

Answering The Religious Errors Of Our Family, Friends, and Neighbors 1

“Divorce Is Permitted For Any Cause!”

Lesson 40

INTRO:

A. Grounds for divorce in the state of Alabama:

1. “‘No fault’ grounds - irretrievable breakdown; separation (2 years)”
2. “Adultery; cruelty or violence; drug/alcohol addiction after marriage; insanity (in mental hospital for 5 successive yrs.); pregnant at time of marriage without husband's knowledge; imprisonment for 2 yrs. if sentence is 7 yrs. or longer; crime against nature with mankind or beast before or after marriage; incompatible temperaments; voluntary abandonment from bed or board for 1 yr.; wife lived apart for 2 years without husband's support while she's residing in state; at time of marriage, incapacitated from entering married state.”

(<https://statelaws.findlaw.com/alabama-law/alabama-legal-requirements-for-divorce.html>)

B. Grounds for divorce (but cannot remarry) according to some ‘gospel preachers’:

1. “A person may have to leave his mate to become or remain a Christian (Luke 18:29-30; 1 Cor. 7:15; Matt. 10:34-48; Luke 14:26). In this case, one is divorcing for the kingdom of heaven's sake.”
2. “A person may be in a marriage relationship in which his mate runs up bills which he has no intention of paying. In this case, one's responsibility to God to pay one's bills would demand that he not be supportive of his mate's ungodly behavior (Rom. 13:8).”
3. “A mate may be abusive to the children (beating). A person has a responsibility to bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:1-4). To fulfill that responsibility, may require him to leave his mate to provide for the children.”
4. “There are some cases in which one must leave to have physical and emotional health. One's obligation to serve God would require him to preserve his physical and emotional well being.”
5. “Sometimes a couple becomes so alienated from each other, the hostilities have reached such a point, that they must live apart.”

Sermon Outline “**When Is Divorce A Sin?**” presented by Mike Willis

I. WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES TEACH?

A. **Matthew 5:32; 19:9**

1. The only difference in these two verses is that Matthew 5:32 does not make any mention of remarriage on the part of the person doing the divorcing.
2. Otherwise they are both saying the same thing.
 - a. The exception is the same in both passages: fornication/sexual immorality.
3. There is only **ONE CAUSE** and one cause only for which a person can divorce!
4. Yet we see the ‘exceptions’ which have been made by civil law and those profession to be preachers of the gospel.

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5. In the context of Matthew 19, the question was straightforwardly asked in verse 3 “...’*Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?*”
 - a. In that same context, Jesus implied the answer was “NO” but only for the reason of fornication could there be a divorce.
 - b. The question of verse 3 and Jesus’ answer makes the statement we are studying absurd!
- B. Let’s now examine the five ‘causes/exceptions’ which were given in the sermon outline:
 1. “A person may have to leave his mate to become or remain a Christian (Luke 18:29-30; 1 Cor. 7:15; Matt. 10:34-48; Luke 14:26). In this case, one is divorcing for the kingdom of heaven’s sake.”
 - a. **Luke 18:29-30**
 - 1) This verse can only rightfully be used if a marriage is unscriptural thus resulting in adultery.
 - 2) A person cannot be an adulterer, continue in an adulterous marriage, and expect to have eternal life.
 - 3) They must repent and come out of the adulterous marriage.
 - 4) Therefore, Luke 18:29-30 does not apply to marriages which are scriptural and some other ‘cause’ has arisen.
 - b. **1 Corinthians 7:15**
 - 1) This verse does not permit the Christian to divorce.
 - 2) The ‘departing’ is being done by the “*unbeliever*”.
 - a) Sometimes a Christian cannot prevent what the “unbeliever” does!
 - c. **Matthew 10:34-48; Luke 14:26** Summary: Jesus did not come to bring peace but a sword and we must love all things less than Him.
 - 1) To be quite honest, I fail to see any connection in Jesus’ statements in these verses and how they apply to the matter of justifying a divorce.
 - 2) But if divorce is included in these verses, **ALL** would be **OBLIGATED** to divorce their mates!
 - d. The consequence of his statement, whether he will accept it or not, is that you can sin in order to remain a Christian!
 2. “A person may be in a marriage relationship in which his mate runs up bills which he has no intention of paying. In this case, one’s responsibility to God to pay one’s bills would demand that he not be supportive of his mate’s ungodly behavior (Rom. 13:8).”

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- a. As apparent justification for obtaining a divorce on the grounds of financial problems, he is relying on **Romans 13:8** which says, *“Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.”*
- b. Is a divorce for some cause other than fornication a lesser sin than going into debt?
 - 1) We also need to keep in mind **Romans 3:8** *“And why not say, ‘Let us do evil that good may come’...?”*
- c. This is basically what this ‘cause’ for a divorce boils down to!
3. “A mate may be abusive to the children (beating). A person has a responsibility to bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:1-4). To fulfill that responsibility, may require him to leave his mate to provide for the children.”
 - a. We all know what Ephesians 6:1-4 teaches.
 - b. We must ask: Where is the Scripture which says “Thou shalt divorce thy mate if they are abusive”?
 - c. One can always propose “situations” that make any absolute law appear unreasonable or unfair.
 - 1) Human judgement and emotion will often lead us to believe God’s laws are unreasonable and unfair.
 - d. **Revelation 2:10; Hebrews 11:35**
 - e. Someone might ask, “What if he really beats them up?” Human reason would tell us they should be allowed to divorce.
 - f. A failure of responsibilities by one partner does not remove responsibilities laid on the other.
4. “There are some cases in which one must leave to have physical and emotional health. One’s obligation to serve God would require him to preserve his physical and emotional well being.”
 - a. This, too, is an argument appealing to our emotions.
 - b. I like the statement Pat Donahue made: “Suppose a man jogs five miles every morning to maintain his physical health. Would that justify him forsaking the church’s assembly on Sunday mornings?”
 - c. If we know the answer to that question, we can also see through the argument being made in regards to this being a cause for divorce.
5. “Sometimes a couple becomes so alienated from each other, the hostilities have reached such a point, that they must live apart.”
 - a. This is what the lawyers and judges of our civil courts call ‘incompatibility’ or ‘irretrievable breakdown’!
 - b. I find it beyond belief that there are those who profess to be gospel preachers who are allowing it as justification for the obtaining of a divorce! Absolutely amazing!

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- C. All these ‘causes’ which have been stated that justifies divorce, comes with the stipulation that the person doing the divorcing cannot remarry.
1. However, these divorces are wrong even if the person never remarries.
 2. God “*hates divorce*”, **Malachi 2:16**
 3. Jesus has given only one exception: “...*whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality (fornication, KJV), and marries another, commits adultery;*” (**Matthew 19:9**)

CONCLUSION:

- A. For anyone to teach that divorce for some other causes than fornication are “lawful” as long as one never remarries is not without dire consequences.
- B. There are at least SEVEN SINS which are committed at the time of an unscriptural divorce:
1. IT PUTS ASUNDER WHAT GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER: Matthew 19:1-9
 2. IT DEFRAUDS ONE’S MATE: I Corinthians 7:2-5
 3. IT CAUSES ADULTERY: Matthew 5:31-32
 4. IT BREAKS ONE’S WEDDING VOWS: Matthew 5:33-36; James 5:12; Ecclesiastes 5:4-5; Psalms 76:11
 5. IT DESTROYS ONE’S INFLUENCE/EXAMPLE: I Timothy 5:14; Titus 2:3-8 (esp. w. children, Ephesians 6:4)
 6. IT IS INIQUITY: Matthew 7:21; 2 Timothy 2:19; Hebrews 1:8+9
 7. IT IS DOING WHAT GOD HATES: Malachi 2:15-16