

MDR

Ruth – Family tragedies

[Learning to trust God]

1. Period of Judges: unparalleled apostasy / rejection of God's way
2. In middle of it, holy contentment – trust in God
3. Despite widespread rebellion (Judges) –
 - a. Naomi learned to trust God in hard times
 - b. Ruth, a blessing sent from heaven, from an unlikely earthly source
 - c. Boaz, a man of integrity in a nation of infidelity

I. Why Study MDR?

1. Evil influences on young (and not so young)

- Folly. If no love, leave...
- Failure. Married, but no love...
- Fixers. Seek ways to make sinners safe...
- Frivolous. 'Don't know, don't care...'
- Foes. Hate scripture / God / Christians...
- Friends. Live together; no commitment...
- Family. Bad ideas / practices are alive and well...
- Fuzzy. Clear thinking...until MDR issues arise...
- Falsehood. Excuses for sin; coverup for shame...
- Fighting. To the bitter end...
- Future. Influence children, others...

2. Unmarried

- Choose with care
- Agree on basics (religion; children...)
- Discipline

3. Married

- Often look for way out; leave, not cleave

4. Every marriage can improve

I. Why Study MDR?

II. What Did Jesus Say?

Mt.19

3. Issue: not the right to divorce, but grounds

3. Testing Him. 3:7...

- Disagreement of rabbis. Any reason? ...
 - Shammai: divorce wife only for indecency
 - Hillel: trivial divorce may define indecency [she spoils his supper... talks so loud...]
 - Akiba: he finds someone prettier...
 - Josephus...

Mt.19

Josephus –

‘I divorced my wife, being displeased at her behavior’ (Life, 76)

‘He who desires to be divorced from the wife who is living with him for any cause whatsoever – and with mortals many such may arise...’

(Ant.4.8.23 = Mt.19:3).

Marriage is attractive because
it's easily dissolved (?)

Mt.19

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 - Pharisees: test = minefield...
 - They hope Jesus will offend listeners...

Mt.19

3. Issue: not the right to divorce, but grounds

3. Testing Him. 3:7...

- Dismissal of revelation. If He dismisses / denies Dt.24, or condemns divorce, He may lose many followers / credibility
- Death of righteous.
 - Is it lawful  Mt.14:4, led to John's execution. Would Lord end in same way?

Mt.19

4. citation: Gn.1:27 – creation principle

- Have you not read?
 - Bible is clear / authoritative
 - “At the beginning”: eternal Creation principle.
 - “Male and female” so that the one should have the one.

“If it had been His will that he should put this one away and bring in others, when He had made one man, He would have formed many women” – Chrysostom [Adam and Eve – pattern for all]

Mt.19

5. citation: Gn.2:24, creation ordinance: marriage established

1. Leave father / mother

- Marriage relationship is closer, stronger than parent-child relationship

2. Joined to wife. Unity of soul...

3. Two...one flesh. A married oneness

Mt.19

6. conclusion: so then... no longer what they were (two separate individuals): now bound...
 - Therefore what (not *whom*) God joined...
 - Let not man separate
 - What God unites, man divides (as Pharisees)
 - Divorce is both unnatural and rebellious

Mt.19

7. They misapply Moses (supported divorce?)
 - God limited divorce
 - Command is wrong word: it is concession (Mal.2:16)
 - Certificate legally drawn up, witnessed, served, 'made it right' = presto! God's command for MDR is swept away in flood of *WANT TO*

Mt.19

8. Hardness – Israel rebelled against God

- *Permitted corrects command, 7.*
 - Sin can be so vile that divorce is lesser of two evils
 - Without Deut.24
 - husband can divorce wife, put her out
 - If she divorces again, he can claim she is still his wife...take her back.
 - Dt.24 protected women
 - After giving the certificate, he loses all claim on her

Mt.19

8. Hardness – Israel rebelled against God

- *Permitted* corrects *commanded*, 7.

- Two rulings –

1. If you don't want your wife, divorce her?
2. If you want a divorce, you must give her a divorce notice.
3. But think about it – once she remarries, you cannot get her back.

From the beginning (God's original plan) –
It was not so [perfect tense]: has not been so
(continuously from Genesis to Revelation)

Mt.19

9. One lawful divorce: for fornication (sexual immorality).
 - Mt.5:31-32, *divorced wife in adultery . . .*
 - Mt.19:9, *husband remarries, in adultery . . .*

Mt.19

10. His teaching separated Him from Pharisees AND disciples
11. “This saying” may refer to ...
 - Jesus remarks (9): they don't apply to eunuchs
 - Disciples remark (10): marriage is attractive only if we can discard a lemon
- 12: Three kinds of eunuchs: two physical, one biblical

I. Why Study MDR?

II. What Did Jesus Say?

III. So What?

- Husbands and wives still look for loopholes
- Preachers still look for loopholes; unhappily married, want a way out
- Society embraces loopholes
- BUT: marriage and family are basis of healthy society and church. If family is wrong, nothing is right; problems abound...

To avoid MDR: respect Scripture

Healthy marriage requires...

1. Alert selection. Mt.19:4-6
2. Biblical foundation. Mt.19:9, is s/he eligible?
3. Commitment: Lord first, spouse second.
Titus 2. Am I mature? ...spiritual?
4. Devoted relationship.
*Boaz and Ruth . . . *Aquila and Priscilla
5. Exertion. Ep.5 – ‘happily ever after’ ... work!