

# A Word Concerning Divorce And Remarriage

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[ 0 : 00 ] Last week, we're going to just touch on them as we make our way forward here. The Pharisees, Jesus had just been teaching a parable about the love of money, basically, and how we like to hold on to our money.

And he says the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, this is Luke's commentary, basically, heard all of these things and they ridiculed Jesus. How could Jesus, who was himself poor, speak on the issues of money?

Because he doesn't have any. They thought he wasn't qualified to speak on the subject. The Pharisees, they had money. That was part of their theological perspective, that if God blessed you, you would have means, you would have wealth, and if God was not happy with you, then you wouldn't.

And so that's kind of how they thought of things. And so they were lovers of money, and they scoffed at Jesus, made fun of him, really. And Jesus said to them, you are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts.

The Pharisees were good at wanting to win the approval of man, looking at outward appearances, but God looks at the heart. Jesus mentions this, and he says, for what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

[ 1 : 18 ] Your love of money, and your thinking about how money works, is an abomination in God's sight. The law and the prophets were until John, so that dispensation came until John the Baptist.

And since then, the good news of the kingdom of God is preached. This good news that the kingdom of God is at hand, that Jesus is right there in front of them, offering them the kingdom of God.

And they were in the process of rejecting that good news, and everyone forces his way into it. This was Jesus' way of saying, all these people are crowding in, all of these sinners and tax collectors and people who weren't worthy, people who all the Pharisees looked down on and said, how can you even spend time with them?

How can you share a meal with them? These were the people who were clamoring to get in, clamoring to be around Jesus and to hear his teaching, but not the Pharisees.

Verse 17, but it's easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the law to become void. And we talked about people eating their grandmothers last week.

[ 2 : 27 ] If you weren't here last week, you'll have to go back and catch that. I believe that. And this verse kind of gets thrown in there.

And at first you think, well, why is this here? Because after this verse, he goes on to another story that he wants to tell. But he says, everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery.

Oh, wow. And again, this is Jesus speaking to the Pharisees. We have to keep that in context here. That's the whole point of what he's saying here.

And he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery. And so it's a really plain statement here without any kind of exceptions given.

It's just like if you get divorced and then you get remarried, boom, you're just guilty and it's not good for you. And so what was Jesus doing here? What was he teaching here?

[ 3 : 25 ] And so that's what we're going to get into. I couldn't, at least for me, at least in this season that we're in right now, I couldn't just read this verse and move on. And there are some preachers that would and some commentaries that just kind of, you know, hit the verse and boom.

And here's what Jesus said and then let's get on to the next story. And we're not going to do that, at least this time. And we're going to delve into it and hit this subject head on.

And so we're going to get a little wonky today. How many of you, you ever like getting a little wonky? That means we're going to dig into the weeds a little bit.

This is something that you may not get very often on a Sunday morning in a typical Sunday morning church service. We're just going to kind of open up the Bible and look at some different passages and then come to a conclusion.

And I was talking to my wife this week about this particular subject. I'm 62 years old now and I'm just now, I'm just now to the point where I could probably sit down with someone and explain to them why I believe what I believe about this particular subject.

[ 4 : 37 ] And what I would find is a clear and satisfactory way. In other words, when I've been able to sit down and talk with people about this subject before in the past, I would have an explanation.

But inside, I was never really fully satisfied that I explained it well. And maybe I will today. I don't know. I hope I will. But let's do that today and get a little wonky.

This is another interesting thing because here we are in Palm Sunday and my sermon topic today is divorce. And it's like, wow, he really misses the calendar here. Wait till next Sunday when we get to Easter and we're not talking about, actually resurrection is part of the next story.

But we're talking, anyway, if you read ahead, you'll see what we're talking about next Sunday. So, and my goal in preaching through the Gospel of Luke was that by the time we got to Easter 2026, that I would be at the portion of the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday.

I missed it. That's okay. That's okay. We're going to still make our way through this and get there. So, what is going on in this passage?

[ 5 : 52 ] Because this passage does not include what is famously known as the exception clause. We'll talk about what that means in a moment. I'll show you what that is in a moment. And so, what's he doing here?

And what's this subject about? If people are getting divorced and then remarried, and if they're guilty of committing adultery, are they living basically the rest of their life in perpetual adultery? Because that almost sounds like what Jesus is saying there. It is not, but let's take a look at our notes. So, let's fill in some of this.

Religion prefers to talk about the exceptions which permit divorce. And so, the Pharisees were fascinated with the exceptions, with the loopholes.

We talked about this last week. And so, when they had an opportunity to talk to Jesus, to ask Jesus about this, this is what they did. And so, as per usual, religion wants to find out where can I get around it?

[ 6 : 58 ] Where is the loophole? What can I do to get around this very clear command of God about any given subject? But what we find in Jesus throughout the Gospels, not just here in Luke, but throughout the Gospels, is that Jesus insisted on stressing the nature of marriage.

And that's key. And we have to start there, that we have to understand what is the nature of marriage. And so, to go there, we go all the way back to Genesis chapter 2, where we see that God is the one who is the originator, the creator of this thing called marriage.

He's the one, it's his idea. Whether you're a Christian or not, or whether you're any other religion, it doesn't matter where you are in this world. The idea of marriage comes all the way back from Genesis chapter 2.

For this reason, the Lord taught, a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined. That is a key word that we're going to come back to, that a husband and wife would be joined together. Let me ask you a question, and this is where it might get tricky if there are young ones in the room. But what does it mean when a husband and wife are joined together? What are we talking about here?

[ 8 : 23 ] What's the three-letter word that begins with S and ends with X? And that's what we're talking about here, okay? That's what he's referencing. And they shall become one flesh.

So those ideas go all the way back to the beginning, all the way back to creation, when God came up with the idea of marriage and what happens between a husband and wife.

Now, we're going to fast forward all the way to what Paul taught in 1 Corinthians chapter 6. In 1 Corinthians chapter 6, he says this, and it gets a little dicey here too, okay?

You guys okay with getting a little dicey? Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? The idea of membership in the body of Christ comes from this idea that there's hands, there's arms, there's legs, there's organs, there's eyes and ears.

We have different parts of the body or different members of the body. And you are joined, if you will, into the body of Christ in this way. Shall I then take the members of Christ, the parts of your body that are joined to Christ, and make them members of a prostitute?

[ 9 : 44 ] Shall I join them together? Make them members of a prostitute? And, of course, the answer there is, as a believer, never, never, no, don't do that.

Don't go there. Or do you not know? And this is Paul, and sometimes kind of like Jesus, was going to ask this question. Don't you guys know this? Don't you know that he who has joined, same idea as in the Hebrew Genesis chapter 2, the idea of joining.

So we're talking about a relation, a sexual relationship with, that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her. For as it is written, the two will become one flesh.

So let me ask you a question. Again, this is delicate stuff, and it's like, how do I say this out loud? When anyone has sex with another person, what happens between them?

They become one flesh. That is the nature of the sexual relationship between man and woman. Any kind of sexual relationship outside of marriage.

[ 11 : 02 ] Inside of marriage, that's the design of marriage, that husband and wife join together and become one flesh. But outside of marriage, whether it's sexual immorality, whether it's adultery, whatever kind of sexual relationship that you have.

Can I say this anymore clearly? That you can have that there's something unique that happens in that dynamic.

That the two become one flesh. That's how God created us. And so that is the nature of marriage. And we can't get around that. You cannot change that. You cannot talk it away. You cannot make it sound any less than that.

It's just what it is. So then when you come back to the context of these statements, and this is the premise that we're going on here.

[ 12 : 10 ] Don't miss this. It's important to consider the context of these statements that Jesus is making in the Gospels about divorce and remarriage. And Luke, in our passage, Luke chapter 16, verse 18, he says that everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery.

Because that's just the nature of the marriage relationship. That's just the nature of the sexual relationship. That dynamic is always.

And I would say that whether the divorce is justified or not, it's still just the nature of how marriage works.

Oh, and here's where the pushback comes in. Well, even if there's an exception, well, let's talk about that. And it goes back to, again, Jesus is addressing in these passages this idea that we looked at last week.

So this fill-in-the-blank is from last week. These Pharisees, why were they scoffing? Why were they ridiculing Jesus? Because they often dodged God's law through their loopholes while at the same time proclaiming their faithfulness to it.

[ 13 : 27 ] So they're looking for loopholes. They're looking for ways around it. They're looking for exceptions, exception clauses. That's their whole motive. And then you come into a place like the Sermon on the Mount.

Now, what's interesting is that Luke and Mark, when Jesus speaks of divorce and remarriage in Luke and Mark, he does not provide an exception clause of any kind.

It's not addressed in the Gospel of John at all. The subject of divorce and remarriage is not addressed in John, Gospel of John, at all. But in Matthew, there are two different passages, and we're going to look at both of them, Matthew 5 and Matthew 19.

In Matthew 5, the context is the Sermon on the Mount. And so we have to remember that as we're reading these verses. We can't just pull these verses out of the context in which they are in and look at them separately and say, this stands on its own.

No, we have to keep them in their context and understand what is it that Jesus is trying to do here. And remember that Jesus is always wanting to refer back to the nature of marriage.

[ 14 : 33 ] That's his whole purpose. What is the nature of marriage? We have to remember that as he speaks to these things. It was also said, Matthew 5, 31, this is a pattern here in chapter 5 of the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus talks about, you've heard this, well, let me tell you this is how it really is.

You've heard it taught this way. Let me tell you how it is really. And in every instance, Jesus is doubling down.

In every instance, Jesus is raising the bar. Okay? You've heard it taught this way. I'm telling you it's even harder. Okay? So this is what he's doing.

We'll see that later on. It was also said, whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce. Now, what is that about? That's actually coming out of Deuteronomy.

We're going to look at that verse here in a little bit, but we're going to keep going here in Matthew 5, verse 32. So the idea of if you're going to get a divorce, you've got to give a certificate of divorce.

[15:40] This was for the protection of women. Okay? In that culture, in that Old Testament coming into New Testament culture, it was for the protection of women. It was so that men couldn't just throw their wives away without any assistance, without any help.

They had to write them a certificate of divorce so then she would be free to go on with her life.

Okay? Without that protection of that certificate, of that letter, then she wouldn't be able to move on with her life, if you will.

Okay? But I say to you, Jesus said, you've heard it said that this is how it works. If you're going to get divorced, write a certificate of divorce. But I say to you, here's the doubling down, that everyone who divorces his wife, here's the exception clause highlighted in yellow here, except on the grounds of immorality, sexual immorality.

And I have the word except there in parentheses. And I'll explain that in just a moment. Okay? That everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery.

And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. So basically, Jesus is saying the same thing that he says in Luke chapter 16, but he throws in this little caveat, except for.

[16:55] And I would say, well, wait a minute. Is that how that should be understood? Because when you look at the Greek construction of this phrase, the word except is just a general word for a negative.

It just means something that's a no, a not, a can't. That's what the word means. So that another way to properly understand this passage would be to change the word from except to even.

In other words, not even on the grounds of sexual immorality. Remember the context that Jesus is doubling down, that Jesus is raising the bar, making it seem even more difficult.

And in their context, there were two points of view, two schools of rabbinical eyes. One was the Shammai. One was, I forget the other guy's name. And these two rabbinical schools, one taught, nope, there's only one reason why you can get divorced, and it's adultery.

And the other school of thought said, nah, you can, if you don't like her, if you found someone who's more attractive, if she burns your toast in the morning, you can write her a certificate of divorce and send her on her way.

[18:21] And some of you guys are like, hmm. Where is this school located at? Where can I check that out? Don't, guys, don't even joke about it.

It's not even funny. Okay? And so the question becomes, should it be even or should it be except? Should this be an exception clause or should this be a doubling down?

I want to tell you it really doesn't make much difference. Whichever side you want to choose here, I would choose on the side of going with the context and say even. But even if you say, no, no, it seems like the translations go this way and that's.

But let's remember here the context. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is raising the bar on our understanding of the law. So he's saying, you say this is a sin.

Let me tell you how much more of a sin it really is. And it gets tougher. It gets harder. What's he doing here?

[19:31] What's his purpose in this portion of his teaching? Let's take a look at the second passage. This is found in Matthew chapter 19 where the Pharisees are coming to Jesus.

Let's take a look at this. The Pharisees came up to Jesus and tested him. So they're wanting Jesus to choose a side here. Are you at the side that says adultery only?

Or are you at the side that says she burns the toast, she's gone? Okay, which side, Jesus, are you on? I want you to notice before we even read this how Jesus doesn't answer their question.

He's not interested in answering their question. He's interested in exposing their hypocrisy. That's what he wants to do. Okay? And he's interested in emphasizing the nature of marriage.

That's what he does in the Gospels. He always goes back to just talking about, Hey guys, did you forget what marriage is? Let me tell you. Let me remind you what marriage is.

[ 20 : 42 ] So is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause? Is it just adultery? Or can I do it if I find someone better? Or I don't like the way that she dresses?

Or I don't like the way that she cooks? Or, you know, for any cause. And this goes back to Deuteronomy 24. And this is what causes some of the confusion.

Why there is two camps, if you will. Two points of view here. So in Deuteronomy 24, on the subject of divorce and remarriage. When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes, because he has found some indecency in her.

And that word indecency then is like, Okay, what does that mean? And it's really kind of ambiguous. It's kind of left open to interpretation.

Does it just mean something immoral? Or can it be some other sort of infraction? And thus you have two schools of thought about how to interpret that.

[ 21 : 49 ] And he writes her a certificate of divorce. Now what's interesting is this idea of certificate of divorce in the Old Testament law doesn't originate with the Old Testament law.

It just pops up there as if this is something that occurs when a divorce happens. There's a certificate of divorce. And so theologians and Bible scholars and their guys, they say that Israel, while they were in captivity in Egypt, that's where they picked up the practice of writing a certificate of divorce. Hey, God intended divorce that man and husband would be married for a lifetime, right? Two people joined together, one flesh. That's God's design. That's it.

And then all of a sudden they find themselves in captivity in Egypt. And when they come out of Egypt, you have this kind of language. If you do this divorce thing, make sure you write a certificate of divorce.

Just don't do it willy-nilly. Just don't kick her out of the house. That's not how it's supposed to be. So back to our passage in Matthew 19. So Jesus answered.

[ 23 : 03 ] Notice how he doesn't answer as he answered. Have you not read? And again, when he says this to the Pharisees, who were the most educated people in the room, who had memorized whole portions of the Old Testament, and Jesus says, have you not read?

It was like, you know, the three stooges, you know, sticking his fingers in their eyes. Have you guys not read? And they would have been very upset with just that little phrase right there.

Have you not read? That he who created them from the beginning made them male and female. He goes right back to the nature of marriage. And said, therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast or be joined to his wife's same language, and the two shall become one flesh. So he's actually quoting right from Genesis chapter 2. And he just goes back to, don't you guys understand the nature of marriage is basically what he's saying.

This whole talk of divorce and certificates of divorce and reasons why, nonsense. Just remember what marriage is.

[ 24 : 11 ] Quit looking for the loopholes. This is what it is. And again, Jesus at this point is not interested in answering their question. His point is, let's remember the nature of marriage.

Okay? This is why he came. He came not to give us a bunch of answers to our questions, but he came to point out the law, to say that the law is going to be fulfilled, that every jot and tittle, every little point of the law is going to be fulfilled.

He's going to be the one to fulfill it. And then he's going to take our place and pay the penalty that we couldn't pay on the cross. So there are no longer two, but one flesh. It's what therefore God has joined together.

Let not man separate. You can't. It's not that you can't separate them. It's that you can't separate them. Does that make sense?

It's not that you can't separate them. It's that you can't separate them. You just can't. You can't take two people who were joined together as one flesh and somehow separate them.

[ 25 : 22 ] It's against the nature of marriage. You just can't do that. Now, you can.

I mean, we've done it all over the place, right? In our culture, in every culture, there's a culture of divorce. It's a part of our existence, okay? It's just how it works.

But they said to him, why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away? Okay, Jesus, if this is the case, then why does the law allow for divorce and a certificate of divorce?

And he said to them, because of your hardness of heart, because you're not getting it, because of your sin, because of your selfishness, because of the hardness of your own heart, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives.

But from the beginning, it was not so. Let's go back to the nature of it. Let's go. It's just constantly going back to the nature, going back to the nature of what marriage is.

[ 26 : 26 ] And I say to you, here comes our exception clause. Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery. Is that except, or is that not even for sexual immorality, and marries another?

Again, the word even or except there is just the word not. It's just a negative, generally expressed negative. That's all it is.

So however you take that. And again, I would remind us, we have to go back to the nature of marriage and be reminded again, that if you join with a prostitute, or if you join with anyone other than your wife, before or after marriage, you'll become one flesh.

Because that's the nature of how God created us. He created us that when two people come together in that union, they become one flesh in that union.

And that's why, verse 10, Matthew 19, the disciples said to him, and such is the case with the man and his wife, better not to marry. To which Jesus said, that right.

[ 27 : 45 ] Yes, it is. This marriage thing is difficult. And if you decide to do this, be aware of the commitment that you are making. That is a one flesh commitment.

Two people come together and are joined together in that union, and they become one flesh. And that cannot be separated. So in Matthew 19, what's the context of that?

Matthew 19, Jesus is exposing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in the way that they would manipulate the law to justify their own disobedience. So some of these Pharisees were just looking for the loopholes, like we said earlier.

They're just looking for a way out. I don't like my wife this morning, so I'm looking at that certificate of divorce and wanting to fill in the blanks and give it to her. Jesus, give me some justification.

And Jesus says, no. Don't you guys remember? Don't you guys know? Have you not read how marriage works? What is the nature of this marriage relationship?

[ 28 : 53 ] And again, notice that Jesus doesn't answer the question. He just goes back to the nature of marriage over and over again. And so that's for the four Gospels. Again, it's not mentioned in John, but in Luke and in Mark, he just makes this statement.

If you get divorced and remarried, boom, you're done. It's adultery. And then here in this passage, whether you see it as an exception clause or you see it in the other way, either way, I mean, it's still this, let's go back to the nature of marriage.

Now, what's interesting is you have the four Gospels and then you have the Acts of the Apostles or the Acts of Jesus Christ through the Apostles, the history of the early church there in the book of Acts.

And then your next portion of the New Testament is a bunch of letters written by who? The Apostle Paul. A lot of people refer to Paul as a commentary on what Jesus taught.

Okay? So Jesus taught some things in the Gospels. It's not exhaustive. He doesn't cover every subject. Okay? And then Paul takes what Jesus taught and expounds on it, expands on it, gives it clarity, helps us to understand it better.

[ 30 : 12 ] And in a passage in 1 Corinthians chapter 7, we find exactly that. What looks like, it even reads like, a commentary on what Jesus taught.

So I want to show you that passage of Scripture next in 1 Corinthians chapter 7. And you have this on your notes before we do that. In the Gospels, Jesus didn't cover every contingency on this subject of marriage and divorce.

But in 1 Corinthians 7, Paul fills in the gaps for us that Jesus doesn't address. And as we read through the text, you tell me if you agree with that, that Paul is kind of filling in the gaps, filling in some, where Jesus didn't address it, Paul gives us some further clarity on the subject.

So, with that in mind, 1 Corinthians 7 now. Wait a minute. What are we doing here? Let's go. I've got to go forward, not backward.

1 Corinthians 7, verse 10. To the married, I give this charge. And then, in your English text there, they have this little phrase in the parentheses.

[ 31 : 26 ] Not I, but the Lord. What does Paul mean by that? What is that phrase there for? What Paul is saying, I'm going to write out, I'm addressing in this letter to you, Corinthian church, what Jesus taught.

In other words, Jesus taught this, not me. These are Jesus' words, not Paul's, not my words. Okay? To the married, I give this charge. From Jesus, the wife should not separate from her husband. Separate, not in our modern sense of separation, but the idea of divorcing. Okay? Not divorce from her husband. But if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And the husband should not divorce his wife. We just heard that. We just saw how Jesus, this is what Jesus taught. Now, this next verse, it gets a little interesting.

To the rest I say, I, not the Lord. Oh, what is Paul saying here? Let me tell you what he's not saying. [ 32 : 30 ] He's not saying, okay, well, what Jesus taught, that's gospel. And now here's Paul's opinion. That's not what he's saying. Okay? What he's saying is, Jesus addressed this subject and here's what Jesus said on the subject.

Now, verse 12, I'm going to address this subject. Jesus didn't address this subject. But make no mistake that what Paul is going to teach us is just as inspired, just as much the word of God, just as much the command of God as anything that Jesus said.

This is why I have, this is my little personal, do you guys ever have any hobby horses or pet peeves or anything like that? Can I tell you one of my pet peeves?

One of my pet peeves is red letter Bibles. Anybody know what a red letter Bible is? Red letter Bible means it's the words of Jesus in red. Okay? And that's fine.

I get the highlights of that. But what it can lead to is the idea that what Jesus said in the red letters is important than anything else written in black and white.

[ 33 : 44 ] And it's not. What Jesus said in the red letters is the word of God. Anything else written in black and white is also the word of God and is just as inspired and is just as much the word or the command of God.

Am I clear on that? Okay. Okay. So let's go forward. Now if you have a red letter Bible, it doesn't mean you should go out and throw it away or whatever or not use it. It's fine to have a red letter Bible.

It's just understand that you can't emphasize and say, well, the words of Jesus are somehow more important. It's what happens when you get people out there from a liberal persuasion who will say, well, Jesus never addressed the subject of fill in the blank.

And so because even though it's addressed all over the place in Scripture, but because Jesus never said it in red letters, therefore, we can do however we want. It's like, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Okay. So we got that part clear. And let me explain that a little further. A little later on down in the chapter, verse 25, I'm not concerning the betrothed and other subject. I have no command from the Lord.

[ 34 : 53 ] In other words, Jesus didn't speak on this, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. In other words, what Paul is saying is just as trustworthy as what Jesus taught on the subject.

Paul understood. Paul knew as he was writing these letters that he was writing the very words of God. You got that? Peter says the same thing about Paul's writing.

Chapter 3 of 2 Peter, he says, hey, I know that some of what Paul wrote was tough to understand. Even I struggle with that. One of the apostles struggles with understanding Paul. So if you and I struggle with understanding what Paul wrote, it's okay because Peter, one of the apostles, struggled with it.

It's okay. But he's saying it's just like the other scriptures. In other words, Peter was saying that what Paul wrote was scripture. Remember that.

So back to our passage. To the rest I say, I, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, new context here. So in Corinth, Paul had gone in and preached the gospel and he had people that were getting saved and in that context you had one spouse that was getting saved and one who wasn't.

[ 36 : 03 ] We have that kind of a circumstance today in our world today where one spouse is a Christian, loves the Lord, wants to serve him and one who is not. Okay?

That's the context. That's the situation. So if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever and she consents to live with him, in other words, the wife in this context is the unbeliever.

The husband is saved, the wife is not. But if she consents, if the unbelieving spouse consents to live with him, he should not divorce her.

Okay? There were apparently some people in the context of the church at Corinth who were like, well, hey, I've become a Christian. And my spouse is not a Christian. Can I get a do-over?

Can I just start over and find a Christian husband or a Christian wife? That was kind of the mindset.

Hey, it sounds good. Do-over. Okay? Now, the word consent becomes the key to understanding this passage and what Paul is getting at.

[ 37 : 07 ] Let's take a look at what this word, the Greek word here, means. It means to join in approving. It means a pleasing agreement both ways.

Both sides are in agreement. This is a good thing. Okay? So in our context, it's talking about a mutual desire. The husband and the wife, even though one is believing and one is not, there is a mutual desire, a mutual consent to stay together, a hearty approval to feel gratified with.

It's a two-way street, this consent. Okay? That's a key. And he consents to live. And then if, and he says kind of the opposite here, if it's flipped, if the woman is saved and the husband is not.

If a woman has a husband who's an unbeliever and he consents, again, that two-way street, that good, desirous, I want to stay in this, that both of them should not divorce him.

Verse 14, for if the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, verse 14 is the explanation of why. It's the motive why you want to stay together.

[ 38 : 20 ] Okay? For if the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband, otherwise your children will become unclean as it is they are holy.

Now, it doesn't mean that your kids are automatically saved if you've got a believing spouse in that household. That's not what it's saying. It means that if there is a believing spouse in the household, there is an umbrella of blessing, an umbrella of protection over that household and God views the household as being holy, as being blessed and blessable because there's a believer there.

Either one or both of the spouses are believers there. So that's what's in view here. And that brings us then to verse 15, which becomes very key in our understanding of this.

But if the unbelieving partner separates, let them go. Let it be so.

If the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. So if the unbeliever says, no, I'm not interested.

[ 39 : 37 ] Now, my question is this. What if the partner claims to be a believer but is not living like a believer?

Oh yeah, I'm a Christian. I'm going to keep on having this affair because I love her, but I'm a Christian so you can't divorce me. Paul says, no, no, no, no.

That's not what we're talking about here because that person is living as if they're not a Christian.

Okay. If you're going to live in blatant sin, then you're living as not a Christian.

You might say with your words, yeah, I'm a believer, but you're living your life as if you are not. okay i i i'm a christian but then a week down the road he gets mad and beats her no you're living as if you were not a christian that's that's not what i would call two people giving consent where there's a pleasurable agreement there there is a desire for them to be together so often in a situation where there is this kind of destructive behavior by one spouse the other spouse feels trapped paul's going to address that here but if the unbelieving partner or and this is this is mine and and a theologian by the name of wayne grudem the way that he would kind of expound on the translation if you but if the if the one who is acting as an unbelieving partner if the unbelieving partner whether they claim it or they're living like an unbelieving partner separates let it be so and then he says this in such cases what does that mean does it mean just simply in such cases where you have an unbeliever and a believer or are there other destructive kind of ways that one partner can behave and another believer the other partner is stuck with that unbelieving behavior that kind of behavior and what's interesting is what what what has what has been found and again i'm relying on the research of others and i'm grateful for that because a lot of research would have to be done just to understand this little phrase in such cases because this little phrase these words put together in this way is not found anywhere else in the new testament it's not found anywhere in the old testament the greek translation of the old testament the only place you find it is in other greek literature and in every case where you find that it is talking about circumstances where you have one thing that happens and then in such cases in such circumstances and it's talking about circumstances that are similar

to but not the same as so when you look at it from that context this idea of this in this and otherly other similarly destructive cases i think becomes an acceptable way to understand what paul is getting at here in such cases in such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved other translations is not in bondage to there's a way of escape when you have such destructive cases that are happening in this particular case it's desertion the unbelieving partner doesn't want to be there but in other such cases where there's destructive behavior and the partner is behaving in destructive ways as an unbeliever would behave and Wayne Grudem gives this list

i find this list to be um not a bad list of reasons that would be justifiable for divorce any kind of sexual activity outside the boundaries of marriage that would fit uh pornography pornography is just the word for sexual immorality and that's what pornography is uh that's a justifiable reason someone who is caught up and won't give up on that sin that's what we're that's what we're talking about gambling not the occasional jaunt to the casino i'm talking about someone who is so caught up in their gambling that it's destructive to the rest of their family they can't pay the bills they can't have a place to live they they they can't provide for basic needs of the family because of the gambling the gambling debts and it's so destructive addictions to drugs and alcohol again that that so overtakes a person that it's impacting in a destructive way the relationship and the dynamic and the family and the kids verbal cruelty verbal abuse physical abuse and again we're not we're not talking about just a one-off we're not talking about occasional we're we're talking about when there is consistent abuse that happens over a period of time promises i won't do it again does it again i won't do it again does it again and do we just say so sorry your relationship is permanent your relationship now becomes a testimony to the rest of the unbelieving world about how you endure in a merit no i don't believe that i believe that when the church stands by the one who is abused provides help and resources for the ones who are abused the ones who are caught up on the receiving end of this kind of stuff that that's a greater testimony to the community of how we help those who are hurting those who are enslaved to in bondage to someone who's behaving in such destructive ways why in such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved not in bondage for god has called you to peace god has called you to peace what's the context of that it's the context of a broken marriage relationship that's the context and if you cannot be in peace in a broken marriage because one person is so addicted so abused won't give up on their sinful activity then now there is well rich doesn't god hate divorce kind of says it and i think my response to that would be well i guess yes god hates divorce but he must what love abuse that he who loves the fact that your spouse is sleeping with another person habitually he loves that kind of destructive no god hates divorce in the same way that you hate divorce if you've been through it

[ 48 : 22 ] you know what i'm talking about you hate it because of what it does what it does to your life what it how it just wrecks everything it is destructive it's not that god hates divorce because now he's got a reason to judge you that's not what's in view here and we have to be very careful about how we address this this issue and and these kinds of issues but now on the flip side of this let me also say this the issue that leads to divorce is not sin because if it was sin would any of us be married seriously because we all sin i've hurt my wife i've done mean things to her and vice versa and you have too we live under the same roof we we say and do stupid things and hurtful things sometimes well my marriage is perfect yeah i don't believe you i don't believe you here's the issue the issue is willful unrepentant sin so that even okay you might say well my husband or my wife they had an affair my husband my husband and my wife they hit me or my husband or my wife they went and gambled and okay still the point in that relationship is reconciliation that's still the point that's still the goal that must always be our aim in working through a situation but if the person just continues if the behavior is willful i don't care what the bible says i don't care what you say i'm gonna do it anyway i'm gonna live like this anyway boy that's a threat and how many people as a pastor this is i get disgusted with this people who want to wear the christian label well i'm a man of god or i'm a woman of god and you cannot do this because the bible says that god hates divorce so you're stuck no sir no don't go there the bible does not give you justification to excuse your sin or blame someone else for your sin and leave the other person trapped don't go there talk about belittling the name of christ by claiming to say this is who i am and then living in a way that completely contradicts it so the issue is willful unrepentant sin that's what's at stake in all of this and by the way i'll point this out just as a little rabbit trail this is um i wanted to go back this is also what's at stake in church discipline completely unrelated issue perhaps church discipline is the same thing again if it's just and we'd all be kicked out of the church we'd all be just church disciplined it is willful unrepentant sin that must be disciplined in the local church okay all right move on and then again

more motivation here paul says for how do you know wife whether you will save your husband how do you know husband whether you will save your wife how many testimonies where one person gets saved in the relationship and then maybe even after years maybe sometimes decades the husband or the wife then becomes a christian so that happens first peter five addresses that subject the idea of a wife just living a quiet peaceful life with her husband just serving and then eventually the husband coming to faith in christ you don't know that and so that's the reason to stay in a marriage not one where that's it's broken and and and it's destructive but but where two people are consenting to live together again that desirous consent to live together in that way so final point here remember that the purpose of the law was to prove that every one of us is a sinner i think it's done a pretty good job of that if you're if you're if you look with two open eyes at the old testament law and you see what's required there and it becomes pretty evident pretty quickly okay i'm toast okay so matthew chapter 5 where jesus is really hammering this home uh you've heard it said to those of old that you shall not murder and whoever murders will be liable to judgment we get that right you can't murder someone you can't do that but jesus says uh that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to the same basic judgment how you guys doing how many of you are guilty of murder because you you've ever gotten angry at anybody you never gotten angry at anybody really i have that means i'm guilty of murder oh rich that's cute that's not no it's i am guilty as charged of murder and just in case that wasn't enough whoever insults his brother you ever done that i have how many of you have ever insulted your wife or your husband oh you're done you're toast you ever call someone a fool i have i've yelled that at my tv multiple times i'm subject to hellfire oh man you have heard it that it was said that you should come out of cannot you shall not commit adultery but i say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart i'm toast i'm done my guess is you are too that's the whole point of this so you get to the end of chapter five and and he says it this way this is the summary statement uh you therefore must be perfect how you guys doing how you guys doing i know i'm not doing so good okay that's the whole point of the law the whole point of the law is to point out to you you can't and that's what makes you come running to jesus and you cry out to him and say lord save me i don't have any i don't have any hope so in this context of divorce when it comes to how this church views it how how we approach the subject it's this way that those who are guilty of divorce must also be joined by those who have had an immoral thought or responded in anger i am no better off none of us are any better off than anyone who's ever gone through the pain of divorce so there's no such thing as second-class citizen because you've been divorced there's no there's none of this oh i'm less than or somehow less than because i've i've faced this in my no that's nonsense that's garbage it's not the message of the gospel you've been set free you're no longer enslaved go and live in peace as paul would say first corinthians 7 15 go and be in peace because your lord has accepted you he loves you in the same way that he loves me and anyone else who has ever sinned we're all in the same predicament we're all toast until jesus amen all right let's pray lord thank you so much for your word thank you for how you love us so much we are such broken people that's all of us and and even in our brokenness you come to us knowing that we're broken knowing that we were as romans 5 says we're enemies of you because of our sin because of our rebellion and jesus came and took our place and died for us shed his blood for us what love that is a demonstration of love that you put on display on the cross this thing that we celebrate this friday and we are so grateful because we are so broken and the only hope that we have is not found in trying to be obedient not trying to live up to not trying to fake our way through it let us shed the hypocrisy that we are so prone to walk in and lord just humbly bow before you and receive this good news this gospel message of your grace and your mercy in our lives lord we're so thankful we love you and we praise you we ask all of this today in jesus name amen all right thanks guys have a great week and we'll see you next time  
Thank you.