



A. Marriage is a covenant between husband, wife and God (Gen. 2:24; Mal. 2:14-16; Matt. 19:4-6).

**<sup>24</sup>For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.** Genesis 2:24 (NASB)

Verses where the same Hebrew word for “joined to” is used to refer to the covenant between God and Israel: Deut. 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; 30:19-20; Joshua 22:5; 23:8

**<sup>14</sup>“Yet you say, ‘For what reason?’ Because the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.** Malachi 2:14 (NASB)

**<sup>4</sup>And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, <sup>5</sup>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’?**

**<sup>6</sup>“So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”** Matthew 19:4-6 (NASB)

B. Divorce does not break the marriage covenant.

**<sup>32</sup>but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.** Matthew 5:32 (NASB)

**<sup>11</sup>And He \*said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; <sup>12</sup>and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery.”** Mark 10:11-12 (NASB)

C. What is God’s purpose for divorce? It removes the blessings of the covenant until the erring partner repents. (Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:8)

**<sup>1</sup>Thus says the Lord, “Where is the certificate of divorce By which I have sent your mother away? Or to whom of My creditors did I sell you? Behold, you were sold for your iniquities, And for your transgressions your mother was sent away.** Isaiah 50:1 (NASB)

**<sup>8</sup>“And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also.** Jeremiah 3:8 (NASB)

D. What breaks the marriage covenant?

1. Death (1 Corinthians 7:39-40; Romans 7:2-3 “bound” = deo)

**<sup>39</sup>A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.** 1 Corinthians 7:39 (NASB)

**<sup>2</sup>For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. <sup>3</sup>So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.** Romans 7:2-3 (NASB)



## 2. The formation of a new covenant with God.

- Evidence from OT case law- Deut. 24:1-4

<sup>1</sup> "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* in her hand and sends her out from his house, <sup>2</sup> and she leaves his house and goes and becomes another man's *wife*, <sup>3</sup> and if the latter husband turns against her 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, <sup>4</sup> *then* her 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, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance. Deuteronomy 24:1-4 (NASB)

- The New Covenant replaced the old Mosaic Covenant

<sup>8</sup> For finding fault with them, He says, "BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE Lord, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; <sup>9</sup> NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE Lord. <sup>10</sup> "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE Lord: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. <sup>11</sup> "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE Lord,' FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. <sup>12</sup> "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE." <sup>13</sup> When He said, "A new *covenant*," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear. Hebrews 8:8-13 (NASB)

- This understanding makes the remarriage a one-time act of adultery at the formation of the new covenant, rather than an ongoing state of adultery.

## V. Practical Considerations.

- A. I will only remarry people whose former spouse had died or has already remarried.
- B. I am called to support whatever marriage covenants currently exist, regardless of the conditions under which they were formed.
- C. We can't change the past but we can live obediently now and in the future.
- D. It's okay to disagree with me on this issue.



Life Group Questions  
1 Corinthians 7:10-24; 39-40

1. How do you think the instruction to stay married applies in cases of physical spouse abuse?
2. How does Pastor Mark's description of the marriage covenant and divorce differ from the common cultural understanding?
3. Should you attend a wedding when you don't think there are Biblical grounds for the marriage? Why or why not?
4. What are some other kinds of social responsibilities or obligations that do not change upon a person's conversion?
5. Whereas marriages can be performed by the church or the government, divorce is only granted by government. What problems has this caused? Should the government be in the business of establishing marriages? Why or why not?
6. If the marriage covenant is between a husband, wife, and God, what difference should that make in how the couple interacts, makes decisions, assigns responsibilities?
7. What will you do or think differently as a result of what this passage teaches?
8. What do you learn about God from this passage?

