

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

JESUS ON DIVORCE: Part 1

1. Where does this whole subject of divorce ring closest to home for you? What names, faces, scenarios were at the front of your mind as you listened to the message?

2. What struck you as to how our culture's view on marriage and divorce clash with the biblical/Kingdom view?

3. Why do you think marital reconciliation is so deemphasized in our culture as opposed to the high priority that it is lifted to in the scriptures?

4. What are your reflections on the passage from Jeremiah 3: 8-9/12-14 in which God declares His divorce from Israel?

5. How do you process Pastor Nathan's clarifying point at the very end of his talk? Does this challenge some of your previously established views on divorce?

JESUS ON DIVORCE: Part 1

Pastor Nathan Carroll

Mark 10:1-12 NIV

Jesus then left that place and went into the region of Judea and across the Jordan. Again crowds of people came to him, and as was his custom, he taught them.

²Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"

³"What did Moses command you?" he replied.

⁴They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away."

⁵"It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. ⁶"But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' ⁷'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, ⁸and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

¹⁰When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. ¹¹He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. ¹²And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

Biblical Context (What's happening here?)

The Pharisees are trying to _____ Jesus.

- The *Hillel* school believed that a man could divorce a woman for _____.
- The *Shammai* school believed that a man could divorce a woman for _____.

Black-and-White #1:

Marriage is a _____. (Mark 10:6-9)

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." Genesis 2:24 NIV

- _____: meaning holy, divine
 - Holiness means that it is _____ with sin - it cannot be compromised.
 - Marriage is a _____ in scriptures of God's love for his people.

- _____: meaning a vow or agreement _____
 - It carries with it blessings for honoring it and _____.

Today, marriage is seen more as a _____.

Black-and-White #2: **Scripture makes it clear that this sacred covenant is** _____. (Mark 10:9)

Has not [the LORD] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith. Malachi 2:15-16 NIV

God hates the _____ of that which is sacred.

1 Corinthians 7

- "A wife must not separate from her husband" (v 10)
- "A husband must not divorce his wife" (v 11)
- "A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives" (v 39)

Black-and-White #3: **God's heart is for** _____ **at all cost.**

While verses in scripture give assent to divorce _____ - each instance first assumes that all has been done to _____.

This is not simply a lower story reality, either - it is an upper story reality...

Jeremiah 3:8-9/12-14 NIV

⁸I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries. Yet I saw that her unfaithful sister Judah had no fear; she also went out and committed adultery. ⁹Because Israel's immorality mattered so little to her, she defiled the land and committed adultery with stone and wood.

¹²Go, proclaim this message toward the north: "'Return, faithless Israel,' declares the Lord, 'I will frown on you no longer, for I am faithful,' declares the Lord, 'I will not be angry forever. ¹³Only acknowledge your guilt—you have rebelled against the Lord your God, you have scattered your favors to foreign gods under every spreading tree, and have not obeyed me,'" declares the Lord.

¹⁴"Return, faithless people," declares the Lord, "for I am your husband. I will choose you—one from a town and two from a clan—and bring you to Zion."

...echoed prophetically in the lower story in the book of _____.

The LORD said to me [Hosea], "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another man and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes."

Hosea 3:1 NIV

The bottom line: God is able to _____

- starting with _____ towards _____.

Black-and-White #4: **While God is capable of restoring** _____ **marriage,** **He is not always** _____ **to.**

Restoration towards reconciliation is a _____ process that requires great _____.

The bottom line: A marriage is _____ if both parties do not allow God to form _____ within both of them.

Black-and-White #5: **As a consolation for people's** _____ **and** _____, **divorce is** _____ **under** _____ **circumstances.**

Divorce is, by nature, _____ - it was never part of _____.

"It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. Mark 10:5 NIV

...But it was not this way from the beginning. Matthew 19:8 NIV

Divorce is never _____ in scripture - it is only assented to and limited to circumstances in which:

- Every effort towards reconciliation has _____

or

- One or both partners are _____ in their _____ to work towards _____.

Scriptural Exception Clauses:

- *Moikea:* _____ Deuteronomy 22:22 / Matthew 5:32
- *Porneo:* " _____ " Matthew 5:32; 19:9
- _____ Disconnectedness that leads the unbelieving partner to quit 1 Corinthians 7:15-16
- Treachery or Cruelty Malachi 2

*** Important Clarifier: Divorce is not a** _____.

- It is _____.
- It can _____ to be committed.