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**SERIES: Matthew (The King, His Kingdom And Me)**

**TITLE: Program 32 – God’s Plan For Marriage**

**TUESDAY**

**OPEN**

When the foundations are destroyed what will the righteous do? O Beloved, the foundations of marriages are being destroyed. And in that destruction we have a destruction of our society. How important it is that you and I understand what Jesus had to say on the subject of divorce when he was questioned. Can a man divorce his wife for any reason? We’ll talk about it today.

**PART ONE**

I can’t think of a more appropriate place to teach you Matthew chapter 19 and what Jesus had to say about marriage and divorce. I’m sitting in the ancient city of Susita. It’s on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. I’m sitting among ruins of pillars that fell during an earthquake in about 700 A.D. These pillars are where they actually fell on the day of that earthquake, and they lay like matchsticks. Everything came tumbling down because of

the shaking of the earth. Why is this so appropriate to teach on marriage? Because what has happened in our culture is, there has been a shaking; a shaking of the foundations of truth, and men have chosen to believe a lie rather than the truth, and our society lays in ruins. Marriages have fallen like matchsticks and it is brought a great destruction. I want us to look at what God says to us in Matthew chapter 19. It's so critical, Beloved, that you understand this teaching. It says, **"When Jesus had finished these words, He departed from [the] Galilee and came into the region of Judea beyond the Jordan; and large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there."** (Matthew 19:1-2) Now what are the teachings that He just finished? The teachings that He just finished were those where Jesus is talking about forgiveness. He's talking about the kingdom of heaven belonging to those who come to him as little children. And then He talks about: What do you do when a brother sins. And then how do you forgive and the importance of forgiveness, because the kingdom of heaven is all about forgiven people living with one another and forgiving one another. (See Matthew 18) Now large crowds are following him and it says, **"[And] some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?' And He answered and said, 'Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female,' and [He] said, 'For this reason [shall a man] leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two...,"** He says, **"...but [they are] one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."** (Matthew 19:3-6) Marriage is an institution of God. It's something that God created, God designed. And He designed it from the beginning when He created Adam and Eve. He meant for Adam and Eve, who were two individuals, to come together and to be one flesh. And Jesus is saying, ["Why are you asking me about divorce? Why are you asking me if a man can divorce his wife? Give her a certificate of divorce for any

reason at all?"] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 19:4-6) I love the way that Jesus handles their questions. And I've told you this before, they ask a question and instead of answering it, He comes back with a question that will help them see what they are saying. It's very, very clever. It's very, very wise, but then of course it's from the Man who is pure, unadulterated wisdom. Well, **"They said to Him, 'Why then did Moses....'"** They're not going to let go of this, **"...Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?"** [And] **He said to them, 'Because of [the hardness of your heart] Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.'**" (Matthew 19:7-8) I want us to go back to the beginning. I want us to go back to Genesis chapter 2. And let's look at this institution of marriage, because I think if you can understand what God says about marriage, then you are going to understand if anything constitutes a legitimate divorce. So we need to see. We need to understand the principles. We need to understand the precepts and I will tell you why. Because if you don't understand, if you don't understand, then in this culture, you are going to be shaken at the very base of your beliefs and you're going to fall like matchsticks. And when marriages fall apart and you know this, because it's so evident in our society when marriages fall apart and divorce comes into families, then society begins to fall apart and that's what's happened. If you studied any of the statistics you know that what is so horrible is that the divorce rate among those who profess to be Christians is almost equal to the divorce rate among those in the world. So something is terribly wrong. **"[And] if the foundations be destroyed, what [will] the righteous do? (Psalms 11:3, KJV)** Well in Genesis chapter 2 it says in verse 18, **"Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for...man to be alone; I will make...a helper suitable for him.'**" [And] **out of the ground the Lord...formed every beast of the field...every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called [the] living creature, that was its name. [And] the man**

**gave names to all the cattle...to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him.” (Genesis 2:18-20)** There was not found a “suitable” and the word is a “counterpart,” a “completer.” And I often use my hands to indicate this, where a man is strong a woman is usually weak. And where a man is weak a woman is usually strong. And so what He is doing is He is taking what He has created male and female who are distinctively different. There’s a difference in the genes. There’s a difference in the emotions. There’s a difference all the way around and you can see it from early childhood. And so He takes them and He puts them together and He says, **“It’s not good for [a] man to be alone; I will make...a [counterpart, a completer].” (Genesis 2:18)** That’s why I take both hands and interlock them and put the fingers between the fingers. So this is what He is saying. Now what I want you to see is that God’s design is marriage. It’s God’s plan and it’s a plan that man should not be alone. It’s not good for him. You’ll find that, when a wife dies, a husband has a hard time being alone. He needs to get remarried because it’s not good for man to be alone. A woman can handle singleness far better than a man. It says, **“So the Lord...caused....” (Genesis 2:21)** Because there was no helper suitable for him, **“[So the Lord caused] a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; [and] He took one of his ribs and closed up [his] flesh at that place. [And] the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to...man. [And] the man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones, [this is] flesh of my flesh....’” (Genesis 2:21-23)** Now this is very important and this is why Jesus quotes this passage. It’s very important to understand that in marriage, they are no longer two but they become one, why? **“...‘This is...bone of my bones, And [this is] flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ For this reason a man shall leave his father and...mother, and [shall] be joined to his wife; and they shall become....” (Genesis 2:23-24)** What did Jesus say? He is quoting Genesis,

**“...one flesh.” (Genesis 2:24 & Matthew 19:6)** No longer two, but now they are one. Now when we look at these pillars, you also see capitals. The capitals stood on top of the pillars and so it was like it was one unit, but then when the earthquake came and the pillar fell, the capitals were separated from the pillars. And that is what happens in divorce, but if you just put the pillar up without the capital it is ugly. But you put the two together and you have a beautiful, beautiful thing. And what Jesus is saying is,

**“...What...God [has] joined together, let no man put asunder.”**

**(Matthew 19:6, KJV)** God’s intention is one man for one woman for all time; for a lifetime. Not in the next world to come. In the next world to come there’s not giving in marriage, but in this world. As we live upon this earth, God’s design is for a man and a woman to become one flesh and,

**“...What...God [has] joined together...,”** this is God’s design so if you go against it you are going against what God says. **“...[So] what...God [has] joined together let no man put asunder. (Matthew 19:6, KJV)** Now it’s interesting that He explains the importance of marriage. Why? Because Adam and Eve are now going to multiply. They’re going to be fruitful. They’re going to multiply. They’re going to have children. They’re going to have a family. That family will be the basis, the foundation, so to speak, of the social unit. The foundation of society,- and when you ruin a marriage you are ruining the foundation of society because that is the haven where the children grow up and they want more than anything else for their parents to stay together. That’s their security. Well God wants them to stay together and we’ll talk about it in just a moment.

## **PART TWO**

The ruins where I’m teaching are the ruins of a church where the columns have fallen like matchsticks. How appropriate to teach this message here because it is the church that is falling apart, because we are not listening to the Word of God, because we are not desiring a righteousness that exceeds

the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees. It's because we are not listening to the Law of God, the commandments of God, we've forgotten that God has said, "You shall not commit adultery." Adultery is having sex with someone when you're not married to them and you are married to another person. And so Jesus is telling them it's because of the hardness of your heart that Moses has permitted to write a certificate of divorce, but it was not that way from the beginning. This is not what God intended. He opens in Genesis chapter 2 telling us that, **"For this cause [shall a man] leave his father and...mother, and...cleave to his wife and [the two] shall become one flesh."** (Genesis 2:24) The word "cleave" literally means to glue together. I have been married two times and I had a religion, but not a relationship. And I went for counseling to two different ministers because I was having problems in my marriage. I didn't know that my husband was bipolar, that he was manic depressive and that that was the cause of the conflict between us. I didn't know that, but I went for counseling. Neither one of those men opened up the Word of God. Neither one of those men took me to Genesis and explained, "Kay listen, when you married Tom you were glued together. You became one flesh. And Kay if you glue two pieces of construction paper together and then you separate them part of this will stay over here and part of this will stay over there." They never explained or opened the Word of God or even prayed with me. There was no counseling from the words of life. Well God begins in Genesis chapter 2 with the sanctity of marriage, with the oneness of marriage. With the fact that you are not going to separate, you are going to cleave together. And when we come to the end of the Old Testament we come to the Book of Malachi. They are going through the ritual. They're bringing their sacrifices to God, but they are not living righteously. In Malachi chapter 2 it says, **"...The lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is [a] messenger of the Lord of hosts."** (Malachi 2:7) Well in days of Malachi the priests weren't doing their job either. And

so you come on down and God says in verse 13, **“This is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. [And] yet you say, ‘For what reason...?’”** And he says, **“...Because the Lord has been a witness between you and [your] wife....”** (Malachi 2:13-14) He says, **“... ‘Against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion’...,”** now listen carefully, **“...‘your wife by covenant.’”** (Malachi 2:14) Covenant is a solemn, binding agreement and God oversees every covenant. And if a covenant is broken, then God as the administrator of that covenant has to deal with those that break the covenant. So He goes on to say, **“But not one [of you] has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit...,”** this is what God is saying to you today, **“...and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. ‘For I hate divorce,’ says the Lord, ...God of Israel, ‘and him who covers his garment with wrong,’ says the Lord of hosts. ‘So take heed to your spirit, [and]...do not deal treacherously.’”** (Malachi 2:15-16) When you and I divorce we are dealing treacherously. We are breaking a covenant and that is displeasing to God. Well let’s go back to Matthew 19 again, when they ask Him, “Well why did Moses command a certificate of divorce so that you can send her away?” **“He said to them...,”** in verse 8, **“...‘Because of [the] hardness of [your] heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives....”** (Matthew 19:8) Now that divorce, and you can see it and you can read about it in Deuteronomy chapter 24, but that divorce, Precious One, was a certificate that protected the wife when he was going to get rid of her anyway. He was going to walk His own way. He was going to do His own thing. And so He says, **“When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it [into] her hand**

**and sends her out from his house, and she leaves his house and goes and becomes another man's wife, and if the latter husband turns against her..., husband number two, "...and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife, then [the] former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again to be his wife, since she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord...."**

**(Deuteronomy 24:1-4)** Now what does it mean she's been defiled? Well because the act of becoming one is the act of sexual intercourse. When you look at the anatomy of a man and a woman and they come together in that beautiful design of God, literally the two become one flesh. He immerses into her, she receives him. So now if she leaves that man and she goes and has sex with another man, she has become one with two different men. And it breaks the picture. And this is why God is saying that this is not right. Now watch what He says. He says in verse 9 of Matthew 19, **"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."** **(Matthew 19:9)** Now that immorality is showing that, if this woman or this man has come and become immoral, then they have joined together with another person and that breaks the oneness of the flesh. He goes on to say, **"[And] the disciples said to Him, 'If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry...,'"** in other words if marriage is permanent then it's better not to marry, **"...[And] He said to them, 'Not all men can accept [that] statement, but only those to whom it has been given. 'For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to [say] this, let him accept it.'"** **(Matthew 19:11-12)** What He is saying is the only way you have sex is through marriage and it says, **"Then some of the children were brought to Him so that He**



**might lay His hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, ‘Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’ [And] after laying His hands on them, He departed from there.”**

**(Matthew 19:13-15)** O Beloved, children are precious to God and marriage is that cocoon, that womb where they are raised to be the kind of citizens they ought to be. Don’t defile children by divorcing your mate, but rather honor marriage as God has honored it. And your life won’t fall apart.