

Small Group Discussion Guide

Mark 10:1-12

“Divorce and Remarriage, Part 2”

Based on Sunday's
Sermon 8/30/26

Background

A related issue was whether remarriage to a different spouse was permissible after divorce. It is clear from both Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 that no person who had wrongly divorced his or her spouse had the biblical right to marry another. Some argue that this was because, in God's eyes, the original marriage bond was still intact since wrongful remarriage was defined as adultery. As long as one's ex-husband or ex-wife was alive (Rom. 7:2–3) and had not married another person (Deut. 24:1–4), the only remarriage choice for such a divorced person was to reconcile with his or her previous spouse (although 1 Cor. 7:10–17 may also allow abandonment as an exception). It was assumed in the first century that a divorced person would remarry. Therefore, the only way to avoid the adulterous sin of a wrongful remarriage was not to go through a wrongful divorce. However, in the case of a biblically justified divorce, we are to assume that the offending spouse is not justified in remarriage, but that the offended spouse *is* allowed to remarry. Some who have wrongfully remarried may wonder if they are continually living in an adulterous relationship. This dilemma is contrary to 1 Corinthians 10:13, which says that God will never put a believer in a situation where he or she has to sin. He will always make a “way out” from sin. So the sin of adultery in a wrongful remarriage is a one-time sin, at the beginning of the new marriage. From that point on, the new husband and wife are committed before God to preserve their relationship for life. Neither spouse in the new marriage has the option of going back to a previous spouse. Such would be “detestable” (Deut. 24:1–4). This understanding supports Moses' original reason for including the Deuteronomy 24 principle. People must understand the divine nature of marriage as an institution and never treat it lightly.¹

Discussion Questions

Getting Started

1. Discuss how divorce, remarriage has affected your life or the lives of your extended family.

Observation

2. Read Matthew 19:1-9. Compare this passage with Luke 10:1-12. What are the similarities and differences?

¹ Stuart K. Weber, *Matthew*, vol. 1, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 329.

3. Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-16. What are the key points in this passage concerning marriage and divorce?
4. What are the exceptions that allow for divorce in Scripture? Is the list exhaustive?
5. What should a believer do if an unbelieving spouse wants to stay married?

Interpretation

6. As a group discuss and put together the biblical understanding of marriage and divorce. Where do you find agreement? Disagreement?
7. Read Ephesians 5:22-27. How does marriage reflect our relationship with Christ?
8. What makes a great marriage in God's eyes?

Application

9. How would you counsel a friend who is going through a divorce?
10. How can we be proactive to guard our marriages from ending in divorce?

Prayer List: