

Sermon  Snapshots

**WHEN**  
MARRIAGE GETS  
Messy



# MARRIAGE CAN BE SO MESSY!

Ephesians 5:22-33 commands “submission,” “headship,” and “love” in marriage. Easy to say; not so easy to do. The truth is: “Marriage Can Be So Messy!” In this lesson, we’ll consider some difficulties of marriage.

## **This isn’t who I married!**

- After the “honeymoon” is over, reality sets in! What was “overlooked” now “greatly annoys” you!
- Hidden idiosyncrasies (who knew?): snoring; long time in bathroom; cleanliness; bad habits; etc.
- Real changes in personality: psychological issues; disease (Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia)
- *The best marriage can be challenged!* Need forbearance, forgiveness, & commitment (Col.3:12-15)

## **Issues involving finances**

- Out of control spending (too fancy; too much house; too much car; extravagant clothing, etc.)
- Spending money on junk, playtime, vacation, needless devices, etc. (*rather than essential bills*)
- Lack of spousal “consultation” and/or “communication” about household finances (Lk.16:1-2)
- At least one spouse must be the fiscally responsible one; and a strict budget is always in order!



## **The stress of raising children**

- Religious disagreements – which is another argument for marrying a faithful Christian! (Eph.6:4)
- Disciplinary disagreements, permissive vs. overbearing; Should we spank? If yes, when? If no, why?
- New rules as they mature – Driving (When? Where?); Dating (Who? When?); **Discuss in advance!**
- Children in divorce situations – “his” kids, “her” kids, and “our” kids – and the danger of partiality

## **Challenges and distractions**

- Internet/social media: very **time consuming**, causing **distraction** from family – even **addictions!**
- Complacency: The feeling that everything is OK, when in reality, it isn’t! (i.e. lack of awareness)
- Boredom: Sometimes, couples get “bored” with the same old thing (grass greener on the other side)
- Life in general: Too busy to talk and/or re-connect – *in other words, to work on the marriage!*
- **The solution to all of these is constant self-examination and re-commitment! (2Cor.13:5)**

## **The temptation to adultery**

- We all live in a body of flesh, capable of various temptations; *no one is immune from temptation!*
- Sexual desire is one of the strongest; however, it can be resisted! Consider Joseph! (Gn.39:6-12)
- Attraction (v.6) - lust (v.7a) - flirtation (v.7b) - persistence (v.10) - seduction (v.11-12a) - yield?
- Refusal (v.8a) - those who trust you (v.8b-9a) - think of God (v.9b) - avoidance (v.10b) - run (v.12)

## **When adultery takes place**

- It DOES happen – *even among elders, deacons, and preachers!* (cf. King David, 2Sm.11:1-4)
- Divorce is permitted (Mt.19:9), but not required! *They CAN reconcile; but it’s NOT easy!*
- *TRUST is greatly damaged; because what should belong ONLY to your spouse is betrayed!*
- Repair **requires** much time, prayer, forgiveness, and a SLOW rebuilding of trust (Mt.18:21-22)
- **If any “feelings” still exist for the tempter/temptress, they must NOT be acted upon! (Mt.5:28)**
- **In such cases, the wisest thing may be to remove any association with the tempter/temptress**

**My intent here is not to discourage marriage per se; but to discourage entering into it lightly! Marriage is very rewarding; but it is also very labor-intensive! If you can’t commit to this, then don’t marry!**

# THE SIN OF DIVORCE

In Malachi 2:13-16, we learn that divorce *causes tears* (v.13), is an act of *treachery* (v.14-15) and *violence* against the marriage covenant (v.16). In other words, *divorce is a sin!* But, aside from the fact that God said so, **WHY** is divorce a sin? In this lesson, we want to examine at least five reasons why divorce is a sin...

## Divorce violates the law of God

- God *hates* it (Mal.2:16); Jesus *forbids* it (Mt.19:3-6); and Paul *confirms* it! (1Cor.7:10-11)
- Note: 1Cor. 7:10-11 gives NO “permission” to divorce; it’s only a contingency (cp. 1Jn.2:1-2)
- Nor is remarriage allowed in 1Cor.7:10-11, for it would only compound the sin (Mk.10:11-12)
- Finally, IN THIS CONTEXT, *reconciliation* is the “*preferred*” option (note: “*not* to divorce”)

## Divorce violates your marital vows

- Spouses, you made this vow (oath) **to one another** – *a mutual commitment!* (Mt.5:37)
- E.g., “to love, honor, cherish, in sickness and health, till DEATH do us part”
- You also made this vow “**before God**” – *and He will hold you accountable!*
- “Better not to vow, than to vow and not pay,” and “Pay what you vow!” (Eccl.5:4-5)

## Divorce defrauds (cheats) your spouse

- Sexual union is **ONLY** allowed in marriage (Hb.13:4); & it becomes a spousal “debt” (1Cor.7:1-5)
- Therefore, the failure to pay this debt is to “cheat” your spouse of what you rightfully owe them!

## Divorce can lead to the sin of adultery

- On the part of one who *is* put away (i.e., *is divorced*, Mt.5:32)
- On the part of one who *puts away* (i.e., *initiates* divorce Mt.19:9)
- Note the **only** exception which allows remarriage: “fornication” (Mt.19:9)
- Therefore, **EVERY** divorce involves sin; and you can “cause” your spouse to sin!

## Divorce can seriously damage your children

- It shakes up their entire world, and their rightful sense of security at home
- They are often forced to choose – and then pitted against the other spouse
- *You* become a poor example of commitment, which *they* bring to the next generation
- Their physical “provisions” become less than what they could have been (1Tm.5:8)

*The same principles noted above ALSO apply to a prolonged “separation” – if not, why not? Separation violates the law of God (Mt.19:6, let NOT man “separate”), violates our vows (till DEATH do us “part”), defrauds our spouse (1Cor.7:5), causes adultery (ibid), and damages children. Let us remember that “commitment” is not about feelings, but choices. You made a vow; now pay what you vow!!! (Eccl. 5:4-5).*

**-Lanny Smith**





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