

Marriage and Divorce - Part 4

by Don Courville

Following God's order is crucial for the church, family, and community, and the qualification for a pastor is to be the husband of one wife.

Duration: 32:18

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Mark 10:6, Luke 16:18, Hebrews 6:17, Hebrews 13:8

Topics: "Marriage and Divorce"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of church order and the role of men in their homes and marriages. He emphasizes that church order is crucial for the functioning of society and that the family is the foundation of society. The preacher references biblical passages, such as Genesis 2 and 1 Corinthians 7, to support his teachings. He warns against the destruction of the family and emphasizes the need for husbands to be devoted to their wives and remain married until death.

Transcript

I heard a story about a planter in Kentucky. He had a plantation, and there was a black man that was his mule driver, and he asked his driver, he said, can you use a whip? And the driver, he flicked a butterfly off of a flower, and then he killed a honeybee, and they went on a little bit. Owner of the plantation said to him, there's some hornets.

Can you hit those three hornets? And he said, yes, sir. But I ain't going to. Day's organized.

We're going to talk to you today about church order. Heavenly Father, we ask that you would bless the teaching of your Word, and that, Father, we would understand that your thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are our ways your ways, you've told us. But we'd ask that you'd bring us to understand your ways, and especially in the subject of church order, and in relation to the men that you've called to hold this position, and especially, Father, in the area of their homes, their married life.

We thank you now for your Word. We pray for any that do not know Jesus Christ as their Savior. We pray that they would come to understand that Christ died on the cross for them.

He was buried, and he rose again the third day. Father, we pray that you bring the truth of this, that either they die for their sin, or you died for their sin, and offer that as a payment, as a free gift. We pray for the movement of your Spirit in our hearts, that we would not be hard-hearted.

In Jesus' name, amen. Well, if you've been with us the last couple weeks on Eagle's Wings, you know that we've taken on a subject that's been controversial, and there's usually controversy in areas that are important. In relation to the Word of God, we either believe it, or we don't.

If we don't, then we go about to try to get some ways that will fit our situation, so we can get around it. And our schools have adopted a philosophy of the world that's made it convenient for men to be in the ministry, whereas years ago, they wouldn't even get near the area of being a pastor. But now, our pulpits are full of men that are not qualified according to the Scripture.

We've been looking at the area of marriage and divorce. And you know, I was just reading this passage from Isaiah 55, where God said, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, said the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the things whereunto I send it. I read that for you so that you'll be praying that God will cause His Word to prosper, that it will accomplish that which He wants it to accomplish today.

This subject of marriage and divorce has been a controversial one in the last 50 years of this century at least, and maybe going on back a few years as liberalism began to get into the fundamental schools. And now what the liberals had years ago, the fundamentalists have. But this started off from a phone call a few weeks ago from a man, a pastor in another state, way off of a large church, called a friend of ours who called my wife and talking about it, and then it got put over on me.

And so I was going to do some research for them and decided to just go ahead and share with you this research on this subject. It's important because it affects our lives. And I'm going to go through some things today about church order, and I want to get right into it without a whole lot of review.

But I do need to take just maybe a couple minutes to bring you up to where we're at. We talked about the foundation. If you establish a doctrine, then establish it on the clear teaching of the Word of God for your foundation.

And we established the principle that God's Word teaches that there's not to be marriage and divorce. In Matthew 5 and verse 19, it had been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. And Jesus was speaking.

He said, But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery. And whosoever shall marry her, that is divorce, committeth adultery. And last week we looked at this fornication.

This was sex before marriage. Adultery is sex after marriage. And stoning was the penalty for adultery.

And we went through the details of that. We don't have time to go back over that again. It was the hard-heartedness of the people of Israel that made God put that in the Word.

And Moses gave them a writing of divorcement because they would not accept the standard of God's Word for marriage. And it came from those that were backslidden at the best and most probably

unbelievers in their heart. They just didn't want God's Word.

And if we have time, I'll make another statement about the law. You know, the law was added because of transgression, Galatians says. Another passage on this that is a clear teaching passage, Jesus in Matthew 19, 5. The Pharisees are trying to trick Him again.

They're tempting Him. He said in verse 5, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. This is the covenant relationship.

Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And they say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? And he said unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away from your wives.

Now listen to what he said. But from the beginning it was not so. This is the foundational principle.

We started off in Genesis chapter 2, where it says they would be one flesh. And he said, I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery. And whoso marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.

That was Matthew 19, the first few verses in that chapter. And then Mark chapter 6, verse 5. Excuse me, that's not the right place. And Mark, it was Mark 10, verse 6. He said, they started off the same thing again in verse 4. Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, for the hardness of your heart, he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation of God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife.

And they twain shall be one flesh. So then they are no more twain, but one flesh. And then he said this, what therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

I put a proposition out to you that if you go get a divorce, you've got a piece of paper. But in God's sight, you're still married. That piece of paper does not give you the right to go get married unless your mate has died.

And I'm going to show you that in a couple more minutes here. Whosoever putteth away his wife, in Luke 16, verse 18, and marrieth another, committeth adultery. And whoso marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.

You know, we talk about revival. I'm going to turn over to Romans chapter 7 now. If you have a revival, it's going to affect, it's going to affect the leadership of your church as they get right with the Word of God.

Matter of fact, I was in a revival crusade a number of years ago. And the pastor there, and I knew him, was pastoring, and I also knew that he was divorced. Nobody ever said a word to him about that.

But we were praying. We were driving around that town every day, two, couple, three times a day and praying. And praying that God would do the work.

He would convict. And after about a week of God working there, this man and his wife came under such conviction. I think his wife might have been divorced too.

Came under such conviction that they just broke before God. And I remember them, I think it was on a Sunday. It just, it shook the whole church and had reverberations in the town.

As he came before the congregation, he said God had convicted him that he should not be pastoring. He should not be pastoring since he was divorced. And he resigned.

He was resigning his position immediately. And it just was shaking. But this was just the power of God working.

Now, this is what I'm saying. It will affect your church. Here's what happened.

Because it was a large church. It was a large church in that denomination, in that area. The Word went sweeping around the area.

And his preacher buddies, they were calling him up and telling him he'd made a big mistake and everything. And before the meetings were over, they went for three weeks. Before the meetings were over, he was already out of the church.

He'd already resigned that. But he changed his mind later on and went back into the pastorate. He renounced what he said.

The effect of that on the church, even though God was doing a great work, was to cut off the Spirit of God from working in that community. And the last I heard, the church just went dead. It will affect your church.

It will affect your area. It will affect your family. I'm going to share a couple more stories with you about the effect it can have on your family in this area.

If there's a pastor in the church that's got--he's got a wrong qualification in this area, or if he is in a bad relationship, say if he's in an immoral relationship, it will affect. I'm going to share with you a story on that. Now, another thing on this past--this is foundational.

In Romans chapter 7, in verse 2, 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 loose from the law of her husband. Listen to what he said in verse 3. 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.

I know if you've been with us, you've heard this before. But this is the foundational teaching of the Word of God, back from Genesis chapter 2, where God said that they would be one flesh. And once the foundation is established--by the way, the psalmist said in Psalms 11, 3, If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? If the family is destroyed in our country, what can we do? There's nothing you can do.

You can't build a society on a situation where there's no family life, where the family isn't the mainstay of the society. So if you destroy the family, which is the direction we're going, you destroy the society. Another passage in 1 Corinthians 7, and I won't go into all this, but Paul has said, Let not the wife depart from her husband.

There's no grounds. There's no way. Three times, four times, he mentioned in 1 Corinthians 7, for those, that man and wife, not to put away each other.

In verse 12, Let him not put her away. Verse 13, Let her not leave him. Verse 15, But if they believe and depart, let them depart.

A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God hath called us to peace. And this is where a lot of people, they'll hinge onto this, say, There, you're free. But look at the next verse.

He said, For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife? Now, I want to get into the church order today. That's a little bit by review, and I don't want to go into any more, but the Scriptures are very clear on this principle. The foundation has been established, and it's very clear.

Now, church order is important. Could it be that the families, our families are out of order, because the church is out of order on the guidelines of the Scripture? And what is the proper order, anyway? And I'm not talking about the Catholic order, or Lutheran, or Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, or Assembly, or whatever it is, but I'm talking about the Scriptural guidelines for the order in the church in regards to the qualifications for a pastor. Can a man pastor, or should he pastor, if he does not meet the qualifications? And you say, what is the qualifications, anyway? The qualification is this, in 1 Timothy 3, A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filtry and lucre, but patient, not a brawler, not covetous, one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.

For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. And then he goes into the deacons.

By the way, the deacons have this qualification of to be the husband of one wife. And we're going to talk to you about this qualification today, one wife. You know, Paul was interested in church order.

Colossians 2.5, he said, join and behold in your order. He had some guidelines for them. It was important that they followed the order as it was supposed to be.

And just as there will be a series of positive consequences when things are in order, there will be a series of negative consequences when things are out of order. Just like that in your car with your spark plugs. If they're in order, things run smooth.

If they're not, you put your plugs back on, those wires back on wrong, you're going to have a mess. Things are out of order. It's not going to run good if it'll run hardly at all.

First Corinthians 11.3 and 4, he said, the rest will I set in order when I come. Communion was out of order. They were shaming those that had not.

Whenever there's something out of order, then you can tell it. Somebody's, it's going to begin to hurt the body. He said, let all things be done decently and in order.

For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace as in all the churches. And he'd left Titus in Crete to set things in order. What is God's order then for an elder? The very first qualification is blameless.

And that's not to say he has to be sinless. But I've got this question. Why did God have such a high standard set for the pastors? The answer is that the overseers were the stewards of God's property, the church.

And just like in Luke 16, the story of the unjust steward, they have to give an account to God and they must know how to keep their own life in order, their own family in order, if they're going to keep other families in order. How would you like to have a man fly your plane that didn't know how to fly the plane? That's basically a crude illustration, but that's what happens. If a man doesn't know how to keep his own family in order, he's had a marriage and a divorce, and then he's going to come and tell you how to run your family.

It doesn't work. The qualification is one wife. The only thing that would let him have another wife, according to the scriptures, the foundation that we set was if that wife was to die.

And that's the qualification also for a wife to be remarried if her husband will die. You say, that's too tough. That's too hard.

I can't take it. This is the Word of God. Duty is mine.

And what you do with it, mine is just to share what God lays on our hearts. And by the way, if you have something you'd like us to talk to, we listen to you. When you write or you call, you talk to us.

We pray about these things, and if God prompts something, then we share it. Now, the husband of one wife, a one-woman man. Now, what those that take these other versions and take the other view, they'll say, well, that means one wife at a time.

One wife at a time. Doesn't that sound cool? That's really smooth. But that's not what the Word of God teaches.

He is a one-woman man. The one, which is an adjective, receives the emphasis. One.

Just one. Now, we have trouble counting. You know, there are a lot of views on this.

Here's five of the main views on this. There's the marriage to the church view. This has been held by a lot of the Roman Catholics.

One wife is the church. That's his wife. And, of course, this was to protect celibacy for the priest, which isn't biblical either.

And so they had to get around that. But we'll reject this. It's not biblical at all.

Then there was the prohibition of polygamy. Not a big problem today. Was then.

First Corinthians 7.2. Had one wife and husband. It was forbidden in the empire at the time, but, you know, there was those trying to do it. But we'll throw this one aside, too.

Then there was the prohibition of remarried widows' view. The bishop may marry, but just once. This isn't compatible with Scripture either, and I've got a lot of other Scriptures that go along with that.

Then there was another view that was the exclusion of unmarried overseers' view. In other words, only married men are eligible for the office. Well, if you take that, you've got to look out in verse 4. Well, they

had to have children, too, before they could get married.

Well, that's a little bit hard to do. So we'll have to throw this one aside. You know, Paul was an elder, and he wasn't married.

We didn't know if he hadn't got married, if he was just a widow or whatever. But then there was another view, and this was the prohibition of divorce view. This is the view that I take.

And that's this, that divorce was very common among the Romans and the Jews at that time. And if you can imagine these people getting saved, the bulk of the converts, after God moved out of the church, out of the Jews, I mean, into the pagans, the bulk of them were coming from pagans, that all kinds of stuff was going on. So to keep things in order, Paul laid down the standard, the common teaching of the Word of God that every Jew knew and understood, that they had to have just one wife, and they couldn't have been into other relationships.

And I'll get into a little bit more detail on this with you in a minute. And the blood cleanses. When you get saved, the blood cleanses.

We're all cleansed in Christ. But the highest office had the highest qualifications, and thus not every man would be qualified for that. Because, well, they say, well, that was before.

That was before he was even saved. That may be true, but this standard of one husband and one wife, not just for the church, this is God's guideline for marriage for the human race. And if you blow that standard for the human race, then for sure you're not qualified for the church.

Now, there's such a spirit today of wanting to do it our own way. I don't think we recognize many times how carnal and backslidden and worldly we are, thinking that we're spiritual, having ideas and philosophies that we've received from men and the teaching of men that are not scriptural. And I know you can turn around and say, well, that goes for you too, preacher.

Well, you tell me something, I'll look it up in the scripture, and if God convicts me I'm wrong, I'll change. But I don't think you're going to change me on the scripture. I've already laid down at least five clear passages on this.

We've looked at it and compared it. And by the way, this is a revival of evil in the church of this marriage and divorce. A hundred years ago, everybody knew.

Two hundred years ago, everybody knew. Even probably 75 years ago, they knew. Maybe even back 50 years ago, when this was beginning to get more popular, they still knew that if a man was divorced, he could not be a pastor.

We don't know it today. I don't know what's going on. I think I do.

You do too. We want to do it our way. There was no record of divorce or other marital infidelity in the candidate to be found.

Even before his conversion, Homer Kinnett said this, there was no record of divorce or other marital infidelity in the candidate's life, even before his conversion, if he was to be an elder in the church. If you've got, just imagine this, suppose you've got a preacher up there preaching, and then one day, while he's preaching, in walks this gal, walks up to the pulpit and says, Hi, honey. Remember me? I'm your wife.

Now, what's going to happen in the congregation? There's his new wife sitting over there, and there's his old wife, and she says, I got saved. I just wanted to come tell you so we can put our marriage back together. I've got saved.

What are you going to do? If this man has violated scripture and went ahead and got a divorce, got a piece of paper, this is what 1 Corinthians was talking about. Suppose he's there, and in walks this old gal, her hair's all razzled up, her clothes are disheveled, and she's a mistress that he had somewhere back lying. She tracked him down and found him, and she comes in and makes a scene, or what about some kid comes in? Hey, Dad! And there he's got a family over there, but this is an illegitimate kid.

This qualification takes away all of those possibilities. It just removes it. This standard is from the beginning.

Matthew 19, 8, Jesus said, but from the beginning it was not so. And last week we talked about how we're trying to take the standard that Moses was allowed to give them as our standard today, the standard of because of their hard hearts. The overseer, now get this, must, he must, this implies that he must be devoted to his wife, that he must stay married to his wife till death will part them.

Now, we've been moving along through here. I think maybe I want to say a couple other things. This will affect your church.

A number of years ago, back in the early 90s, we went into an area, and God really impressed me, had been working on me, that he wanted to do a work in this one certain area. And I had a friend down there been trying to get me down there for a while, and so we believed that God wanted to have a meeting there for revival. But the Spirit of God directed, and just like he put a prohibition on me not to work through the pastors.

This was unusual, because I believe in working through the local church. This ministry is geared to be a support to the local church, to the pastors, and we work with preachers. As God gives us the opportunity, it's the one-on-one warfare that gets the job done.

You can preach to them in conventions and whatever, but it's the one-on-one. Somebody's got to take a man and work him through, and it takes a lot of prayer. But we were just, the Spirit of God just said, don't work with them.

And I found out later why. His church, he began to show me, his pastor was having an adulterous affair with a woman right at that moment. And him and his wife had found out about it.

They were wanting to know, what do they do about this? They'd been trying to approach some things, and it was just such a bomb that nobody even wanted to do anything. And I told him, Donald, you need to get your family out of that church. It's going to affect you.

You can't keep your kids in there. And to make a long story short, he didn't get his family out of there. He eventually did, but it wasn't soon enough.

And his oldest daughter ended up, had a bad, moved in, started shacking up with a guy. The spirit of rebellion, the spirit of immorality can be passed on to attack your kids and your family. And if you don't believe this will happen, I've got, I've just got too many years of watching this.

Watching, I've studied, my hobby has been studying churches and preachers for 30 years. And it just will affect you. If you're in there and you don't know it, and your preacher has a problem with this, it can affect you.

It can affect your family without you knowing it. And it just, he lost his daughter. Just, uh, it was sad.

You know, we were, we had the meetings there. We met in a school. The other, uh, there were two main Baptist churches there.

He went to one. And the other one, we had a, we were having a meeting in the school. The pastor from the big first Baptist church came into the meeting that night, come in with his tennis shoes.

You know, you couldn't have told him from Adam in there, but, uh, I found out he was, but the spirit of God worked on him so hard that, uh, he resigned his church. He was just there one night. After I left, he resigned his church and, and I made some contact with him, uh, later on and went off another direction.

He shook him. He even told somebody he'd never had such this. I won't say what he said.

Uh, well, maybe I will. He said he never had a man get to him like that. But what he meant was he'd never had the spirit of God get to him like that.

And it shook him. If, and I don't know what his life was like. I never could get near him, but it will affect your life.

Um, let me give you another quick story because this is the end of our little series on this. As far as I know, there was another pastor carrying on an affair in a church. And this was a friend of mine carrying on an affair with a church.

And this has such a tragic consequences. Ended up with him and his wife getting divorced. Uh, or he had an affair with another, uh, gal messed up their marriage, messed up his marriage, ended up probably, I don't know, maybe it was the cause of his wife dying.

Eventually at a young age of 36, the kids, their lives following the same pattern. Just been a mess. Just been a mess.

You tell me it doesn't matter. I'll tell you it does. When God says a bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, he means it.

And if you will go against his standard, you will pay the price. If I go against it, I'll pay the price also. You know what, what, uh, what this is, what we're saying is God has changed today.

But I'd like to say something to you about this. God is unchangeable. You know, once he's stated a principle, he's not going to change it.

You look carefully at scriptures. God's not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent. Hath he said and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken and shall he not make it good? Numbers 23, 19.

What we're doing is we're saying God's changed his mind. And so how, how'd they do it? Well, the, it's just, this is what God means now. No, God meant one man to stay with that woman till they died.

You violate that, it's going to have consequences. Wherein God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath. Hebrews 6, 17.

Notice, he is immutable. He doesn't, we're the ones that changed. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Hebrews 13, 8. Every good gift, every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness. We're variable, neither shadow of turning. You know what, we have the word of God.

If you have a King James Bible, you have the word of God. It hasn't changed. It hasn't changed.

We've changed. And we've changed our Bibles to fit in with our lifestyle. In marriage and divorce, you can get it.

You can follow it out of these other versions. Because they've changed it. It's just like if you're a Mormon or a Jehovah Witness, whatever.

They have to write their own Bibles to fit their doctrines. And that's what they're doing with these other versions. Does God change? No, we do.

You know, the Psalms says, concerning his word, the counsel of the Lord standeth forever at the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Psalms 119, 89 says, forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. That means his word is unchangeable.

And we've been messing with his word just as we've been messing with his law regarding marriage. And if, you know, if he changed one thing, he could change another. But he's not changing.

We're changing. And we're suffering. You know, Christ said many years after the first marriage, he restated the principle of marriage.

He said, unto them, have you not read that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female? And said, for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother? He said, we've been changing. It's time. There's a message that the Spirit of God has for the church today.

And he has it for you and he has it for me. He has it for your church and my church. And the message is, repent.

If there's any changing to be done, God is saying, you need to change your mind, change your ways. He's saying that to us as a body. And when we change, we'll have revival.

When we don't, we'll have apostasy. And that's why we're heading on into apostasy. Divorce, you know, isn't mentioned in the scriptures until many years after God instituted marriage.

What was it? I don't know, some 2,000 years, however long it took to get to Moses there. And God didn't give it a break. Instead, in the Ten Commandments, you know, there's no mention of divorce.

Mentioned other things, but not that. Who's changing? God isn't. We are.

And it's time for us to just fall before the Lord and say, God, and let's just pray right now before we close up. Father, we confess to you our wickedness. We confess to you as a church, as a body of Christ, as

church leaders, as pastors, evangelists, that we have gone away from your word.

Your standard is there. Your foundation is there. But we're trying to change it, Lord.

We're trying to go our own way. I ask you to have mercy upon us. I ask you to forgive us.

I ask that we would repent and change our minds. And if there's one in a position of pastor, or an evangelist, or whatever, they're working, and you have showed them they're wrong in this area, and it's affecting their lives, I pray that you just do a work. Have mercy upon us.

We thank you that you do give us grace. You do give us grace to go on. When we violated your Scriptures and you showed us, then we go on by your grace.

Thank you, Father. I ask you to bless. I ask you to provide the means.

I ask you to provide the wisdom for those that your word is spoken to, that they could use your word to bring healing in Jesus' name. Well, we're going to shut off now. Until next time, I'm continuing to pray that the Lord will bless you, and that we'll be in a position to receive his blessing.

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