

The Faithful Spouse
Sermon Based Discussion (September 30, 2012)
Sermon Series: Sermon on the Mount

WARM UP

1. What are some common reasons people give for divorce today? Which of these seem reasonable or unreasonable to you?

People seem to accept, even expect, divorce to happen to many marriages these days. The reasons people give for divorce may seem more or less reasonable. But if Jesus is God, then Jesus knows best how we should look at divorce and, more importantly, how we should look at marriage. In this session, we'll consider Jesus' brief teaching on divorce in Matthew chapters 5 and 19.

INTO THE BIBLE (Read Matthew 5:31-32; 19:1-12)

2. Looking back over chapter 5, who does Jesus speak to as the intended target?

3. What is Jesus' basic teaching on divorce here? (You can also see Matthew 19:1-12)

UNDERSTANDING

In the message, Enoch drew out two implications about marriage from this passage. First, the oneness of marriage is so profound that divorce doesn't end it.

4. Based upon this implication, why does Jesus say having a divorce leads one to commit adultery?

The second implication about marriage was this: that having sex with someone who is not your spouse does tear away at the oneness of marriage, even if that spouse is still technically married.

5. Based upon this, why is sexual immorality a possible ground for divorce?

DIFFERENCE

6. How do modern people view the biblical position on divorce?

7. Enoch mentioned the micro-trend of a "starter marriage" (similar to a starter home or starter car or starter job). How would you feel to be called a "starter spouse"?

APPLICATION

In this passage, Jesus commands spouses to cultivate a lifelong, internal faithfulness, not merely a temporary, external one.

8. Consider the reasons people give for divorce today. How should a disciple of Jesus respond to such reasons?

9. Whom do you know that has been affected by divorce? Share appropriately, of course. How can we uphold God's standard of marriage while extending grace to one another?

10. Pray for us to draw closer to God during difficult times such as divorce. Pray that we repent of our sins in marriage, and find healing for our wounds. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict us about sins in divorce. Ask the Holy Spirit to give us compassion towards one another.

FOR REFLECTION

"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.'" (Matthew 19:4b-6, ESV)