**Bound in Marriage – “Let not man separate”**

*Matthew 19:6*

**Introduction**

1. Marriage is a wonderful institution graciously bestowed upon man by God in the beginning.
2. It is the oldest, and most foundational institution known to man, as it is that which God determined would grow the population, and establish all other institutions.
3. Given the foundational position of marriage in the existence of mankind, it is sad to note the ignorance of, and unwillingness to conform to God’s standard concerning the institution.
   1. Society has left God’s design of marriage, and intentions for the institution in many ways.
   2. **More disparagingly, the church has seen several false doctrines concerning marriage and divorce arise from within. These have been combatted for some time.**
      1. **These will continue to exist. (As long as there is truth there will be error.)**
      2. **We must continue to revisit the teaching of the subject to ensure our knowledge of such is untainted by worldliness, and ulterior motives.**
4. It is necessary to set aside all preconceived notions as we delve into God’s design for the marriage relationship, and His instructions concerning divorce and remarriage.
5. Testing Jesus (**cf. Matthew 19:3-10**)
6. Pharisees laying a trap **(v. 3)**.
   1. They questioned Jesus before (**cf. 12:10** – lawful to heal on Sabbath?).
      1. They would question Jesus again (**cf. 22:15, 17** – lawful to pay taxes to Caesar? **22:36** – what is the greatest commandment?)
      2. *We find these questions to be insincere. They were seeking to catch Jesus in contradiction of self, or the Mosaic Law.*
      3. **We must not make the mistake of the Pharisees when considering marriage, divorce, and remarriage.**
   2. They asked about a section of the Law which Moses gave concerning this topic **(v. 7**). (**cf. Deuteronomy 24:1-4**).
      1. Differences concerning interpretation of ***“uncleanness in her.”***
         1. Sexual misconduct.
         2. Any reason. (Wife burning food.)
         3. Simply becoming attracted to another woman.
      2. **It seems as though the Pharisees were seeking for Jesus to take a side in the dispute**.
         1. If He sided with the one they would find fault in Him by siding with the other. **(Pharisees suggest by their question it meant any reason.**)
         2. *This is similar to what occurred with the question of taxes. (What side will He choose?)*
7. Jesus appealed to marriage design. (**v. 4-6**).
   1. God’s design for marriage in the beginning was: **one man, one woman, for life**.
   2. God saw man in need of a helper. The helper he provided was to be permanent.
      1. **Genesis 2:18, 20-24** – Out of everything that God saw as good stood a lonely man – this was not good.
      2. **The creation of woman in both procedure and purpose shows the designed permanency of marriage.**
         1. **Needed a helper – God provided the perfect one 🡪**
         2. **One flesh (Adam) – separated (Rib), made into woman – rejoined in one flesh (marriage).**
   3. Three facets of the marriage design:
      1. ***“man shall leave his father and mother” (man does)***
         1. Not concerning residence, but identity.
         2. **A husband and wife are a distinct family unit from the ones they came from.**
      2. ***“be joined to his wife” (man does)***
         1. Join – to glue to; adhere to.
         2. **There is an overt recognition of the covenant made between the man and the woman. (They are now identified as husband and wife.)**
      3. ***“the two shall become one flesh” (man does)***
         1. Intimate sexual relationship in marriage.
         2. ***This is a privilege of the commitment of marriage. (It is not lawful in any other circumstance – cf. Hebrews 13:4 “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”)***

*These three distinct facets of the marriage relationship shows how special it is. There is a blending of hearts, minds, and bodies. It is the most intimate of relationships in creation, and should be held in high regard.*

* + 1. ***“what God has joined together” (God does)***
       1. God serves as a witness to those who have the right to make this commitment to each other.
       2. Joined – yoked together.
       3. **When two who have the right to come together in marriage and make such a commitment, God joins them together.** (*A God joined union is not to be separated.*)
  1. The Pharisees question had ulterior motives, and was misguided. Jesus laid out the design from the beginning. (**This is how it was MEANT to be!**)

1. Divorce permitted. (**v. 7-10**).
   1. Pharisees say Moses ***“commanded.”***
      1. The text they cited does not say such. (**cf. Deuteronomy 24:1-4**).
      2. God hates divorce! – **Malachi 2:16**
      3. **God would never command for something He hates to be practiced!**
   2. Because of hard hearts.
      1. The text of Deuteronomy 24 reads as though divorce was already occurring, because it was.
      2. **God did not desire this, but permitted it. (As He did with polygamy in cases.)**
      3. **This was part of the Mosaic law as a permission of something already happening because of hard hearts.**
         1. **The consequences laid out in Deuteronomy 24 put a check on divorce. 🡪**
         2. *Remember, when you divorce her and she marries another you CANNOT take her back!*
   3. Jesus laid down kingdom law. **(v. 9)**.
      1. ***“And I say to you…”***
         1. ***ONLY ONE*** lawful cause for divorce – ***fornication***.
         2. **If divorced for another reason, and marries another, goes to the bed of adultery.** (Not a God joined union – had no right to each other.)
         3. **If one marries a person who was divorced, both go to the bed of adultery.** (Not a God joined union – had no right to each other.)
      2. **Mark 10:10-12** – Marks account leaves out the exception.
         1. The exception still exists.
         2. **However, divorce is not an option! It is not something that should be considered upon entering a marriage!** 🡪
         3. ***Matthew 19:9 (without exception) – “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, ~~except for sexual immorality,~~ and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”***
         4. **The exception is not a loophole out of a marriage! (Marriage should not be approached in that way!)**
   4. Disciple’s reaction to Jesus’ teaching **(v. 10).**
      1. The standard of marriage in the Law of Christ is higher than that in the Mosaic Law with its permission.
      2. **If one cannot accept such strict terms, it is better not to marry!**
      3. **Marriage is serious. One must be careful in picking a mate – it is for life! 🡪**
2. Bound Until Death (This is the rule. Divorce for fornication is the exception.)
3. **Romans 7:2-3**
   1. Context: **v. 1, 4** – cessation of Old Law by death of Christ. (*The marriage bond was used to illustrate this point*.)
   2. **V. 2-3** – Example of marriage bond.
      1. **V. 2** – **the bond exists until death of spouse. When one dies, the living one is released.**
         1. **“Till death do us part.”**
         2. **This is how marriage should be viewed. This is God’s design.**
      2. **V. 3** – (because of v. 2) – **If both are alive, and one marries another, adultery is committed. If the one dies, it is no longer adultery, because there is release.**
4. Binding and loosing.
   1. All binding and loosing is done by God, and revealed to man via law – **cf. Matthew 16:19.**
      1. The apostles were not the authority. They would not arbitrarily bind something, and because they did so God would accept it.
      2. **God had already done the binding and loosing, i.e. set the parameters of the kingdom law, and that is what they were to speak!**
   2. Marriage forms a bond by law (God’s law on marriage) – **cf. Romans 7:2**
      1. **When two marry they are bound by the law.**
      2. **God said they are bound until death, and what He has bound man is not to separate.**
   3. **It is important to note that God is always the bond former. Where there is a bond, God is there. (Marriage of two who have the right to each other is a God-joined union that is not to be separated.)**
      1. **Thus, marriage and the bond are not the same.**
      2. In a lawful marriage, God binds two together. (**Acceptable marriage – with bond)**
      3. In an unlawful marriage He does not. (**Unacceptable marriage – without bond)**
5. Difference between bond and marriage.
   1. Bound and acceptably married – **Romans 7:2**
   2. Unmarried but bound to another – **1 Corinthians 7:10-11**
      1. **Recognition that some would divorce even though Paul (and Jesus) said it is wrong.**
      2. **Don’t do it, but if you do, these your only options afterword**.
   3. One – unmarried but bound; the other – unmarried, but free from bond (free to marry) – **Matthew 19:9**
      1. Exception allows for divorce.
      2. Divorce wife and marry another = adultery. Unless the divorce is for fornication.
   4. Bound to first mate, but unacceptably married to another – **Mark 6:17-18; Romans 7:2-3**
      1. **The marriage exists. It is real, but it is not lawful.**
      2. **The marriage and the bond are not the same.**
   5. **Only death releases the bond. That is the rule. When divorce occurs because of fornication, only one is released from the bond – the innocent party.**
   6. *What about 1 Corinthians 7:15? 🡪*
6. Pauline Privilege? (**cf. 1 Corinthians 7:15)**
   1. In an effort to find exceptions other than the ONE given by Jesus people have taken part of Paul’s writing out of context.
   2. **V. 15** – some use this as a second exception to Matthew 19:9. What do they say? 🡪
      1. Circumstance – believer married to unbeliever.
      2. Unbeliever wants to depart. Believer can let him depart (truth).
      3. ***“not under bondage in such cases”*** – those who use this as a second exception suggest this is concerning the marriage bond. (The bond is released, thus, they are free to remarry.) (FALSE)
   3. What is Paul teaching?
      1. **7:39** – cannot be a second exception. This is what Jesus said, and what Paul is affirming. (No death in second exception false teaching.)
      2. Rule remains – **one man, one woman, for life.**
      3. Concerning marriage – divorce is NOT permitted – **v. 10-14**
         1. ***“let HIM NOT divorce her [unbelieving wife]”***
         2. ***“let HER NOT divorce him [unbelieving husband]”***
      4. **V. 23** – Paul is discussing our slavery to Christ. We are under bondage to him.
      5. **V. 15** – do not renounce your faith in Christ to save your marriage.
         1. The bondage concerns spiritual bondage to Christ.
         2. Under bondage to Christ, not the marriage.
            1. ***“not under bondage”*** – *dedoulotai –* is a “perfect passive indicative” in Greek.
            2. **This is a bondage which is not, was not, and never has been.**
         3. First allegiance is to God, not man. If unbeliever is unwilling to live with believer, and wants to depart, the believer is not to forsake Christ to save the marriage.
      6. What is the believer to do in such a situation?
         1. ***“Let him depart.”***
         2. Remain unmarried – **Matthew 5:32**
            1. ***“causes her to commit adultery”***
            2. This is if she decides to remarry.
7. Marriage is for life! – **Matthew 19:4-6** – **One man, One woman, for LIFE!**

**Conclusion**

1. **Understanding marriage is simple. IT IS FOR LIFE!**
2. However, men want to find loopholes in Jesus’ plain teaching so we must continue to contend for the faith (cf. Jude 3).
3. We must never subscribe to the teaching of any man if it contradicts the scripture!
4. Make sure you marry someone you want to spend the rest of your life with. Do not enter a marriage with any other concept in mind!