



What God Has (And Has Not) Joined Together (2)

Husband and Wife for Life

Matthew 19:1-12

Our 2026
Theme

Introduction

- Last week, we introduced our 2026 theme, What God Has (and has not) Joined Together
- This theme is based on **Matthew 19:6**.
- We will be examining some doctrines, specifically things that God has joined together (they complement each other) while many in the world reject or redefine their union.
- Our lesson last week emphasized the importance of “sound doctrine” (healthy teaching).
- Today, we begin with the subject of our text.

Matthew 19:1-12 - Introduction

- We live in a time when divorce is far too common. The marriage covenant is taken too lightly by too many.
- But what does God's word say about the permanence of marriage?
- What does His word say about divorce and who can marry again?
- Our text, **Matthew 19:1-12**, addresses this.
- And while it is unpopular and unpleasant, that does not change His will.

Matthew 19:1-12 – The text

- **19:1-2** - Jesus is in the midst of His ministry. He is teaching, traveling and healing.
- The Pharisees come to test Him.
- **19:3**, "*Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?*"

Matthew 19:1-12 – The text

- **19:3**, "*Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?*"
- Possibly seeking clarification from
Deuteronomy 24:1-4
- Two schools of thought:
 - Rabbi Shammai (50BC-30AD) – a conservative view – divorce only for sexual impurity (unfaithfulness)
 - Rabbi Hillel (???-~10 AD) – advocated divorce for any reason if one's wife displeased him. Progressive and popular view.

Matthew 19:1-12 – The text

- **19:3**, “*Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?*”
- BUT, they were testing Him. **Deuteronomy 24:1-4**
- Typically, this implied ulterior motives
 - Matthew 15:1-2** – washing hands
 - 16:1-2** – a sign from heaven
 - 22:15ff** – pay taxes
 - 22:35** – greatest commandment

Matthew 19:1-12 – The text

- **19:4**, "Have you not read...?"
- Jesus answers them.
The plain answer is NO!
- But he teaches that with reasoning:
- **Genesis 1:26-27**, God made them in the beginning, male and female. Also **Gen. 5:1-2**
- **Genesis 2:24**, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife.
They become one flesh.
 - Marriage was in God's plan from the beginning.
 - NOTE: Culture determines how one marries

Matthew 19:1-12 – The text

- **19:4-6**, "Have you not read...?"
- Jesus answers them. NO!
- **19:6**, *Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.*
- God intends that a marriage be for life! In marriage you enter into a covenant with God.
- When man and woman who HAVE THE RIGHT to do so (Some do NOT! E.g., Herod – **Matthew 14:4**, homosexuals, our text, etc.), God joins them together
- Man has no right to separate what God has joined together.

Matthew 19:1-12 – The text

- **19:7**, Pharisees ask, *Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?*
- Again, this is likely based on **Deuteronomy 24:1-4**
- **19:8**, *Because of the hardness of your hearts, Moses permitted it.*
- NOTE the intent of **Deut. 24:1-4**, it was partly about protecting the woman put away by her husband. It was not intended as a “blank check” for divorce. Another marriage involved being defiled.

Matthew 19:1-12 – The text

- **19:7**, Pharisees ask, *Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?*
- **19:8**, *but from the beginning it was not so!*
Jesus is CLEAR this was not in God's purpose!
NOTE: *Beginning* is the same word as **vs. 4**

Matthew 19:1-12 – The text

- **19:9**, *And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.*
- Jesus declares:
 - 1) Divorce is ONLY recognized by God if one has been unfaithful by committing fornication
 - 2) To divorce for any OTHER reason and marry again, THEY are in an adulterous relationship
 - 3) If one is divorced (put away) because he is guilty of fornication, he has no right to remarry.
 - 4) Only the innocent party can marry again without sin!

Matthew 19:1-12 – The text

- **19:9**, *And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.*

- Other texts to consider:

Matthew 5:31-32

Mark 10:11-12 (parallel, but both parties)

Luke 16:18 – different occasion, same message

Romans 7:1-3 – only death ends the covenant

Making application

- First, this passage is about marriage.
- God intended that marriage be for life!
 - Even if it is not ideal.
 - Are we willing to work to make it work?
- Healthy marriages are the foundation of a good society.
- Marriage is the foundation of a new home
- **Hebrews 13:4**
- It is NOT something to be entered into lightly!
That is why we must carefully choose our mate.

Making application

- Second, God hates divorce!
- **Malachi 2:13-16**
- Whenever there is divorce sin is ALWAYS involved! Often times BOTH parties bear guilt!
- Even if one scripturally divorces their spouse, it is because of serious sin! Someone has broken covenant with God and spouse.
- NOTE: The sin Jesus addressed was divorce!
- It is NOT ok to divorce “as long as I don’t marry again!”
- Marrying another complicates resolving their sins.

Cf. 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 (cf. 1 Jn. 2:1)

Making application

- Some argue that Jesus was dealing with LOM.
- In one sense yes, He was. BUT was the LOM really His point? , OR was He addressing the new law?
E.g., “But I say to you...” **Matthew 5:32, 19:9**
- Consider **Deuteronomy 22:22, Leviticus 20:10.** If they were interested in God’s law, BOTH parties would be stoned to death.
- Also, Jesus went back to “the beginning”
(Mk. 10:6)
He establishing God intent under the New Law?
Matthew 5:17-18, Colossians 2:13-14

Making application- **Matthew 19:10-12**

- This was about entering the kingdom of heaven
- **19:10**, *His disciples declared, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry."*
- They realized the gravity of His teaching!
If marriage is for life, and you cannot divorce, aren't you better off not being married?
- Not necessarily – **cf. 1 Corinthians 7**. BUT you must UNDERSTAND the commitment!
How much effort are putting into finding/being the right spouse?

Making application- **Matthew 19:10-12**

- This was about entering the kingdom of heaven
- **19:11**, *But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given:*
- Jesus is NOT saying what He taught was optional. His point is: Not all are willing to make the necessary commitment to follow Him!

Will you fully repent? **Acts 2:38**,

2 Corinthians 7:10-11

Cf. Matthew 19:16-26 – the rich, young ruler!

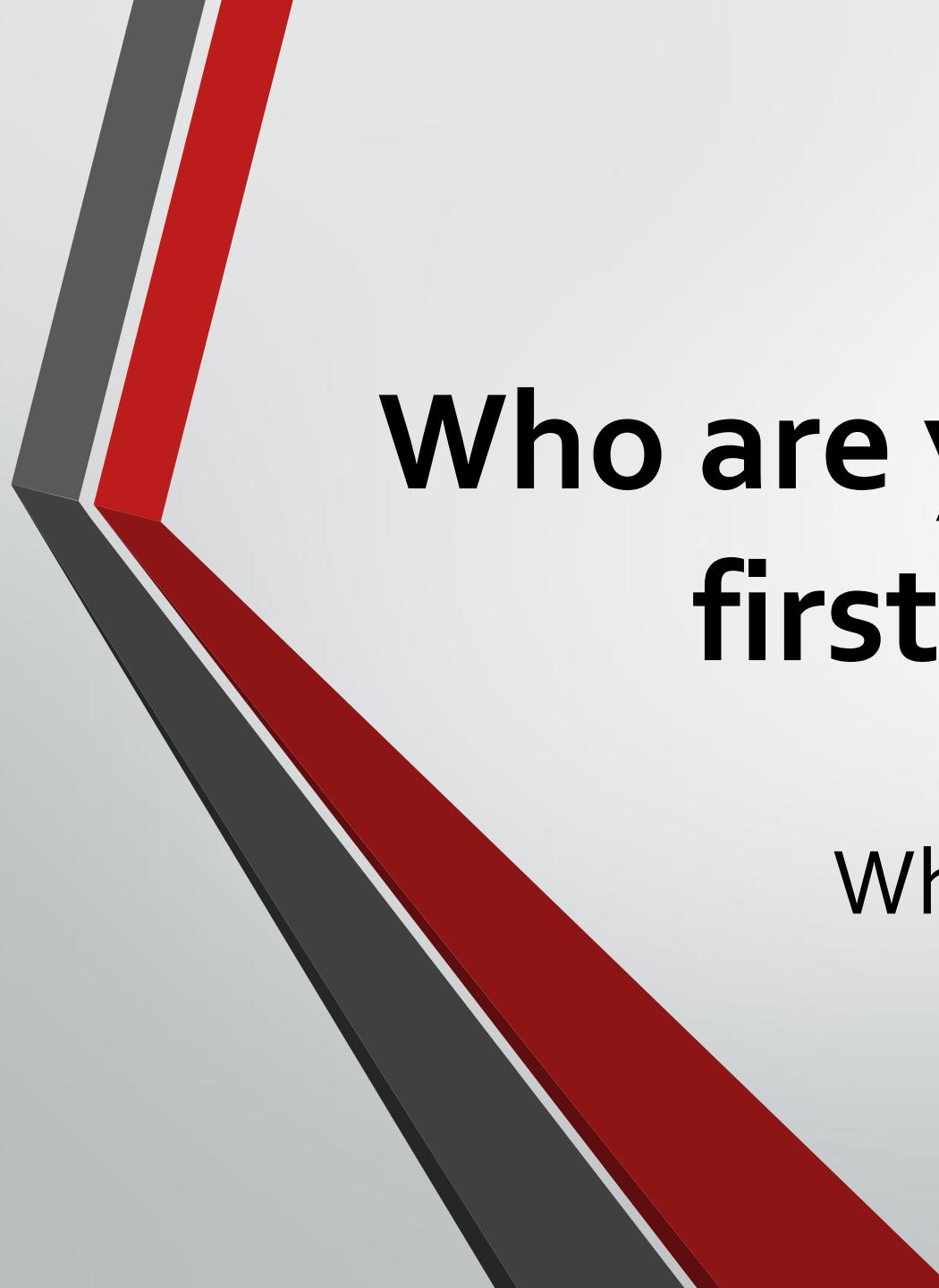
Making application- **Matthew 19:10-12**

- This was about entering the kingdom of heaven
- **19:12, For there are eunuchs...**
- Jesus categorizes 3 different classes of Eunuchs (one unable to have sexual relations)
 - Those born that way – birth defects, etc.
 - Those made (physically) eunuchs
 - Those who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake – do whatever is needed to be faithful to Him –

Cf. Mark 10:29-30, Luke 14:26-27

Concluding thoughts

- These are hard sayings:
 - It is personal and unpopular. It affects families and lives!
 - It is so unpopular many are looking for a way around it! And if you look hard enough you will find someone to validate your desires.
- BUT, if we desire to make Jesus Lord in our lives, we will accept His teachings, even if it means ending an unscriptural relationship.



Who are you willing to put first in your life?

What God has joined together,
let us not separate!



Let us pray!