

To Tie The Knot or Not

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2,3,4 Larry: GFE. Women's Xmas. Blank.
- B. Slide5 Prayer Night: Next Sun. Dec.4th. 6:30-7:30pm. Agape rm.
- C. Slide6-9 Also, Thanksgiving Eve pics our on our CM/FB. TY Mark Ritter.

II. Intro: To Tie The Knot or Not

- A. The questions here were (and still are) *a political, religious, experiential, physical, moral & ethical...Hot Potato.*
 - 1. Divorce & Remarriage remain controversial & complex.
 - a) As many couples unfortunately are married *for better or for worse*, but *not for long*.
 - 2. It is also an *emotional* topic, as it concerns many people's lives & therefore requires great sensitivity.
- B. This was also a *dangerous question*...as this was *Herod Antipas'* region (who divorced his wife to marry his brother's wife). Remember *John the Baptist* lost his head over this topic in this region.
- C. The dilemma was that this put Jesus between rock & a hard place. Or at least, that's what the Pharisees thought. A yes or no & He'd be in trouble.
 - 1. Condemn divorce and risk John's same fate.
 - 2. Condone divorce and lose the confidence of devout people.

III. TO TIE THE KNOT OR NOT (1-12)

- A. Slide10 UNTYING THE KNOT (1-3)
- B. Slide11 2 Schools of rabbinical thought in Jesus' day:
 - 1. Rabbi Shammai (50bc-30ad) – Very Strict. Only if a man married a woman & then found out she wasn't a virgin.
 - 2. Rabbi Hillel (100bc-10ad) – Very Liberal. One of Hillel's followers said a man could divorce his wife *simply if* he found another woman more attractive.
 - a) The liberal view was the more popular. Divorce was tragically even more common then than today.

- b) **Slide12** The issue was the **interpretation** of one phrase *some uncleanness* in Deut. 24:1 *When a man takes a wife & marries her, & it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, & sends her out of his house.*

C. **Slide13 TYING THE KNOT** (4-6)

- D. (4) He challenges their knowledge of the Law, *Have you not read?*

1. Jesus takes away any possibility of **myth** or **fable** out of the creation account, & sets His seal of **truth** upon it. (**read** vs.4)

- E. (3-5) Jesus ignored the **current debates** & focused attention on **the Word of God**...so He took them to **Moses**.

1. **Slide14a** Back to the very building blocks to establish an **endearing & enduring** marriage. - God made **marriage** & He has the right to make the **rules**.

- a) **Slide14b** Gen.2:24,25 gives 4 instructions for marriage (Severance, Permanence, Unity & Intimacy). *Therefore a man shall leave (severance) his father and mother and be joined (permanence) to his wife, and they shall become one flesh (unity). And they were both naked, the man and his wife (intimacy), and were not ashamed.*

2. The **Pharisees**, who wanted to **argue religion not discover truth**, considered **Moses** their highest authority.
3. **Slide14c** **They** were more concerned for **the grounds for divorce**; **Jesus** was more concerned about **the principles of marriage**.
4. Jesus then explained the reason for this **concession**.
5. Divorce was **already taking place** among the Israelites.
6. Moses put **limitations** on it requiring **a certificate of divorce** to be made out, indicating the reasons for it.
 - a) This required **hiring a scribe** & going through a **legal procedure**.
 - b) This thus **protected the wife** by restraining the husband from impulsively divorcing her. **Because she would become a social outcast, no man could marry her, & she would be left defenseless & destitute.** [even our liberal state of CA instituted a 6 month **Cooling Off Period**]
7. Moses was not **encouraging divorce** but seeking to **discourage** it.

8. **However** this was not **the divine plan**.

a) The marriage of one man to one woman for life is the foundation of stable society.

F. **Slide15a Ps: Heterosexual divorce** has done more to **destroy** marriage **than all the gay activists** in the world put together.

1. How about having a marriage that glorifies God. Have a marriage that rocks all other earthly relationship. Have a marriage that others want. Have a marriage where you invest 100% of yourself, even if your spouse wont. Display a marriage where your children say, *I want that for my life when I grow up.*

G. **Slide15b (6) Jesus adds His commentary to this.** Again, He gives God's *intention*, that marriage should be a permanent commitment.

1. He spoke in these terms to *discourage* all divorce in principle, **but** not to *prohibit* divorce in every circumstance.

H. (7) **Command?** **no**, Permit.

I. (8b) There was no provision in Paradise for **Adam's** putting away of **Eve**.

J. (9) Nations make whatever Law they dare, **but** they cannot alter the facts...**God created the Sanctity of Sex, protects it, & punishes** when His law is violated.

1. Heb.13:4 *Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

K. **Note:** God's original Law of marriage left no room for Divorce, **but** that Law was laid down *before man sinned*.

L. **Slide16a We know God the Father Hates Divorce.**

1. Mal.2:16 *For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence, Says the LORD of hosts.*

a) Of course He does. **Who doesn't?** It destroys families, individuals, & children no matter their age.

b) Divorcees hate the embarrassment. They hate the stigma. They hate feeling that they failed the marriage. They hate the loneliness. They hate putting their friends or family members in the place of having to choose sides.

(1) But it **doesn't** say, *God hates the divorced*.

M. **Slide16b Yet, Jesus' heavenly Father got Divorced.**

1. Jer.3:8 *Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce.* Also Isaiah 50.
- N. Slide16c Jesus earthly father (Joseph) thought of getting a divorce.
1. Mt.1:19 *Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away (apolu'o/divorce) secretly.*
- O. Slide16d Jesus showed great love & gave salvation to a 5 time divorced woman. Jn.4:18
1. By bringing these up, I am not giving *liberty* to divorce...just seeking its *balance*.
- P. Slide16e **Happy marriages are not Accidents.** They are a result of commitment, love, mutual understanding, sacrifice, death to self & selfishness, & hard work.
- Q. (8,9) Marital unfaithfulness.
1. **The exception clause.** Which is a justifiable ground for divorce.
 2. **Jesus** (and Moses before Him) **recognized that human sinfulness can irrevocably damage a marriage.**
 - a) Jesus adds this, because in OT time, adultery **wasn't** grounds for divorce...it was grounds for getting **STONED TO DEATH!**
 3. **Jesus' statement doesn't make it necessary or require it, but simply permits it.**
 - a) Certainly there can be *forgiveness, patient healing & a restoration* of the broken relationship. [This would be a Christian's 1st approach to the situation]
 4. Divorce is always a **tragedy** & we will always want to look for **forgiveness & reconciliation** even when *adultery* has taken place.
- R. **Your marriage isn't what you expected because you are a sinner married to a sinner and you both live in a fallen world.** The good news is that there is **sufficient grace** to bring your marriage **back to life.** Paul Tripp
- S. Slide17 **NEVER TYING THE KNOT** (10-12)
- T. They had come to look at tying-the-knot as tying a Slip-knot.
- U. **It is better not to marry** - Isn't this the **opposite** of Gen. 2:18 *And the LORD God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.*

- V. **Eunuch** - men who cannot reproduce due to a physical defect. **Or by castration, whether intentional or accidental.**
- W. In 1 Cor.7:1-10 Paul's context in this chapter leans actually to **celibacy** more than **marriage**. **Yet**, in the midst of his discourse on celibacy he gives **extraordinary advice to married couples**. [See transition in vs.10 **Now to the married**]
1. God is not **against** intimacy...He is **for marriage** for some & **for celibacy** for others.
 2. **Slide18a Singleness is an issue for everyone**. We are all single at some time.
 - a) **Some are...Single for all seasons** (men/women who **never** marry). **Single for a season** (adults who **will be** married). **Single again** (separated, divorced, widowed).
 - b) **Myth: God's best is marriage...singleness is second best.** (**Nope:** vs.8, 35)
 - c) **Slide18b Singleness is important for some seasons & some reasons.**
 3. (7) **Gift** – gracious gift, a gift given out of grace.
 - a) **Both singleness & marriage take a real gift to be able to carry out.**
- X. **It's better to marry if...**we are willing to spend the rest of our days **giving** more than **receiving**.
1. Living successfully w/a spouse takes lots of time & **practice, practice, practice**. **Like Ice skaters** who spend 8 hours a day in the rink w/their partners, falling and helping each other up & landing hard on the ice again.

IV. **Slide19a BLESSING CHILDREN (13-15)**

- A. (13) **Put His hands on them & pray** - a symbol of prayer & blessing. [**baby dedication**]
- B. (14) These words are the **simplest** which ever fell from the lips of our Lord. **Yet**, maybe the most **lofty**.
- C. Mark helps us in identifying Jesus **temper** at the moment He uttered these words.
 1. **Jesus was greatly displeased** – only time NT. Mk.10:14 **Greatly displeased**, moved w/indignation.
 - a) His voice was touched w/**tenderness**, **but** vibrated w/**thunder**.
 - b) The things that **grieve** us & make us **indignant** reveal much about the kind of people we are. **And** what Jesus said & did here, tells us volumes about Him.

c) In the midst of His hot anger came one of the most gentle & beautiful things that He ever said about child life.

D. **Fathers** were bringing their children to Jesus [I'm sure mothers might have been also] **but**, the Greek pronouns prove that they were **Men** who brought their children. (see Mrk.10:13 parents)

1. In the Hebrew Law it was **the Father's** who were responsible for the religious training of the children.

E. **Lk.18:15** tells us they were **Infants** (from womb to weened).

1. **Touch them** – OT custom dating back to the patriarch **Jacob** laid his hands upon the heads of his kids Ephraim & Manasseh, and **blessed them**.

a) This was all very *proper, traditional, & wonderful*...**then** it all **stopped**... people were chasing them away.

F. **Don't forbid them** - seems to say, *they will come if you don't get in the way*.

1. It seems our responsibility is on **getting things out of their way**. Whatever hinders **their** coming.

2. **If there is a text on child evangelism...Here it is.**

3. **Children can come to Christ early on. Will they deepen in their understanding & devotion later? Sure. Pray for them. Cultivate** their spiritual awareness & sensitivity.

G. **Slide19b** *At CM we have loosened our policy in bringing children into the sanctuary. That said, please know **our goal** with our children is **for them to come to Jesus**. And we think this is best served **3 ways**:

1. **At their own level of development.** A 2 year old, is at **a different maturity level** than a 5th grader, than an adult.

2. **At their own level of understanding.** Children's church accommodates the unique educational needs of children. Thus **targeted teaching** for kids helps accommodate these differences.

3. **At their own reasonable length of time** (break up class time)

H. **For such is the Kingdom of heaven** - welcome God's **rule & authority** into your heart & life. Have... **a helpless dependence** on Jesus.

1. Children of the kingdom must enter it helpless, ones for whom everything must be done.
 - a) Like old hymn says, ***Nothing** in my hand I bring, Simply to the cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress, **Helpless**, look to Thee for grace.*
2. Wiersbe said, **We** tell children to behave like adults, but **Jesus** tells the adults to model themselves after the children.