

Twelve Lessons

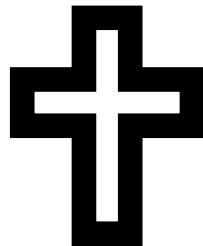
on

Marriage & Divorce

Compiled and Written

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CONTENTS

1. MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE.....4

2. UNDERSTANDING MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.....6

3. THE LAW OF MOSES.....9

4. DIVORCE OF AN UNBELIEVER & INTERRACIAL MARRIAGE.....11

5. DIVORCE & THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST -- PART I.....13

6. DIVORCE & THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST -- PART II.....16

7. UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF FORNICATION.....19

8. THE TEACHINGS OF PAUL -- PART I.....21

9. THE TEACHINGS OF PAUL -- PART II.....23

10. DIVORCE AND THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.....26

11. THE CHRISTIAN COUNSELOR.....29

12. RESTORING GOD’S STANDARD.....31

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MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE – LESSON 1

Introduction:

1. Astounding Divorce Rates:
 - a. 1920 – 1 out of 7, 1940 – 1 out of 6, 1960 – 1 out of 4, 1972 – 1 out of 3, 1977 – 1 out of 2
 - b. Soon it will be one divorce for every marriage.
2. Contributing Factors
 - a. Lenient position, many pastors, teachers, and writers have taken. Many make decisions that are influenced by experience not by the Word of God.
 - b. Biblical teaching is that marriage was designed by God to be permanent until death with “no divorce” option.
3. Point: I am not narrow-minded. I have studied this doctrine for 25 years and I have read every opposing view.
4. Point: I am not “down” on divorced people. Some of the best Christians I have ever met have been people who have been divorced and remarried.
5. In order to clearly understand this doctrine, we must start at the beginning.

Lesson Goals:

1. To study the Divine Origin of marriage.
2. Understand the meaning of becoming “one flesh.”
3. To get a sense of the mutual obligations of the companions in a marriage situation.

Definitions of Important Terms and/or Phrases:

1. Helpmeet – A word for helper, companion, or mate, used by God to describe Eve before she was created as Adam's spouse (Gen. 2:18)
2. Cleave – “*to adhere to,*” or “*to join one's self to.*” The Psalmist speaks of his tongue cleaving to the roof of his mouth (Ps. 137:6). We are told that a man should cleave unto his wife (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5). The word means “shall be glued to”

THE DIVINE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE – Most people know little about marriage and the commitment that is involved.

I. THE CREATION OF MAN – Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7 – Three Things Basic to Man's Creation

A. Man was created and did not evolve.

B. Man is fashioned in the God's image.

C. Man is created a sexual being. God created them male and female. The words literally mean the “piercer” and the “pierced.”

II. THE PROVISION OF WOMAN

A. She is called a “helpmeet.” Literally meaning, “*a helper agreeing to him – agreeing with him mentally, physically, and spiritually.*” In this meaning, we see the importance of a Christian to marry a Christian.

B. Priority of the Male over the Female – Two reasons

1. Reason No. 1 – In the order of Creation – The male being created first suggests priority and authority.
2. Reason No. 2 – In the naming of Eve, Adam exercised authority. The one named is under the one naming.
 - a. Explanation – Priority and Equality are not the same.
 - b. Eph. 5:22 and I Pet. 3:7 clearly teaches the woman's submission to the man and the woman is equal with the man.
 - c. I Cor. 11:3 – “*But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*”
 - d. This Scripture clearly teaches that Christ submitted Himself to the Father, but we know that Christ is equal to God the Father. So priority and equality are not the same.

III. THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE – Gen. 2:23-25

A. Gen. 2:24 is repeated 4 times in the Bible – Matt. 19:5, Mark 10:7, and Eph. 5:31.

B. Gen. 2:24 mentions three things essential to marriage.

1. Leaving – “*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother.*”
 - a. “*Therefore*” refers to verse 22 – and means “*that is why.*” Because God made a woman, a man is to leave his parents, with a view to establishing his own family.
 - b. Illustration – Just as a baby cannot grow unless the umbilical cord is cut, so a marriage cannot mature and develop unless the spouse separates from her or his parents in order to establish a new family.

- c. The two best legacies parents can give their children are “roots” and “wings.”
 - 1) “Roots” – Knowing that parents will always be there to help and encourage in times of special needs.
 - 2) “Wings” – The freedom to live one's own life and develop one's own family.
 - 3) This is not teaching abandonment of the parents. (Ex. 20:12, Mark 7:6-13, I Tim. 5:3-4)
- 2. Cleaving – You cannot really cleave until you leave.
 - a. Vs.24 – “*and shall cleave unto his wife*” – The word literally means “*glued together.*”
 - b. References – Job 38:38 – Used to describe dirt clods which stick together after the rain.
 - 1) Joshua 23:12 – A military alliance
 - 2) II Kings 5:27 – Leprosy which clings forever
 - c. The main characteristic of glue is its permanence – Tape is temporary. Items glued together (like wood) cannot be separated without great damage.
 - d. Cleaving therefore includes the God kind of love (agape) which is a sacrificial commitment patterned after the example of Christ's own personal sacrifice (Eph. 5:2,25)
 - e. “*Cleave unto his wife*” clearly teaches that God established a monogamous institution, one man and one wife.
 - 1) How do we reconcile this teaching of monogamy with polygamy that is found in the Bible? Gen. 29:15-30 and I Sam. 1:2 – Though at variance with God's ideal for marriage, the Old Testament Law allowed polygamy for two reasons:
 - a) In the case of a childless first marriage (Deut. 21:15-17).
 - b) In the case of a leviabie marriage when a man married his brother's widow (Deut. 25:5).
 - 2) Note: This practice never made for happy marriages, but on the contrary, brought great misery upon those involved. (I Sam. 1:6-7)
 - 3) Note: Cleaving also excludes marital unfaithfulness.
- 3. Becoming One Flesh – “*and they shall be one flesh*” – This phrase refers to the physical or sexual aspect of marriage as an act of Symbolism and only Symbolism.
 - a. This sexual act “Symbolizes” the identification of two people with one community of interest and pursuits, a union that is consummated in the physical act of sexual intercourse.
 - b. EMPHASIS – Must be made on the word “Symbolizes.” Having intercourse with a woman does not constitute marriage because there must be a “leaving” and a “cleaving” before the act.
 - 1) See I Cor. 6:16 – Intercourse with a harlot makes one flesh but not marriage. Why? There has been no “leaving” or “cleaving” before the act.
 - 2) Parallel this doctrine with the Doctrine of Baptism. Baptism is merely a symbol. Baptism does not constitute salvation. Why? Before a person is to be baptized, there must be “repentance” and “faith.” Baptism may get one wet but not saved because “repentance” and “faith” must take place prior to baptism just as “leaving” and “cleaving” must take place prior to “becoming one flesh.”
 - 3) This is a rebuttal of trial marriages where couples “shack up” to see if they will enjoy the marriage. There is no such thing as a “trial salvation” or a “trial marriage.”
 - a) Premarital sex is immoral and puts one under judgment.
 - b) Premarital sex defrauds one's future spouse of the unique right of taking a virgin in marriage as is clearly taught in I Thes. 4:3-5.
 - c) I Thess. 4:3-5 – “Possess” means to acquire and the vessel spoken of here is the wife.
 - d) I Thess. 4:4 – But what does Paul mean by “his own vessel”? It can only mean his own body or his own wife. Objections are raised against either view, but perhaps he means that the man shall acquire his own wife “in sanctification and honor,” words that elevate the wife and make it plain that Paul demands sexual purity on the part of men (married as well as unmarried). There is no double standard here. When the husband comes to the marriage bed, he should come as a chaste man to a chaste wife (Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament).

IV. THE OBLIGATIONS OF MARRIAGE – Eph. 5:22-33

A. The wife: a Submissive Helper – Vs. 22 – Subject simply means to “*place or rank under.*”

B. The husband: a Sacrificial Lover

C. The Symbolic Purpose – In marriage, it is not merely love which joins two people together in the sight of God and man, but the existence of a God-ordained union which is divinely designed to portray the intimate and inseparable relationship between Christ and His body, the Church.

D. IMPORTANT NOTE: Marriage is basically the legal union of a man and woman as husband and wife.