

Jesus on Divorce and Remarriage

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- [0 : 0 0] This is a very hard text. Because we do expository verse-by-verse preaching, there are benefits and drawbacks.
- The benefits of expository verse-by-verse preaching through a text keeps us honest, keeps the preacher honest. It keeps us dealing with all the issues that God presents before us.
- The drawback is I have to preach things I don't want to preach. I have to deal with texts I'd rather avoid because they might stir up some uncomfortableness, some trouble in our soul.
- But Jesus speaks truth. Divorce. It's a real-world issue, isn't it not?
- It is a fact that marriages break down and many end in tragedy. Some are victims in this process. All of us fail in our relationships.
- [1 : 1 9] When we're speaking about divorce, may I just say, there but for the grace of God go I? It is not my desire or intent or thinking of looking down on others who have experienced failure.
- We want to be sensitive here. This is not about judging or condemning those who have experienced failure. And the other thing I want us to recognize is Jesus is teaching on divorce.
- He's been asked a question. He's answering the question according to the text. He makes them go back. What did Moses say?
- He goes back to the beginning. He's teaching truth. What he is not teaching here is recovery. Okay? He's not teaching recovery.
- We have to go elsewhere for that. Okay? So I want you to hear the text as it is. He's speaking truth. Okay? So it comes hard. Jesus answers a question here in Mark 10.
- [2 : 3 1] Is it lawful for a man divorce his wife? Basically they're asking, is it okay? Is it permissible? Is there a loophole? Is it really what they're looking for?
- And Jesus' answer, he draws them to Scripture. He directs them back immediately to Scripture. I'm not just going to give his opinion. He's going to go look. What did Moses say? And his answer will stun them all.
- His answer was unheard of in the first century. His answer calls them to a higher view of holiness and purity that they had not seen.
- Which is why the disciples, after he answers the initial question, question him in private, what? What? What?
- Okay? Okay? So, we've been learning. Remember, too, this context that Mark is taking us through. Jesus has been calling his followers to a counter-cultural Christianity.
- [3 : 4 1] Began in chapter 8. If you are following me, what does that mean? Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me. It means not letting your soul run your life.
- It means hating your soul in this world that you might ultimately save your soul. It means dealing with the disciples' attitudes like they're arguing about who's the greatest.

As he's talking about suffering, they're talking about elevating themselves. And he immediately calls them, if you want to be first, be last. That's counter-culture.

That's a whole different way. Deny yourself. Not serve yourself. Deny yourself. If you want to be first, be last. He addresses their judgmental spirit.

Those guys aren't following us, Lord, so we told them to stop. Jesus says, stop forbidding them. Leave them alone. Be more gracious. And then we saw at the end of chapter 9, verses 42 to 50, he's dealing with stumbling blocks.

[4 : 47] And he comes pretty strong, using very shocking language of tearing out your eye and cutting off your hand and amputating your foot, if that is the cause of your sin.

So he deals very hard, very radically with sin. If we have stumbling blocks in our life, remove them.

Remove them. Take radical action. That will cost you, and you will feel the pain of it. Better to be crippled and enter into life than to maintain all of those things and go to hell, Jesus said.

Strong, strong language. And now it's continuing. He's still dealing with our natural impulses and calling us to counter cultural Christianity.

He's talked about attitudes. He's talked about stumbling blocks. Now he's going to talk about values. In chapter 10, he's going to deal with our values. Our value. How do we value marriage? How do we treat marriage?

[6 : 00] Verse 13, he's going to address how we value children. How do we look at children? Then beginning in verse 17 in chapter 10, on to 31, he's going to deal with treasures and riches.

How do we think about that? Again, he's going to address each of these things with a counter cultural mindset. Not like the world looks at it. Our view is to be different.

If we're following Jesus. So again, he's just calling us, see, to a counter cultural kind of mindset. To follow Jesus is no easy thing.

It is a daily process of self-denial, sacrifice, changing attitudes, overcoming sins, rooting out the source of sin. And making choices that are honorable to him.

In all these things, we fail, beloved. In all these things, we fall. And as we follow him, we get back up. We follow him.

[7 : 05] He dusts us off. He comforts us. He forgives us. And we keep working. He keeps working on it. So now we see in chapter 10, Jesus calls us not only to counter cultural Christianity, but a counter cultural marriage.

The followers of Jesus have a higher view of marriage than our world does. Jesus teaches, in answering the question of divorce, he's teaching that his design for marriage is lifelong companionship.

He's answering two questions here. Verse 2, he answers the question, the Pharisees, Pharisees, Pharisees, not so fair, you see, bring up, looking for a loophole.

Is there, you know, is it okay? Is it permissible? Is it lawful to divorce? So he responds to that answer with an answer that talks about God's intention, God's design.

And then in verse 10, he answers a second question. And the question isn't spelled out for us in verse 10, that the disciples ask in private, but they're asking about the same thing that he's already talked about.

[8 : 30] And so he gives further explanation. So I want to break this text into those two categories. The first explanation answering the first question. The second explanation answering the second question.

So really there are two reasons. There are two reasons for why Jesus calls us to lifelong companionship in marriage. He calls us to never divorce.

For two reasons. First, because divorce is always caused by the hardness of our heart. And secondly, because divorce can lead to more sinfulness.

So let's break those down. First of all, he calls us to lifelong companionship and to never divorce, because divorce is always caused by the hardness of our heart.

So let's look at this, verses 1 through 9, or 2 through 9 in three things I want us to see. First, in verses 2 through 5, Jesus gives a correction.

[9 : 45] He corrects their understanding of Moses. Then in verses 6 through 8, he'll give a clarification of God's design. And then finally in verse 9, he will give a conclusion.

He will give a summary. He'll say, therefore, here's the application. So first of all, let's look at the correction. In verse 2, we see that the Pharisees come and ask him, but in their asking, Mark tells us they're testing him.

So in other words, not a genuine question. They're trying to trap him. They're trying to ensnare him somehow. They're bringing up a controversial subject, just as controversial in that day as it is today.

Okay? Okay? And by the way, the Jewish community was just as lenient as our culture is today about this.

Okay? So what Jesus says to them is radical. Just stunning. Okay? So they seek to trap him.

[10 : 46] They seek to set him up. We learned in verse 1 that Jesus comes. Notice now he's coming south. He's coming into Judea, Mark tells us. He's been way up north, right?

He went way, way north up to Mount Hermon, and he's been slowly coming back down. Now he's down into Judea. He's not yet at Jerusalem. Chapter 11, he'll be in Jerusalem, but he's still coming down.

He's coming south. So he's in Judea, but he also mentions also beyond the Jordan. So that means on the east side of the Jordan. That means it's the territory of Herod Antipas.

Remember him from Mark chapter 6? The one who killed John the Baptist? You remember how John the Baptist got arrested? Because he was saying that King Herod had unlawfully married Herodias, who was the wife of his brother.

So the Pharisees are likely trying to trap Jesus to get him in trouble just like John got in trouble. So if they can get him to say something like John said, maybe that'll take care of their problem.

[11 : 55] Maybe Herod will arrest him and chop his head off, and we're done with this Jesus. Okay? That's probably what's going on. Of course, that wasn't God's intention, but that's probably what's going on.

They're setting him up. So they ask this open question. Is it okay? Is it lawful? Is it permissible to divorce? Is there a loophole?

And so Jesus, as a wise teacher, answers a question with a question. He doesn't give easy answers. He wants you to think. So he draws them back to Scripture.

What did Moses say? Not just what Moses said. What did Moses command? And notice their response in verse 3 is not what Moses commanded, but what Moses allowed.

They use a different word. Jesus is, what did he command? They say, well, Moses permitted. He left the loophole. He left an okay, you know.

[13 : 00] So they're quoting from Deuteronomy 24, and they say Moses permitted a man to write his certificate of divorce and to send her away. To which Jesus said in verse 5, Jesus said to them, well, you understand why?

Why Moses talked about that? Because of the hardness of your heart. Moses is not commanding you to divorce. He's not endorsing divorce.

He's not even really permitting it. He's just limiting its effects. He's regulating.

It's actually a concession to reduce the fallout lest one evil becomes two evils is what Moses is really doing.

So Jesus is correcting them. And what I want to do is, on your outline you have the quote from where they're drawing in Deuteronomy 24, 1-4.

[14:08] This is where Moses talks about divorce. And this is what the Pharisees are quoting from. So let's look back at what Moses said.

What was his command? Well, here's what Deuteronomy 24 actually says. When a man takes a wife and marries her, if, okay, conditional, conditional, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house and she departs from his house and if she goes and becomes another man's wife and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies who took her to be his wife, then, then her former husband who sent her away may not take her again to be his wife.

There's the command. Everything else has just been situational. What did Moses command? He did not command give her a certificate of divorce and send her away.

That was just part of the if. If this happens, here's the regulation. If that happens and you may not take her again to be his wife after she has been defiled for that is an abomination before the Lord and you shall not bring sin upon the land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance because you have broken the seventh commandment.

Now, there were two interpretations in the first century of Deuteronomy 24. Two schools of thought. One was the school of Shammai who were the more conservative.

[16:03] They believed that the word where she found no favor because he found some indecency. They interpret the word indecency there to be adultery, to be moral unfaithfulness.

So they say the exception is for divorce is if she's committed adultery. The other school, the more popular school, the school that most Pharisees and rabbis were a part of that were bringing the question of Jesus, the school of Hillel said they focused on the phrase, he finds no favor.

She finds no favor in his eyes. In other words, anything that she does that is displeasing to him is a grounds for divorce.

That was the view of the day. So if she burns his toast, his bagel, that was what the view of the day was.

That was the majority view. But if we read Moses rightly, Moses gives no grounds. Moses gives no endorsement.

[17:19] Moses simply limits. If you've done this, and the way we know this, now the King James translates chapter, Deuteronomy 1 a little differently.

It says, if he finds some indecency in her, let him give her a certificate of divorce. That's a terrible translation. It is not the translation.

True is not as defined as Greek, but there is some definition. Hebrew does not have all these tenses and all these, you know, we don't have perfect passes and all that kind of stuff going on in Hebrew.

But we do have two kinds of action in Hebrew. Completed action and incomplete action. That's it. Everything from verse 1 through 3 is all completed action.

So in other words, it's already done. So if the man does this and he does this and he does this and he does this and he does this and he does this, then you get to verse 4 where he says, then comes the incompleting action and therefore the command, what you will do, what you will or you will not do.

[18 : 34] Then he says, then he shall not, see the incomplete? He will not marry her again. So, did I go too far astray with that?

Is that too much technical? I just want you to know that both schools of the first century misinterpreted the text. They did not read carefully.

You know how Jesus kept saying to those folks, have you not read? Have you not read carefully? So, now I want you to notice in verse 6, Jesus' clarification.

So he says, the correction is that Moses is doing this, he's recognizing that you've already hardened your hearts and you're doing what you're going to do.

He's trying to limit it. So then Jesus takes us further back in Scripture. Remember, Jesus originally asked them what did Moses command? Well, Moses didn't write just Deuteronomy.

[19 : 47] He also wrote Numbers, Leviticus, Exodus, and what came first? Genesis. That's counted as Moses' book.

It's considered part of the Torah. The first two chapters are absolutely foundational. And Jesus goes back to chapter 1 and chapter 2 of Genesis.

And he quotes from Genesis 1.27 first. From the beginning, He, the Lord God, has made them what?

Well, first, He made them male and female. That's how He designed it. That's the only design. That's the only marriage. Okay?

That's the only way God has designed it. We updated our statement of faith to articulate that because of issues going on in today's world. God hasn't changed that.

[20 : 51] Jesus is pointing them back. He made them male and female. That's the way He did it. And then He quotes from Genesis 2.24. Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother, shall cleave or hold fast or be devoted to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

An exact quote from Genesis 2.24. That's God's design for marriage. It's God's purpose and intention. That's how He intended it. intended it. We messed that up.

Right? We messed that up. And by the way, a man doesn't have to divorce and leave his wife and marry another to commit adultery. What did Jesus say?

If you even look at a woman too lost, you've committed adultery. So you're already toast. Okay? You're already toast. By giving the truth, Jesus is simply exposing sin.

Okay? He does it all the time. And then notice, we've taught on this before when we went through Ephesians. Paul quoted from, when he was talking about marriage, remember he quoted from Genesis 2 as well.

[22 : 12] And so we talked about how the foundation of marriage there is the, very important to understand, the husband and wife both leave their parents. There is a separation from parents.

Not abandonment, but a separation. And now a new priority cleaving to his wife. His priority changes. He is no longer, no longer is his primary duty to his parents, now his primary duty is to his wife.

And that's higher than his priority to his parents. Guys? Okay? I know mom.

I know mom's going to be in your ear, but your wife is your priority. Okay? And God established that. That's the way it is to be.

She is now your priority. She is now your devotion. And then they two become one flesh. Jesus comments on that. Did you notice that? Verse 9?

- [23 : 14] Verse 8? And the two shall become one flesh. Quote ends there. Jesus makes a comment. So, they are no longer two but one flesh. He's emphasizing that.
- They are no longer two. They are no longer two individuals. They are no longer two independent beings. They are now one flesh. They are now one. They are now inseparable. There is something more that happens.
- It's not just some contract. There is more that happens. Because what he says then in the conclusion of verse 9 is what God has what?
- Joined together. God is doing something. Not just me doing something. God is doing something. When I leave and I cleave, I become one flesh.
- now there is more than just a relationship and a contract. There is a oneness that is inseparable.
- [24 : 19] They're not two independent beings. They are. There is a permanent union. His conclusion is what therefore God has joined. Marriage is not man-made.
- Yes, we go, we get a license, we, you know, the state endorses that, et cetera, et cetera. But marriage is God-made.
- It is God. God acts. He makes them one. They are inseparable. And then Jesus applies.
- See what he does in verse 9? He's interpreting, he's applying, and he's commanding all at the same time. So what do we do? Jesus says, therefore what God has joined together, application, let no man separate.
- That's not a suggestion, it's a command. Man shall not separate. Man is, literally, man is not separating what God has joined.
- [25 : 30] In a sense, it's impossible. Man does not have the authority.
- Man does not have the control. Man does not have the option to change that. It is what it is.
- That's what Jesus is teaching us here. It is what it is. Here is what God is doing. It's a beautiful thing. Is it not?
- Is it not a beautiful thing in marriage? We mess that up. divorce okay? It is not a beautiful thing. It is not a beautiful thing.
- So, question. Is divorce okay? What does Jesus say? What does he command?
- [26 : 35] It's unequivocal in verse 9. Let no man separate. That's what he commands. That's the truth. Okay? He also says, you shall love your God with all your heart, with all your mind, strength.
- How do we do with that? Okay? He's showing us another way we failed. Okay? That's what the law does. It exposes us, right? We're not beating up on people that have had a failed marriage.
- Because we're all in the same category. Okay? Are you hearing me? Is divorce okay?
- Jesus says, no. Because it's always caused by the hardness of heart. God has designed and called us to lifelong companionship.
- That is his intention. That is the beauty of marriage. That is the blessing. So, verse 10, what happens? In the house, the disciples asked him again about this matter.
- [27 : 48] And actually, the verb is, they kept on asking him. They didn't just ask him. They, Jesus, what do you mean? Jesus, you got to explain this.
- They kept asking him. They're stunned. They're shocked. They're scared. They're overwhelmed.

It's the same way they respond. Well, in Matthew 19, where Matthew is recording the same incident, okay, Matthew gives us one more bit of information that Mark doesn't give us.

after Jesus does his teaching on divorce and remarriage, they say to him, their response to him is, then it's better not to marry.

It's just better not to, if that's the case, it's better not to marry. In other words, that's impossible. People can't do that.

[29 : 00] do that. It's the same way they respond when Jesus says, a little bit later in chapter 10, he's going to talk about the rich man, and he talks about how hard it is for the rich man to get into heaven.

And remember the disciples say, well, if that's so for the rich man, then who can be saved? I mean, if the rich with all their advantages can't be saved, how can anybody be saved? In other words, it's impossible.

And then Jesus goes on to say, yeah, what's impossible with man, true, is not impossible with God. So, if that's God's standard, if God's standard is no divorce and lifelong companionship, the disciples are saying, that's impossible, unless you really are blessed.

Right? You never argue, you never have a different opinion, you never hurt, you never abandoned, all this stuff that happened.

Life. Right? We're human. So, they're asking, so, so, so, so, Jesus, you gotta go on, this, I don't get it.

[30 : 14] Why? Why is the standard so high? It's impossible. And Jesus does call us to impossible things, does he not? Why no divorce?

Well, Jesus answers then in verse 11 and 12, there are consequences of divorce. And divorce can lead to more sinfulness. He spells out the implications.

Verse 11, he said to them, whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. He is responsible and she is the victim.

There are victims in divorce, by the way. okay? He recognizes that. One does this, one takes this action, he divorces, marries another, he commits adultery against her.

Okay? And then, to a generation of people who are all about, it's the man's world, right? Only men can divorce wives and wives can't divorce men.

[31 : 25] This is the Old Testament. doesn't address a woman divorcing, it only addresses a man. But I found out this week in studying that actually it's not the case.

There is archaeological evidence of Jewish women divorcing their husbands. So it did happen. Probably wasn't as regular as the men did, depending on who your rabbi is and what school of interpretation you followed.

look. But it did happen. And so Jesus was addressing that and coming into the Roman Gentile world where Paul's going to enter into, women's rights happened in Rome and Greece.

so women were already doing that. They already had rights. Not as much but very much.

That's why there were problems in Corinth in the church. So I'm not blaming women.

[32 : 31] Please don't hear that. No. I'm simply I thank you. I appreciate that. No I'm not. I am not.

I'm saying that I'm saying that the first century is not different than today. That's what I'm saying. Is our world is not different. The Jewish world yes was different but the Gentile world was not different than what we experienced.

It's not like oh we're different now. They're primitive. No. Okay. That was all I was saying. Thank you Diane. Appreciate that. Bless your heart. We needed to laugh.

I mean that. All right. So Jesus spells out the implications. Divorce and remarriage leads to adultery if there's remarriage.

So divorce doesn't always lead to more sin but it can if there's remarriage. And note that both are responsible.

[33 : 38] He talks about the man is responsible when he does it. Verse 12 the woman is also responsible. If she initiates it and she does it she's also responsible. Both are responsible.

Both could potentially be the victim depending on how it happens. And this is exactly what John the Baptist had warned Herod and Herodias about.

It is unlawful for you to have your brother's wife. Both Herod Antipas and Herodias who was married to Herod's brother Philip both sent letters divorce and then married each other.

And John said illegitimate. It's unlawful. He's just saying before God you can't do that.

So Jesus is saying basically the same thing that John said. So here's the question. Is there an exception?

[34 : 45] Is there a conditional? Because it seems like we've read somewhere else that Jesus says there's an exception. Here at Mark and also in the Gospel of Luke Jesus gives no exception.

He simply says whoever divorces and remarries commits adultery. Period. No exception. But in the Gospel of Matthew there is an exception. More than once.

In the Gospel of Matthew and only in the Gospel of Matthew does Jesus give an exception. He says whoever divorces his wife and marries another except for immorality.

Good paying attention to the text. It's not the same. So listen carefully. Because I have a different view of this than the majority of evangelical ministers today.

And my view has changed in the last number of years. So in Matthew 19 Jesus says except for immorality.

[35 : 57] So why that word? Because he says if a man divorces his wife and marries another, he commits adultery except for immorality.

Why does he use a different word? He's being very specific. He's being very purposeful. We evangelicals, we don't want to offend anybody.

We want everybody to bless you. And so we want to throw everything into that word immorality. We want that to be the big bag of loophole for divorce.

Immorality is only a sin for an unmarried person. Adultery is only a sin for a married person.

Only a sin that a married person can commit. If I'm married and I have outside of my marriage, that's adultery. I know.

[37 : 02] So what is Jesus talking about in Matthew 5 and in 19 where he gives this exception for immorality? So immorality is only, this exception only applies to someone who has not yet been married.

correct. Correct. It only occurs in Matthew. Matthew is written to who? Jews.

Jews. Jews. Well, okay, we're being careful.

Let Jesus speak. Let us hear what he has to say. I don't like it, but let us hear it. So the Christmas story almost ended in divorce.

Remember? When Joseph found that Mary, his betrothed, was pregnant, what did he assume? Immorality! Not adultery, because they're not yet married.

[38 : 19] They're betrothed, which in a Jewish sense, the contract was written. It just hasn't been consummated. They haven't yet become one flesh.

With me? Previous to that, he assumed she'd committed immorality. the angel comes and says, Joseph, don't think that about Mary.

Bless her heart. Okay? She's a good woman. Holy Spirit. Okay? God thing. Okay? Marry her. She's pure. Marry her.

Okay? That's what Jesus is addressing. That's why it's only in Matthew. The exception clause is only in Matthew, because the Jews would understand his difference between adultery and immorality. Because a married person cannot commit immorality.

I mean, yes, it's immoral, but technically he's committing adultery. That's the word. Jesus' exception is immorality, which can only be committed technically by someone before marriage.

[39 : 32] Okay? So that makes it harder, doesn't it? it? Didn't you want that exception just to kind of be, throw all our junk in there?

And divorce could be okay? That's where we are. So where does it leave us? Okay? I know there's questions. I saw some of them downstairs.

I know there's questions. You're thinking. You're processing. Some of you, bless your hearts, have been through hell.

Okay? Where does it leave us? What if we've already been divorced and remarried? That's the bright light question. Jesus is not addressing that here.

Okay? That doesn't mean we're not going to address it. we do, we can go, by the way, we can go to John chapter four where Jesus deals with the Samaritan woman.

[40 : 40] Remember her? Remember Jesus points out to her, he speaks the truth to her. He doesn't condemn her, but he speaks the truth to her and he says to her, you've already, remember he says, call your husband?

I have a husband. Well, yeah, technically you're right, you have had five husbands and the one you're living with now is not your husband.

So here's a woman with all kinds of baggage and a life of just stuff. Okay? How does Jesus deal with her? He points her to himself.

Well, if you had known who you're talking to, you would have asked him for water. He would give it to you. Not after you jump through hoops and get all this stuff in.

He would just give it to you. Okay? How does she go back to her town? Oh, you got to come and see this guy. He told me everything about me.

[41 : 43] He knows me. I think he might be the savior. Okay? So hear that about Jesus too. As you hear the truth that he speaks, hear that also about Jesus.

Okay? Let's go to Paul because Paul does address some of these harder issues. He deals with Gentiles. And we Gentiles are worse than, more messed up than Jews, aren't we?

Ah, probably not. But we bring more baggage maybe. Okay, I don't know. All right. Anyway, it is more complicated when you bring Gentiles into the mix.

That's just, okay? So here's what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7. He says, to the married, I give this counsel.

Not I, but the Lord. So Paul is actually recognizing Jesus has already spoke about this issue. That the wife should not separate from her husband. That's exactly what Jesus said. But if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband.

- [42 : 49] And the husband should not divorce his wife. To the rest, I say, I, not the Lord. In other words, the Lord didn't speak about this issue, but I'm going to speak to this issue.
- To the rest, I say, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, oh, see, now we have a mixed thing going on. Okay, now we have a new situation. Paul's addressing that.
- Gentiles have come to Christ. One comes, the other didn't. Okay? So, if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her.
- If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For, the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife.
- And the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her children. Otherwise, your children would be unclean. But as it is, they are holy. There's a protection there. But if, listen now, if the unbelieving partner separates, leaves, divorces, let it be so.
- [43 : 59] Literally, let them separate. In such cases, the brother or sister is not enslaved. Literally, the brother or sister has not been bound.
- Perfect passage, James. has not been bound. If the unbeliever leaves you, divorces you, you have not been bound.
- In other words, you are free. Your slate is clean. You not only have not been bound, or were not bound, but you continue, perfect tense, to not be bound.
- therefore are free to remarry, I believe. God has called you to peace.
- For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him.
- [45 : 13] this is my rule in all the churches. So how do we apply this? So what do you do? So if you're married, what do you do? Remain married.
- If you're divorced, what do you do? Remain. Or be reconciled. Well, what if there's an unbeliever?
- What if it was before Christ and there was an unbeliever who separated? Then you are not in bondage. You are free. Do as God calls you.
- Now, the question comes up. Do I raise it? What if you separated from a believer? What if it's not an unbeliever who left you, but a believer?
- Or you left a believer, and you remarried? What then? What then? I trust the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what is right.
- [46 : 18] Okay? And believer, if he has not been hounding you, if you are in sin and he's not been hounding you, then I wonder, don't impose guilt that's not there.
- Okay? I want to be very careful here. Go to the Lord.
- You know, Psalm 139 says, search me, O Lord. See if there be. You know, he'll answer that question. See if there be any wrongful thing, if there's anything in me.
- If you're honest and you go and say, Lord, do that. This message from Jesus may cause you to become alarmed about your soul and your walking with the Lord right now.
- And if it just causes you to get on your knees and go before him and okay, Lord, what do I need to do? That's great. I trust the Holy Spirit to reveal that to you.
- [47 : 28] I trust the Holy Spirit to reveal that to you. So how does it apply to all of this? Well, context, Jesus has been exposing sin.
- He's been exposing attitudes of pride. I'm greater than you, a competitive spirit. He's been exposing attitudes of a judgmental spirit. They're not with us. He's been exposing sin that is locked into our hearts that has not been rooted out.

Right? He's dealing with all kinds of sin. And now he's addressing divorce. And as I said earlier, you don't have to divorce and remarry to commit adultery.

men, we can commit adultery just by our look to lust. Jesus is exposing sin. Remember what the law does.

The law exposes our sin. It does not help us. It simply exposes our sin and our need to come to Christ. So what do we do if he's exposed our sin?

[48 : 43] But what is always the remedy when God exposes our sin? Repent and believe. Repent and come to him. And I believe in a God who is so gracious.

So merciful. Who overlooks! Who overlooks so much of our failure. Huh? Which we need to learn to do without one another.

Seek forgiveness. Seek direction. Divorce is not the unforgivable sin. Okay? If you're seeking forgiveness, you haven't committed the unforgivable sin.

And remember, how does Jesus treat that woman? Not only the woman at the well, but remember the woman caught in adultery? By the way, how come the man wasn't caught?

Remember how he treated her? I don't condemn you. I don't condemn you. Go and sin no more. From where you're at.

[50 : 04] Okay? And I think if you read through 1 Corinthians 7 where Paul talks about the if you're this, if you're that, if you're that, here's what you do, the general principle of 1 Corinthians 7 is remain where you are.

If you're married, stay married. If you're divorced, stay there. If you're remarried, stay there. Don't add another complication.

Don't complication. That's where I think the heart of the Lord is. If God is convicted, you must go on your knees before.

Don't take my, I can't give you the, as much as I want to. I'm out of notes and I'm out of thought.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word, though it, it often brings us in turmoil, especially when you make us uncomfortable about ourselves and our choices and our failures.

[51 : 11] And Lord, we know this is a heavy and a hard text. Jesus, as you are, Father, is uncompromising.

He speaks truth. He speaks what is holy and pure and right and just. And as we sang, your justice is like the mountain that's solid and immovable.

And yet your mercy is like the clouds that come and refresh us. And so, Father, we are grateful that you are a God that is holy and righteous and just, a God that we can all, by all means, be afraid of and respect.

And you are also a God that is merciful and loving and forgives. And we are grateful for that. So speak to each of us, Father, where we are at.

Move, O Holy Spirit, in our hearts and minds and our souls. Whatever you do, draw us to Jesus. Draw us to Jesus. We trust that He will show us what we do.

[52 : 22] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.