

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

RLJ-1909

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PART 15: THE UGLINESS OF DIVORCE

DIVORCE

Divorce is an ugly word that traumatizes children and opens them up for an arrested development spirit. More than 8.3 million marriages in the United States ended in divorce since 2000. There were 827,261 recorded divorces in 2019.

The average marriage lasts 7-8 years. Some states have a higher rate than others, but the typical divorce rate is around 50%.

The divorce rate at the time of Jesus was low and He clearly did not favor splitting a family apart. Fornication/adultery was the only ground for divorce such as when a spouse engages in sexual intercourse outside the marriage.¹ **Matthew 5:31-32**

A group of Pharisees at a later time would test Jesus with a scenario for divorce. The Son of God stated that only marriage between a man and a woman is valid. Polygamy was not an option in God's eyes. **Matthew 19:1-6**

The Pharisees asked why Moses had allowed divorce if it was not to be condoned. Jesus told them it was because of the sin nature and their insistence on separation. Once a man and woman become husband and wife, death and fornication/adultery are the only two things that effectively end a marriage. The only legal ground for divorce is sexual activity outside marriage, and anyone who marries a divorcee, is also guilty of adultery. But this messiness isn't how God intended marriage to be. **verses 7-9**

HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY

When the Godhead designed the creation before the foundation of the world, it was decided that human beings would come in two variants – male and female. In order to populate the earth, men and women were designed differently.

Men were designed to produce sperm and women were created to produce eggs that could be fertilized by sperm from men. The woman carries the new life in her womb until the baby is born. A woman also has two breasts that produce milk for the newborn.

Men and women were programmed by Jesus to seek out the opposite sex and so it is natural for a man to be attracted to a woman and vice versa. **Genesis 2:24-25**

PAUL'S TAKE ON MARRIAGE

The Holy Spirit spoke to the apostle Paul and told him that a husband's body is not his own, but belongs to his wife and vice versa. They are literally to be one flesh and live like as a single unit. **1 Corinthians 7:1-5**

¹ Fornication is generally sexual intercourse between two people not married to each other. It is called adultery when one or more of the partners having sexual intercourse is married to another person.



Should a husband and wife divorce, the man and the woman shall remain unmarried and not enter into another marriage. **verses 10-11**

Paul also addressed the scenario of an unequally yoked marriage such as with the following situations:

- ❖ Two unbelievers marry and one of them later is born again.
- ❖ A Christian and an unbeliever marry.

There are no grounds for the believing spouse to seek a divorce simply because they are unequally yoked and their spouse is an unbeliever. However, if the unbelieving spouse obtains a divorce, the believer is free to find another spouse. **verses 12-16**

Jesus made it clear that if a couple divorce and remarry other people, they can never return to the nullified marriage. **Deuteronomy 24:1-4**

MARRYING AN UNBELIEVER

Jesus plainly told the Israelites that He did not want them marrying pagans. They were to seek out likeminded people who also worshiped the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **Deuteronomy 7:1-6**

The apostle Paul was emphatic that a believer in Christ should never marry an unbeliever. **2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 7:1**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

We don't know if Jesus discussed domestic violence with the disciples because it was never recorded. There is no mention of it when the law was given to Moses.

The concept of dating did not exist within Hebrew society because marriages were arranged by the parents when their children were young. The parents of a boy paid a dowry to the parents of the girl. A woman was regarded as a commodity.

I am sure that men down through the millennia abused their wives, but there are few written records in the Bible.

When Lot was threatened by a raging homosexual mob, he offered his two daughters to appease the savages. They more or less had permission to abuse them in whatever way they saw fit. **Genesis 19:8**

There is also the story of a Levite and his concubine. The man arrived to a strange city and lodged in a home to which he was invited. During the evening, the homosexuals in the city came and wanted to rape the Levite. To save himself, he offered the concubine in his stead and the sexual degenerates abused her all night. She exhaustedly returned to the house in the early morning and died in the doorway. **Judges 19:20-30**

- ❖ During the years 2018-2021, 44 women were murdered in Sweden by husbands or live-in partners.
- ❖ During 2021, some 38,700 women filed a police report about domestic violence.
- ❖ In 2020, more than 81,000 women and girls were killed by their husbands or partners throughout the world. Of these women, 3,573 were Americans.

It is common in Russia, China, Japan, Middle Eastern nations, African nations, and a number of other places for men to beat their wives. Women have no rights in these places, and if a wife displeases her husband, it is not uncommon for her to receive a severe beating. Unlike in other nations that place a high value on females, these abused women cannot go to the police and complain.

REACTION TOWARDS VIOLENCE

The apostle Paul stated that a husband should treat his wife as Jesus treated His church. **Ephesians 4:20-29**

Most violence against women occurs when the husband is drunk or high on drugs. There is no place in the Bible where a woman is told to accept abuse and risk being killed.

A woman should never marry a drunk or a drug addict. But since many women also drink and use drugs, they enter into abusive relationships that can end in tragedy.

If you are a wife and live in an abusive marriage, seek shelter where you and the children are safe. We have laws which protects women and children from such abuse.

If a man refuses to stop and continues to live a violent life, my personal belief is that the woman has the right to file for divorce and relocate to a place where he cannot find her. Too many women have no place to go to and suffer for it.

Logically speaking, we know that God is against murder. He also opposes self-murder (suicide) when someone takes their own life. Any wife that stays with a physically abusive husband is doing just that. She knows that eventually her husband is going to incapacitate or kill her. This isn't a situation about loyalty, but self-preservation.

WHAT IF YOU'RE DIVORCED?

I took a survey in the late 1970s in the church that I pastored. I was shocked when I realized that out of all the married couples, only two were not divorced and remarried.

Divorce is just like any other sin. Jesus paid for it on the cross and all you have to do is repent. God will forgive, but just like with any other sin, the consequences of your action will always be there. The pain and the hurt inflicted on your children are still there and the soul damage for everyone involved must be dealt with in repentance and prayer.

Isaiah 1:16-20

Jesus is ready for you! Are you ready to repent? **1 John 1:5-10**

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?