

Series: 1 Corinthians
Title: Christ's Word on Divorce
Text: 1 Corinthians 7: 10-11
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1 Corinthians 7: 10: And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from *her* husband: 11: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband: and let not the husband put away *his* wife.

Our subject is "Christ's Word on Divorce." Believers are to marry believers. This is written to believers. It is because the covenant of marriage between husband and wife was ordained by God to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and the unbreakable marriage covenant between Christ and his bride.

Ephesians 5: 23: For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

When a husband and wife marry, we enter into a marriage covenant before God. We do so because it typifies Christ who entered into covenant for his bride before God his Father in eternity. Christ promised to lay down his life for his bride. He promised to take all our debt as his own and pay it all. He promised to love and cherish his bride, to provide and protect her in faithfulness. He promised nothing would ever separate her from him and his everlasting love! Christ promised to cleave to his bride and they two would be one flesh.

Ephesians 5: 30: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32: This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

The first thing Christ did when he entered his public ministry was attend a wedding. Don't you know his heart rejoiced as he heard the preacher declare how marriage between husband and wife typifies the covenant union between Christ and his bride!

I realize some believers will hear this who have a divorce in their past. Perhaps they are remarried. Put the past behind you. If you are Christ's, he has already forgiven your sins. Still, this message will be profitable for you and for other believers who are married or will marry.

Since marriage between husband and wife glorifies Christ's unending marriage to his bride, husbands and wives should do everything possible to keep their covenant marriage vow until death parts them.

This morning we heard the message of "The Greatest Love Story Ever Told" about Hosea and Gomer. We saw how Christ's bride was yet espoused to Christ even though we played the harlot. Christ loved us and would not let us go. He redeemed us and reconciled us to himself. If you have not heard that message I encourage you to listen to it before you listen to this message.

Since marriage between husband and wife glorifies Christ's unending marriage to his bride, husbands and wives should do everything possible to keep their covenant marriage vow until death parts them.

DO NOT DIVORCE

First, our Lord Jesus commands the believing husband and wife not to divorce—**1 Corinthians 7: 10: And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart [divorce] from *her* husband:**

When Paul says, “Unto the married, I command, yet not I, but the Lord”—he is saying Christ himself commanded these things when he walked this earth. Christ himself commanded, “Let not the wife [divorce] from *her* husband: and let not the husband [divorce] his wife and he tells us why:”

Matthew 19: 3: 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? 4: And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, 5: 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? 6: Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

God made marriage between husband and wife before the law of Moses ever entered in. God made marriage to typify the church’s union as one flesh with Christ from the beginning from eternity before as yet we broke the law in Adam.

When husband and wife are being married, God presides over our wedding. Our vows are made before God. Like Christ and his bride, God declares husband and wife are no more two but one flesh

“Therefore, what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.” The law of the land does not change what God has joined—a husband may divorce but the wife of thy youth is still thy wife before God.

Young people, before you marry, learn Christ and learn how the marriage covenant typifies the unbreakable covenant between Christ and his bride.

The Pharisees ask another question,

Matthew 19: 7: They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? 8: 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. [

In eternity and in the garden, God ordained that a husband and wife would be united as one flesh for life—because that is God’s eternal foreordination of Christ and all God’s elect! Since Christ is the Head of his bride and the Savior of the body, “[Nothing]...shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 8: 39)

But in Moses day, their hearts were so hard against God and their wives—so to prevent wives from being abused or murdered—God allowed Moses to suffer them to divorce. And, brethren, if God permitted it then for the safety of the bride then we should have the same compassion in our day in certain cases. If a woman is in harm’s way with her husband, it may be best for her to at least not live with him. But then this next word applies.

REMAIN UNMARRIED

If we divorce unjustly then we are told what we are to do—**1 Corinthians 7: 11: But and if she depart,** [divorce unjustly] **let her remain unmarried,** [the same goes for the husband].

Christ said,

Matthew 19: 9: And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, [porn-i-a] and shall marry another, [he] committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

Christ gives fornication as a just reason why a husband or wife may divorce. They may. But remember, that could not break the marriage union between Christ and his bride! WE played the harlot but it did not cause Christ to put us away.

The only other scriptural reason for divorce is when an unbelieving spouse leaves a believing spouse because of their hatred of the gospel of Christ. In either case—fornication or abandonment—a brother or sister is not an adulterer if they marry again. But if they divorce without these causes then remarry then they commit adultery and so does the person who marries them. Why?

It is because marriage is ordained to typify, the unbreakable, everlasting covenant of marriage between Christ and his bride. What God has joined together between Christ and his bride—no man shall put asunder. “For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away:” (Mal 2: 16)

Now let me repeat what we see here. In their first marriage, when a husband and wife vow to love one another until death parts them, they do so before God. God says they are now in an unbreakable marriage covenant, like he does with Christ and his bride. Before God, they are no more two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man put asunder.

Therefore, if we divorce without one of these two just causes then though an earthly judge may say we are divorced, before God, we are still married. God says our first husband is still our husband; our first wife is still our wife.

Therefore, when the divorced husband marries again, he commits adultery; same for wife; same for those who marry a divorcee. So he says in our text, “But and if she [divorce unjustly] let her remain unmarried, [the same goes for the husband].”

OR BE RECONCILED

Here is a better way—I **Corinthians 7: 11: ...Or be reconciled to her husband:** [or husband be reconciled to your wife].

Instead of divorcing unjustly, instead of divorcing unjustly then remaining unmarried for life, be reconciled to your spouse. Usually feelings are hurt and hearts are broken. So reconciliation may require a mediator to go between the two parties. That is our gospel!

Though we sinned—committed spiritual adultery against Christ, utter betrayal of our Redeemer—yet God the Father still sent his Son our Mediator, and Christ still loved his bride. So he came to Mediate and reconcile his people to God.

2 Corinthians 5: 18: And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19: To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20: Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. 21: For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Someone will say, “But they offended me so badly, I can’t be reconciled to my spouse!” Believer, get alone and think on how we committed fornication and adultery against Christ our Husband, but he would not put away his elect bride!

God sent Christ our Husband who covered all our sin in his own blood, who redeemed us from all iniquity—so now God will not charge sin to us! We are lawfully married to Christ! Remember, Hosea and Gomer?

Hosea 3: 1: Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of *her* friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. 2: So I bought her to me for fifteen *pieces* of silver, and *for* an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley: 3: And I said unto her, [here is the marriage covenant Christ speaks to his bride, into our hearts individually] Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for *another* man: so *will* I also *be* for thee.

Have you tasted this grace? Have you known this love of God in Christ? Are you now enjoying his sweet embrace in sweet reconciliation with God? Then why would we want to reject our Beloved and his word? The love of Christ constrains us! This is not law, this is the grace and love of God! Christ is our motive, our constraint!

So what did Christ declare here today?

One, believing husbands and wives, do not depart from your spouse! Wives submit to your husbands as the church submits to Christ—for he is the Husband and Savior of the body. Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.

Two, he says but and if you divorce unjustly then remain unmarried. Before God you are still married to your first spouse! It is because Christ’s marriage covenant can never be broken with his elect bride, the church.

Three, he says or be reconciled to that one who has offended you. To every saved husband and wife, Christ says, “Love one another as I have loved you!” Forgive one another even as I have forgiven you! Reconciliation is far better than divorce and spending the rest of our lives alone! It is far more honoring to Christ and his everlasting love, by whom we are saved!

Amen!