

Marriage and Divorce - Part 1

by Don Courville

The Bible teaches that marriage is a legal covenant only dissolved by death, and that reconciliation and salvation are more important than remarriage.

Duration: 25:17

Scripture: Romans 6:6

Topics: "Marriage and Divorce"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of building a strong foundation in marriage and in life. He references Psalm 11:3, which asks what the righteous can do if the foundations are destroyed. The preacher then delves into the topic of marriage and divorce, using Romans 7:1-3 to illustrate that marriage is only dissolved by death. He highlights the current troubles in American homes and emphasizes the need to address the root causes of these problems.

Transcript

When the late Mr. and Ms. Henry Ford celebrated their golden wedding anniversary, a reporter asked them this question. To what do you attribute your fifty years of successful married life? The formula, said Mr. Ford, is the same formula I have always used in making cars. Just stick to one model.

The psalmist said, In the Lord put I my trust. How say ye to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain? For lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow, upon the string, that they may privately shoot at the upright in heart, and listen to this. Then he said this, If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? That's a good question, isn't it? What can the righteous do? Heavenly Father, we ask that today You would bless Your Word, that You would open up our ears, that we would have ears to hear, eyes to see, that our mind, our heart, our person, that we can understand what God is saying to us.

We pray for any that do not know Jesus as their Savior, that they would recognize that without Christ there is no hope. You said, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And we pray that if there are any that have not yet given their life to Christ, that they would call out to the Lord Jesus and trust Him as their Savior, that they would repent of their sin and call out to the Lord Jesus.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become the sons of God. In Jesus' name, Amen. My wife received a phone call the other day from a friend who had received a phone call from a pastor of a large church in a state far away about the subject of marriage and divorce.

And then it came back to me, and I'm supposed to do a little study on it and give some insight into this area. And I thought, well, as long as I'm doing the studying and doing the research and putting into a format that it could be used and studied out, what does the Scripture say on this subject? I might as well just share with you on the radio, because this is a subject that is greatly misunderstood but yet has great consequences in our lives. It's just like the other day I was talking to a man, and he said that him and his wife had been separated a number of years, but they had still been living together in the same house.

And it wasn't a real good relationship from what I get. But now he's moving out and getting them another place. And I had this question in the back of my mind.

Why is it not working? Why is it that so many marriages don't seem to be working? Why is it that there are so many Christian marriages not working? This week I heard on Point of View, they were talking about how much trouble the home is in America. And it seems like we have a good capacity for pointing out all of our problems, but we don't have a very good capacity for getting down to the root of how to solve our problems. Now I'm going to talk to you a little bit about the subject of marriage and divorce, and I want you to listen.

It's not going to be a long program, only about 20-25 minutes. And if we don't have time, we'll continue on next week. But this subject is so important that I believe it has to do with Psalms 113.

If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? It's almost like there's no answer to that. If the foundation of the home is destroyed in America, America is gone. And from what we hear going on, the foundations are eroding fast.

You know, when I was over in Athens, there was this Acropolis there. You hear about this thing, this huge thing. These columns are huge around there, 48.

I didn't go around and count all of them, but I believe there were 48. What holds up all of that weight? Well, it's a solid foundation. One day I was over in Miletus, which is south of Ephesus, since I lived over in Turkey.

And down there, there was a temple that had 122 of these columns, but yet just a few of them were standing. They'd been knocked down. What is it that holds up the weight of the marriage? I believe there's one thing.

And without this one thing, the foundations will be destroyed. It's just like there's one main foundation or one main gatepost of a marriage. Most gates are hinged on one post.

It may hook to another one and lock, but the weight is borne by one post. And I believe there's one thing. Henry Ford hit it.

Stick to one model. Now, if the foundations or the gatepost of marriage is destroyed, then you destroy the home. I believe that foundation, that one strong, mighty, strong gatepost, is this, that God meant it to be till death, that God meant marriage to be till death.

Now, is this what the Bible teaches? It is. Many say that the Bible does not teach this. But I want to take you through a little simple study in the Word of God to show you what the Bible says.

You know, if you're going to build a doctrine, then you need to start with the clear teaching of Scripture, then fit in the more difficult verses. Two things will happen if you'll do that. One, you'll find that those difficult verses will make more sense.

And two, you'll also find that if you reverse this, you'll end up in confusion. And who's the author of confusion? Well, we know that Satan is. Some are confused on this issue of marriage and divorce, but most are deceived.

And if you're deceived, then you're confused and you don't know it. And if a fellow's confused and he doesn't know it, you can't persuade him about very much. Now, let's just look at Scripture.

Let's go back to the beginning in Genesis 2. I'm going to take you through several passages as much as time allows us, and then next week we'll continue on. But in Genesis 2, we have the first marriage. God performed the marriage, of course.

You know this. Look at Genesis 2, verse 21. Now, I want you to notice that God said that they are one flesh, and let's just talk about that for a minute.

Scripture interprets Scripture. If we go back over to Ephesians, chapter 5, and verse 30, For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause, going back to Genesis, we're interpreting Scripture in light of Scripture.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they too shall be one flesh. There's the term again, one flesh. Marriage is a type of the church.

The husband is the head. Back in 23 of Ephesians 5, it says, For the husband is the head of the wife. Now, if a man and a woman divorce, separate, then she's out from under her head, out from under her authority, and she's in trouble.

Anybody that loses his head is in trouble. Now, joined means glued onto. In other words, it's just a picture of it would be plywood.

Plywood is wood that's put together. They'll take strips of wood, and they'll glue this together in layers. And if you've ever tried to take plywood apart, you know that you can't do it.

All you can do is rip it apart, and you ruin the piece. You have to cut it. Now, here's the lesson.

If the husband and the wife can separate, which they can't, according to Scripture, I'm going to show you in the Scriptures that they cannot do this. They cannot just go get a piece of paper and have a divorce and say that their marriage is over. I'm going to show you from Scripture.

You stay with me. But if they could, if they could, then they would blow the type of the church. Ephesians, every passage where the light is given on this subject is illustrating a spiritual truth.

If the husband and wife can separate, which they can't, except by death, then Christ could separate from the believer. And that's not possible. He said, I'll never leave you.

He said, no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand, and we can go through other... That's another subject, another doctrine, by the way, that's controversial. Can you lose your salvation? But let's stick on this one here. One flesh.

You know, 1 Corinthians 6.16 says, For two, saith he, shall be one flesh. It's interesting how when Paul was trying to get across points, he would build up on this doctrine of marriage until, if you would study it out, you have a solid picture of a solid foundation. He said, What? Know you not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

There's that one flesh. Two, saith he, shall be one flesh. Now, what's the big controversy is what's over in Matthew 5 and 19.

And we're going to get there. I don't know if we'll get there today, but we'll get there at least next week. And that's this.

What about the exception clause, they say? What about the fornication? Well, we're going to get there, but this is what we've got to do first. We have to build our foundation before you go to passages that are seemingly hard to interpret. So let's go back over to Romans 7, Romans 7, verses 1, 2, and 3. Here again, as I said, Paul is trying to illustrate a spiritual truth.

And in illustrating the spiritual truth, he uses a common fact, the fact that marriage is only dissolved by death. And here's what he said in verse 1. Know ye not, brethren, for I speak to them that know the law, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth. Now, Paul is going to illustrate a beautiful truth that I would love to get into about the cross.

But he's using a point, the point of the illustration of marriage to illustrate the spiritual truth of the cross and how we have died. He said in Romans 6, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. He that is dead is freed from sin.

And he's illustrating in chapter 7, chapter 6. But notice he says in verse 2. Here's his illustration. For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth. But if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

So then if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. But if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Now go back up to verse 2. I want you to notice that he said that the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth.

What's this mean? And then also in verse 2. If the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. What does this mean? Was Paul trying to say something that's deep and mystical? And then also in verse 3. If while her husband liveth she be married to another man, in other words, if she go get a divorce and her husband be married, what's going to happen? She shall be called an adulteress. Now what's he mean by this? And then in verse 3 also.

But if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Let me tell you what this means in the Greek. What this means in the Greek is this.

As long as a man and a woman are alive, their marriage is in place. They are one flesh. The only thing, what this means in the scriptures here, in the Greek, people are interested in the Greek.

If you want to know what the Greek is, get you a King James Bible where they've taken the Greek and put it into English, actually created a new English, and it's there as plain as God can get it to you. Now you may have to look up a few words in a Webster's dictionary or something that are older words, but this is

clear. What does Paul mean by this? What he means is, as long as the man and the woman are alive, their marriage is before God a marriage and nothing, nothing, not a divorce from some judge will separate it.

Can a piece of paper signed by a judge give you the right to divorce and remarry? According to this verse, there's only one answer, no. And this isn't the only passage. This is a clear passage.

So you build a doctrine on clear passages. By the way, if you violate this verse, you are in adultery. Say if a man goes out and gets married and divorces and goes and gets married again, he's living in adultery.

But if he comes to the scriptures and God opens up and shows him what he's done, and he repents, he confesses, and he receives forgiveness, then what? Well then he is forgiven and he's living by the grace of God. But he'll still bear the scar and the consequences of that all of his life. But you are forgiven.

That's the wonderful thing about the grace of God. Many of you have never yet received the forgiveness of God for something that you've done in your life. Or you've never given somebody the forgiveness that God extends through you to them.

And you're maybe still bitter about something. But if you violate this clear scriptural command, and I'm going to show you where this is a command in the next passage we're going to go to, Paul lays this out in a command. But if you violate this, you end up in a life of adultery.

Many do not realize that the fruit that they will bear into their families' lives will be rotten fruit that will bear out in years. And I'm going to share with you a couple stories at the end of this program to illustrate this truth about the fruit. It may take 10 years, it may take 20 years, but I guarantee you the fruit will bear out.

Bad fruit. Now marriage, what is it? It's a legal covenant. Marriage is a legal covenant only dissolved by death.

And the lesson of the text of our freedom at the cross from the old man, as I share from Romans 6 over there, no power. There's no power in a dead man, he's saying. There's no power trying to tell us how at Calvary we were set free from the bondage of sin.

Paul says the only thing that will set a man or woman free to marry another man is death. Now do you understand that? Many have a lot of trouble with that, but that's very clear. And we're just getting started on this.

There is passage after passage after passage that is clear. Marriage is the highest form of earthly union. Marriage is a type of our spiritual union with Christ, is the highest type of the church.

Now let's go over to another passage. 1 Corinthians chapter 7, and I'll wait for you a minute for you to get over there. 1 Corinthians 7, verses 10 through 16, and verse 39 will be our verses.

1 Corinthians 7, now look at verse 10. And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband, but, and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband, and let not the husband put away his wife. Verse 12, but to the rest speak I, not the Lord.

If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is

sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.

Verse 15, but if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife? I want to read one more verse, then we'll come back and look at it.

Verse 39, the wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth, but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord. Now let's go back to verse 10, and look at this stuff that so many people have a hard time understanding. This is a command from who? Look at verse 10, and unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord.

What he's saying, this is a command from God? He has this based on the teaching of Scripture. And actually what you have, you have the Old Testament explained in the New Testament. It's there.

Now let's keep going here, okay? What's the command? First thing he says, let not the wife depart from her husband. Of course there was a set of circumstances that he was talking about there. Let not the wife depart from her husband.

Look at verse 11, but, okay, we've got a little thing in here, but, and, if, but and if she depart, what are you supposed to do? He says let, what? Let her remain unmarried. What is it that will dissolve that marriage according to what we've already built on the Scriptures? Romans 7, death. Death is the only thing.

Let not the wife depart from her husband. Or here's another option. Or what? Or be reconciled to her husband, and then he goes into another one, and let not the husband put away his wife.

It goes both ways there. The only thing, the two options that they have, if they separate, they have to stay unmarried or get back together. Now let's keep going on.

Verse 12. Is this hard to understand? Is this hard? No, I don't think it's hard. One of the reasons we don't understand Scripture, we don't get it, is because we don't want it.

We want to do what we want to do, and it's our own hardness. That's why divorce got in anyway into the Bible, because of hardness, and we'll get to that when we get to Matthew 5 and 19. Verse 12.

But to the rest speak I, not the Lord. If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. Let not the husband put away his wife.

Let not the wife put away her husband. Verse 13. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

Okay. Verse 14. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife.

This is covering the children. And the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy. And we won't talk about that.

Another subject within the subject, verse 15. But, now notice 15. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart.

And here's the catch. What is this? How do you fit this with Romans 7? This is what they say. This is what people say.

This is what I've been told. Well, see, you're free to go get remarried. No, I don't believe that's what it's talking about.

It says, but if the unbelieving depart, verse 15, let them depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God hath called us to peace. They say, there, see, they're free.

No, look at the next verse. Verse 16 is the answer. The goal is salvation for the mate.

Then the marriage will be saved. Because in verse 16, it says, for what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife? What kind of a situation would you be in if you were divorced, and then you got saved, and then you went and got married again? And then your mate, your original mate, got saved and came back to you to put your marriage together, and you'd already got remarried, living in adultery. This is why God says death is the only thing that dissolves the marriage.

You get into lots of problems. And then verse 39, what do you do with this verse? The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth. But if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married.

The only thing you can do with that is believe it or reject it. And if you believe that you can get a piece of paper and have a divorce, then you have rejected the clear teaching of the Word of God. Only death allows remarriage, not a divorce.

Verse 11, he says, remain unmarried if you are separated. Now let me say this. If this is violated, it brings reproach and fruit that is bad.

Now I'm about out of time, but I'm going to share briefly this one little story with you. There was a pastor, and I don't want to get into too many details, but he was a pastor of my family. And he'd held this view that I've just shared with you for years and years and years.

His dad had held this view, and his mom had held this view, or his grandfather. They were preachers. His dad was a preacher.

His grandfather was a preacher. He was a preacher. And finally, because of the pressure, he changed his view and decided that he would start remarrying divorced people.

And so the church began to fill up with these people. And I know we're about out of time, but give me a couple more minutes, and I'll finish this story with you. And here's what happened.

To make this story short, after a few years, his children got old enough to marry, and they went and married, and their lives were a mess. Marrying, one of them married, the youngest girl married a divorced man that had three children, and it just is a mess, and it went like that. And then the church, it looked like it was okay, but the church eventually just fell all apart.

What happens in the marriage affects the family, and it affects the church. My friends, this is the clear teaching of the Word of God. Next time, we'll continue on in Matthew 5 and Matthew 19.

Till next time, I'm trusting that the Lord will continue to give you light and revelation and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and that you'll be blessed by the Word of God. God bless you.

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