addictive. The laws in Exodus 21 and Deuteronomy 24 highlight that this is not a 'victimless crime.'

**Exodus 21:7-11** (Requires continuing support)

And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do.

If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her.

And if he have betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters. If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money.

**Deuteronomy 24:1-2** (Allows remarriage)

When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.

**Another case of the Law as an example to discuss sin.** Jesus acknowledges the Law (above), but then talks about the sin of adultery. We see adultery as described by the Law, sexual relations outside of marriage. Jesus is talking about a personal sin of rejecting our marriage partner.

Marriage is intended to be a permanent union between one man and one woman. In both scriptural instances, Jesus describes proper marriage as the man and woman becoming one, joined together by God. Scriptures have great respect for marriage, from Genesis to Revelation.

The following three instances are **allowed by the Law** which God gave Israel through Moses, but **described as instances of sin** by Jesus.

**First**, in Matthew 5:32, He says that divorcing for any reason apart from fornication causes the women to commit adultery. The exception for fornication is ostensibly because she is already an adulteress. Divorcing her for any other reason would cause her to commit adultery, with the presumable exception of a woman who spent the rest of her life with no further sexual relations.

**Secondly**, in Matthew 19 and in the parallel passages, Jesus adds that if the man remarries afterwards, then he commits adultery.

**Thirdly**, in both instances, Jesus states that a man who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

As Jesus said in Matthew 5:17, He is not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill. While the Law allows divorce and remarriage, it is an area of personal sin in rejection of God's institution of marriage in favor of adulterous lusts.

### **How do we interpret this in context of our own lives?**

Paul gives some specific guidance in I Corinthians 7, albeit in a different context, which encourages believers to live for God with liberty to marry if divorced or widowed. Note that his passage addresses marriage to avoid sin, not divorce because of sin.

#### **I Corinthians 7:2, 8-11, 27-28a, 39**

Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. And if thou marry, thou hast not sinned;

A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.