

III. THE COMMITMENT OF MARRIAGE

The bottom-line, bedrock foundation of a home is commitment.

In order to have a stable and secure home -

***Both husband and wife must have a conviction that their marriage is _____!**

In God's Word, the Bible, -

The permanence of marriage is evidenced by:



A. The Meaning of a " _____ " (Malachi 2:14) (Marriage is a Covenant)

1. The marriage covenant is an _____ Vow
Observe the nature of vows:
 - a. Numbers 30:2 - Your words are extremely important
 - b. Deuteronomy 23:21 - God holds you accountable
 - c. Example: Jephthah's vow - Judges 11:30-39
2. The marriage covenant is an _____ Vow
"For better or for worse, for richer or for poorer"

B. The Bonding of " _____ " (Gen. 2:24) (Marriage is an inseparable union)

1. The Cleaving of Marriage (v. 24a)
2. The Oneness of Marriage (v. 24b) rings
3. "Till death do we part" (Romans 7:2-3)



C. Christ's Relationship to His _____ (Eph. 5:22-32) (Jesus will never forsake His wife, the Church)

1. The Church is one with Christ (Eph. 5:30; I Cor. 6:17)
2. The Church is the "Bride of Christ" (Rev. 19:7-9)
3. The Church has the promise of eternal security
(Mt. 16:18; Jn. 10:28-29; Titus 1:2; Heb. 13:5)



D. God's Attitude about _____ (Malachi 2:16) (God hates divorce)

1. "He may not put her away all his days"
(Deut. 22:19, 29)
2. "Whosoever shall put away his wife. . . and marry another, committeth adultery against her"
(Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18).

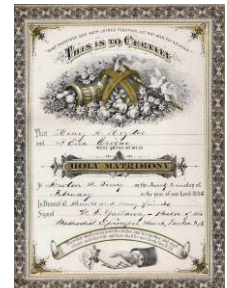
God instituted marriage for four basic reasons:

Before the fall -

- 1) To complete the man which He had created ("help meet" - Gen. 2)

After the fall -

- 2) To promote sexual purity (I Cor. 7:2)
- 3) To begin a new family unit (Gen. 2:18-24)
- 4) To propagate truth and godly principles from one generation to the next (Deut. 6:67)



What makes a marriage?

1. A covenant (a vow before witnesses - Mal. 2:14). This is the premiere essence of a marriage
2. A consummation (sexual union - Gen. 2:24; I Cor. 6:16)

*In the "vow" the two become one by verbal commitment, whereas in the consummation the two become one by a holy physical act.

One of the most plaguing menaces of all time is divorce.

Matthew 19:1-12

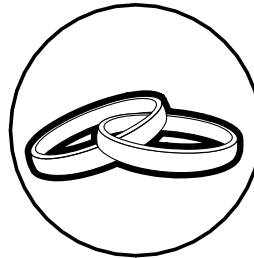
Are there grounds to justify a divorce? Answer: NO

Evidence:

I. THE _____ OF JESUS Reveals no grounds for divorce (vv. 3-9)

Jesus taught:

- A. Marriage is _____ (v. 4, 8b)
- B. Marriage is _____ (v. 5)
- C. Marriage is _____ work; Divorce is _____ work (v. 6)
- D. Divorce was _____, never commanded or justified (v. 7-8)



II. THE MEANING OF " _____ "

Reveals no grounds for divorce (v. 9)

What is meant by "fornication"? Two popular, plausible views:

- A. **View #1 - _____**
This professor does not believe that Jesus meant "adultery". Why not?
 1. He did not say "adultery"; he said "fornication."
 2. Those words are two totally different words with totally different meanings. "Adultery" = moicheia (extra-marital sex) "Fornication" = porneia (pre-marital sex) - I Cor. 7:2
 3. The two words are distinguished - Gal. 5:19; I Cor. 6:9
 4. If Jesus meant adultery, it would have been most natural for Him to say it, since he uses the word adultery 2 other times in this verse!
 5. The penalty for adultery was death not divorce
Under the Mosaic Law, one would not need to divorce his wife if she had committed adultery, because the penalty for this was death (Deut. 22:22)
 6. Such a view says that "one wrong justifies another" ("sin justifies sin") Where is forgiveness in this view?

- B. **View #2 - Unfaithfulness during the " _____ " period**

This professor believes Jesus is referring to unfaithfulness during the betrothal period.

Jewish marriage custom in Bible times:

1. Legal _____ between the fathers of bride and groom) (contract called a "Betrothal")
2. Betrothal was considered as equally _____ as marriage (Deut. 22:23-27).
3. Couple were called _____ and _____ during "Betrothal" period (EX: Mary and Joseph - Mt. 1:19-20)
4. The marriage itself was not completed and consummated until at least 12 months later.
5. Betrothal could only end by a legal _____
Matthew is the only Gospel that records Joseph, the "husband" (1:19) "espoused to Mary" (1:18) as being minded "to put her away privily" (1:19)

Proof of Betrothal view:

1. **Grammatical Proof** - the word "fornication" refers to pre-marital sex
2. **Historical context** - The phrase "except it be for fornication" is only found in Matthew (5:32; _____ 19:9). Ironically not in Mark 10:11-12 and Luke 16:18. Why?
3. **An example:** Joseph was called a "husband" (Mt. 1:19) "espoused [betrothed] to Mary (1:18), who found out that she was pregnant before their marriage, so he decided to "put her away [divorce] privily" (1:19)

The real sin was in the _____ itself, more to than the remarriage. The remarriage prevents reconciliation.

III. THE _____ OF THE DISCIPLES

Reveals no grounds for divorce (v. 10)

Jesus allowed no grounds for divorce after marriage!

--How did Paul interpret _____ teaching about divorce? (SEE: I Cor. 7:10-11)

--How did Paul interpret the _____ teaching about divorce? (SEE: Rom. 7:1-3)

A believer is never justified to pursue a divorce. If the unbeliever departs, that's one thing (I Cor. 7:15), but a believer is never to leave his/her unbelieving spouse.

Romans 7:1-3 - The only legitimate way out of the marriage bond is death (No exceptions).

What are the tragic effects of divorce upon the COUPLE?

1. The divorce usually ends up causing unresolved _____, _____, and insecurities.
2. If the couple has any conscience at all, the divorce results in guilt, emotional torment, and sorrow.
3. The remarriages that occur after divorce usually adopt the "baggage," unresolved conflicts, and problems of the previous marriage(s).
4. Most who fail in their first marriage fail in their second (the divorce rate for second marriages is higher than first marriages).

What are the tragic effects of divorce upon the CHILDREN?

1. Children become the major victims of the emotional scars divorce brings.
2. Divorce teaches children that one's vows, promises, or covenants are not binding.
3. Divorce teaches children that _____ from a problem is the answer to solving it.
4. Divorce teaches children that Mommy or Daddy are more concerned about themselves (what they want; what makes them happy) than they are concerned for the children and the effect the divorce will have on them. [What a selfish society we live in!]

How to Avoid a Tragic Divorce

1. Don't rush into a marriage to begin with. Make sure before you marry that your spouse is _____ and the Lord.
2. Be convicted that God says: *Marriage is for* _____. (Rom. 7:1ff)
3. Do not allow conflicts to go unresolved.
 - Practice forgiveness
 - Don't go to bed angry
 - Talk! Learn to communicate. "*Speak the truth in love.*"
 - Seek Godly advice.
 - Learn to say the words: "I love you." "I was wrong." "Please forgive me"
4. Meet your mate's needs--physically--emotionally--sexually (I Cor. 7:1ff)
[Note: Beware of an over-demanding, time-consuming vocation. You need to spend time together.]
5. Guard yourself against anything you might read, hear, or see that causes discontentment
6. Be faithful to your spouse (Illicit sex [adulterous affairs] pulls down and destroys a couple's trust and respect for each other).
7. Fulfill your God-given roles in the marriage.
8. Cultivate a close walk with Christ as a couple. "*A family that prays together, stays together.*" Sincere prayer is the surest way to release Satan's strangle-hold on your marriage.
9. Realize that love is not a "feeling" or a "romantic emotion" but it is action based on a commitment! In fact, "love" is a commitment (i.e. a decision to be loyal to your responsibility).
10. Consider the word "divorce" the dirtiest word in the English language. It should never be considered as even a remote possibility!

The Marriage Commitment

Husbands, are you committed to:

- Leading your wife as the head of the home? (I Cor. 11:3)
- Teaching your wife as the spiritual example of the home? (I Cor. 14:35)
- Knowing your wife (meeting her needs)? (I Pet. 3:7)
- Loving your wife as Christ sacrificially loves His church? (Eph. 5:25-31)

Wives, are you committed to:

--Helping your husband by being his completer? (I Cor. 11:9; Gen. 2:18)

--Showing affection to your husband? (Titus 2:4)

--Submitting to your husband as the church should submit to Christ? (Eph. 5:22; Titus 2:5)

--Respecting your husband? (Eph. 5:33; I Pet. 3:2)

Are you both committed to being faithful to each other?