

Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage (Lesson 5)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Let's quickly review what was covered in the first four lessons.
2. Lesson #1
 - a. Outlined 3 major objectives for this study.
 - b. Gave 3 reasons for why this study is so important.
 - c. Discussed both the wrong way and the right way to settle issues on divorce and remarriage.
3. Lesson #2
 - a. We read together all the passages that seem to have the most bearing on the subjects of marriage, divorce, and remarriage.
4. Lesson #3
 - a. We did our best to accomplish objective #1—to see both marriage and divorce the through the eyes of God.
 - b. We also accomplished objective #2 by answering the question, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?” (Matthew 19:3).
 - (1) And the answer to that question was a resounding NO! Jesus gives one cause for divorce, and that is fornication.
5. Lesson #4
 - a. Special emphasis was given to objective #3—to answer the question: who can marry again lawfully, or with God's approval.
 - b. And to answer that question, we visually illustrated the teaching of Jesus in the following passages: Romans 7:1-4; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; Matthew 19:3-9; 1 Corinthians 7:10-15.
 - c. So who can marry again lawfully? One whose spouse dies, and one who divorces his/her spouse for fornication.
6. Lesson #5
 - a. We mentioned in the first lesson that we could throw another objective in there, and that was to look at some teachings that conflict with the teachings of Jesus.
 - b. We'll look at one of those in this lesson.

BODY:

- I. The teaching we're about to introduce was taught a number of years ago by a very well-known brother in Christ, Homer Hailey. And it has gained some traction among other Christians.

- A. God's law on marriage, the very law we've been discussing in previous lessons, applies only to Christians; it applies only to those who have agreed to accept the terms of the New Covenant.
 - 1. Hailey: "A covenant and the laws of the covenant are bound only on those who under the covenant" (The Divorced and Remarried Who Would Come to God," p. 24).
 - 2. Hailey: "The part of the new covenant law which is addressed to the alien is that by which he obtains remission of sins and is translated into His kingdom" (Same reference, p. 52).
- B. So how do people today become sinners if they are not subject to the law of Christ? ("Where there is no law, there is no transgression"—Romans 4:15).
 - 1. They are subject to what Hailey calls a "universal moral law." "This was the law transgressed by the Israelites before Sinai, and the law under which all the unregenerate (unsaved—BG) people live and transgress today" (p. 46).
 - 2. Several times he cites Romans 1:20 to explain what people could know about God and His will.
 - 3. "The people of the world are under a system of law other than Christ's new covenant. They are under the universal moral law of God, and the violation of this law makes one a sinner" (p. 37).
 - 4. What about Acts 24:24-25, where Paul seemingly uses the gospel in an effort to convict Felix and Drusilla?
 - a. "When Paul appeared before Felix and Drusilla 'he reasoned of righteousness [the righteousness set forth in the gospel], and self-control, and the judgment to come' (Acts 24:25), thus in preaching the gospel he preached the judgment; but this is not to say that those of the world would be judged by the gospel, though they would be judged by their attitude toward it" (p. 29).
- C. So exactly how does this impact divorce and remarriage?
 - 1. The specific restrictions on divorce and remarriage in passages like Matthew 19 are never directed to the sinner, to the person apart from Christ.
 - 2. Therefore, when a person becomes a Christian, no matter how many times they've divorced and remarried, they can stay with their present companion.
 - 3. At this point the person is subject to Christ's teaching and must remain with his/her companion, unless his/her companion commits adultery.
- II. So here are the two questions we must answer: Did Christ direct his teaching on divorce and remarriage to all men? And more generally, did Christ direct the teaching of the new covenant (or testament) to all men?

- A. Let's start with the teaching on divorce and remarriage.
 - 1. Let's read through Matthew 19:3-10.
 - a. Note the general references to "man," the direction back to the beginning, and the word "whoever."
 - 2. The language used by Jesus certainly indicates that He is speaking to all men.
- B. But what about the rest of what Jesus taught in the New Testament? Was it directed toward all men or only to those who have entered into the covenant?
 - 1. Read John 8:28, which is something Jesus affirmed over and over again. But to whom did He speak the things given to Him by the Father?
 - a. Read John 8:26—"I speak to the WORLD those things which I heard from Him."
 - 2. He spoke these things to the WORLD, and so these very same words would be the standard by which the WORLD is judged.
 - a. Read John 12:47-50.
 - 3. John 16:7-8.
 - a. The Helper, or the Holy Spirit would come and convict the WORLD of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.
 - b. But whose words would He use?
 - 4. Read John 16:12-15.
 - a. The Holy Spirit would reveal the words of Jesus, and these very words would be used to convict the WORLD of sin, of righteousness, and the judgment to come.
 - b. So more than just revealing to them Jesus and the conditions of pardon through Him.
 - 5. 1 Timothy 1:8-11.
 - a. Don't ever be ashamed to take the gospel, or sound doctrine, and use it to show men their sins.
 - 6. Jesus is more than the Head of the church; He is Lord and King of all. And so therefore, His teachings apply to all.
 - a. Read John 17:1-2.
 - b. Read Matthew 28:18-20.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. If one who desires to become a Christian is in an unlawful marriage, one that constitutes adultery, we must urge them to repent.
- 2. And that most certainly will involve them dissolving this unlawful marriage.
- 3. That's what their Lord and King and Savior says, and if they love Him and want to please Him, that's exactly what they'll do.