

Authority

1 When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan. **2** Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

3 Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?”

4 “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ **5** and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’ **6**? **6** So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

7 “Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?”

8 Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. **9** I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”

10 The disciples said to him, “If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.”

11 Jesus replied, “Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. **12** For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others—and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.”

Summary:

1. Jesus finished talking (Matthew 18) and left Galilee. He crossed the Jordan River into Judea.
2. Many people followed Him there and were healed.
3. Some Pharisees came as well, but to test Him on the appropriate reasons for divorce.
4. Jesus responded by asking them if they had read about Creation and that God made humans male and female.
5. He then said because of this fact man and wife should unite as one flesh.
6. They are now one. God has joined them together and no human (entity) should separate them.
7. The Pharisees questioned Jesus about the reason Moses permitted divorce.
8. Jesus replied that it was because the people’s hearts were hard and that this was not God’s original intent.
9. Anyone who divorces his wife except for sexual immorality and marries another woman has committed adultery. (Divorce for any reason other than being cheated on is not right, and if someone remarries for another reason is guilty of cheating on their original spouse as well).
10. The disciples then asked if it was better to not marry at all.
11. Jesus replied that it is not the case for everyone.
12. Regardless of whether someone was born that way, made to live that way, or chose to live that way anyone who can should live this way.

Meaning:

1. Jesus finished teaching and moved on to the next place. He did not stay and linger or bask in his own “fame”.
2. People were drawn to Jesus regardless and followed him. He continued to serve them by healing them.
3. The religious leaders of the day debated Him on cultural hot topics like the proper reason for divorce.
4. Jesus used Scripture to support His statements as well as directly challenged their reading/understanding of God’s Word.
5. God has created human beings and the proper relationships between them.
6. Marriage has been instituted by God and nothing on earth should break that union.
7. Other places in Scripture, and other respected Biblical leaders, had an allegedly different view.
8. Moses permitted this as a concession for human weakness and a limitation on human sin. This is not God’s ideal.
9. First marriage should be indissoluble. This is also a statement to understand Jewish custom debates at the time (**Shammaites vs Hillelites**).
10. So should people marry at all?
11. Not everyone will marry or should marry.
12. **There are different reasons someone might not marry but it is not a license to be promiscuous. This challenges Jewish contemporaries of Jesus who regarded marriage and rearing children as an important duty. (cross reference with radio talk now about younger people are waiting to marry and many deciding to have no children – not enough children to “replace” dying population)**

Application:

1. Do I know my purpose? Am I more focused on my own fame and popularity than on accomplishing God’s purpose for my life? How do I live complacent?
2. Why would someone be drawn to me? Why would someone follow me? How do I serve the people around me? How can I bring healing to those around me?
3. What arguments am I focused on? Why should I debate someone in the first place? What is the right way to challenge someone’s perspective?
4. How does the Bible influence my positions or “arguments”?
5. God has created me on purpose! What should my life look like across the board because of this? Is my life reflecting God? What needs to change in order to reflect God more accurately?
6. What is my view of marriage? How do I treat marriage? How do I treat my own marriage? What am I allowing to try and break that bond? What makes someone *married*?
7. How do I handle apparent disagreements in Scripture? Am I even aware they exist?
8. How does weakness in my life go against God’s ideal for me?
9. How do I approach marriage? Am I already looking for a loophole or am I truly committed? How do I handle conflict within the marriage relationship? How should I approach marriage, if not married already? What is my expectation going into marriage? How about any other relationship?
10. What is the purpose of marriage? Why did I get married? Why is marriage important? What role does it play in my life and in the larger culture?

11. Marriage is NOT a requirement for every person. I should encourage people to chase God first not a boyfriend or girlfriend.
12. See above. Basically, people have various reason to not be married, but that is not a license to live frivolously or promiscuously.