

Matthew 19 Divorce

Notice the question is “for any reason.” Not case law for divorce. As soon as we approach this text like the Pharisees we have begun wrongly. Jesus is not addressing the question of under what circumstances can a person get divorced. God’s design for marriage is Genesis 1:27 and 2:24. Pharisees assume that a husband could divorce his wife and it was pleasing to God. God is not cheering you on to get a divorce because your wife did not bear you a son. Moses does not command divorce as the Pharisees claim, he permitted it as the lesser of two evils.

5:31-32

Divorce- What is the husband’s responsibility? Hillel-Shammai debate: Deut 24:1 Shammai took “shameful or indecent matter” as adultery and only adultery. School of Hillel took a looser interpretation: indecency and “a matter,” which meant ANY matter. Wife couldn’t divorce her husband, but a husband could divorce his wife for anything that displeased him. Is it to divorce her properly? No. The answer is don’t divorce her at all. You are thinking completely wrongly on your responsibility. If you divorce as you have been doing you do a terrible thing to your wives. What God desires for husbands.

What’s justifiable, what can I get away with?

19:1-12

Jesus is not giving case law. He is speaking to the hard heart that assumes divorce is ok and just wants to know under what circumstances it is “lawful.” He is also speaking to the apathetic heart that says “Oh well, it happens. It’s ok, no big deal.”

Jesus does NOT mention what Paul will address in 1 Cor 7. He doesn’t address where a husband has beaten his wife within an inch of her life, or a wife addicted to meth who is neglecting her children while the husband is at work.