



Marriage and Divorce

101 part 1

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According to the National Center For Health Statistics, in 2006 there were 2,330,000 marriages in the United States. The marriage rate was 7.5 persons per 1,000 people. Out of these 7.5 people 3.6 of these people received a divorce from their spouse. You did indeed read this right. The statistics are staggering. We live in a society that seems to have forgotten about God and the very laws that he has established in his word. 1 Peter 3:3 says ***“knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts.”***

Many of these same people will get re-married. Some of these marriages will be scriptural, and

some not scriptural. Well, you ask, who decides whose re-marriage will be scriptural, and whose is not? Is it my preacher, the elders of the church, or my Psychologist? The answer to all of the above is, No! Jesus Christ himself informs us of the answer, and he does so very clearly in Matthew 19:3-9. *“The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?” 4 And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” 7 They said to Him, “Why then did Moses*

command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" 8 He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. 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." Let's

break this down, and we will use the example of Jane and Steve. (Keep in mind that this is a fictitious couple, and does not represent anyone I currently know, this could represent thousands of couples.) Jane and Steve have been married for 15 years, but they really do not love each other any more. Steve works all of the time, and even though he makes a good salary he never spends time with the kids, and never spends any time with her. Steve promises time

after time he will do better, but just cannot. After marriage counseling it is a sure sign that Steve is not going to change, so Jane files for divorce. So, after considering the above scripture in Matthew 19 what happens with this predicament? Before we answer the burning question of whether or not a divorce can take place, let us look at what should have happened in the marriage. We are told in Ephesians 4 about Steve's responsibilities. Let us consider verses 25-29. *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to*

love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.” So, what is Paul informing here in this passage? It is true that Steve has to make a living, for his family. It is true that he needs to be attentive to the future needs of his family such as college, and emergencies that might arise from time to time. The Bible makes this very clear in 2 Thessalonians 1:9 *“For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.”* Furthermore, the Lord expects us to have moderation in all things. True, he expects Steve to make a living but we also have a commandment to do things in moderation. *“Now godliness with contentment is great gain.”* So, alas we see Steve that made some

major miscalculations in his marriage, but was this worthy of being put away? Remember Jesus says in Matthew 19 that there is only one cause for divorce. Lord willing, next week we will examine the marriage from Jane's point of view, and see if this marriage meets the criteria for a scriptural divorce.