

▼ **What God Has Joined - Part 4**

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- **Read the Passage: Matthew 19:1-12**
- ▶ **Understand the historical context and the relevant scriptures.**
- ▶ **Understand precisely both the question and Jesus' response.**
- ▼ **Understand God's intention for marriage and view of divorce.**
 - ▼ What is the purpose of human beings?
 - Humans were made in God's image - thus they (male and female together) represent him to the created world.
 - ▼ What is the purpose of sex?
 - God created sex as an expression of love in the context of marriage between a husband and a wife and as a means of producing children.
 - ▼ What is the purpose of marriage?
 - Jesus refers the Pharisees back to God's original plan for marriage - Gen 2:18-25
 - God created marriage to join a man and a woman for companionship and to provide a stable, loving, safe context for raising a family.
 - Marriage illustrates the relationship between Jesus and the Church: Eph 5:21-33
 - ▼ The husband and wife make the following commitments to each other:
 - Faithfulness
 - Food, Clothing, Marital rights (love, sex, etc.) - Exodus 21:7-11
 - These commitments are the basis for Jewish and Christian (Ephesians 5:28-29) marriage vows.
 - Other passages: Deut 20:1-9; Deut 24:5; 1Peter 3:1-8
 - ▼ How should a husband and wife treat each other?
 - Be faithful to their marriage vows - caring for and protecting each other.
 - They should love each other sacrificially.
 - ▼ Should everyone be married?
 - No! - You don't need to be married to live a fulfilled life in God's Kingdom.
 - Some people are called to celibacy.
 - Jesus honored singleness in a way that previous teachers hadn't.

▼ How many grounds for divorce apply today?

▼ Biblical grounds for divorce: breaking marriage vows.

- Neglect (food, clothing, sex) - Exodus 21:7-11; 1Cor 7:3-5, 32-34
- Adultery (Deut 24:1-4), Desertion (1Cor 7)
- Hardness of heart: abuse, desertion, etc.
- Another passage that sheds light on divorce: Malachi 2:10-16 (ESV)

▼ What does the porneia exception mean today?

- The word porneia (πορνεία) in Matthew 19:1-12 means adultery.

▼ What does Paul's exception mean today?

- Paul told the Corinthian believers not to separate except for one condition mentioned in 1Cor 7:15.
- Separation was the Greco-Roman method of divorce. Either the owner of the house (usually the husband) initiated divorce by kicking the spouse out of the home or the non-owner of the house (usually the wife) initiated the divorce by leaving the home.
- Paul's exceptions amounted to desertion by a non-believer (direct application) or desertion by a non-repentant believer (presumably requiring excommunication).

▼ When is remarriage allowed today?

- Remarriage is allowed after any valid divorce.

▼ How much does the NT agree with the OT and first-century Judaism?

- The New Testament was written for 1st century readers.
- Scripture should be read through the filters of the language and culture to which it was first addressed.
- The morals and laws of Scripture should be compared with those of the cultures for which Scripture was written.
- The primary meaning of Scripture is the plain sense, as it would be understood by an ordinary person in the culture for which it was written.

▼ What is the main message of the NT about divorce?

- Divorce Should Be Avoided and Restricted to Biblical Grounds.

▼ **Discussion / Reflection Questions:**

- How has your understanding of sex, singleness, marriage, and divorce been affected by this series?
- How can we better reflect Jesus' affirmation of singleness?
- How can we promote godly marriages and avoid divorce?