

January 29th – God’s Plan for Marriage

*“So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate”
(Matt. 19:6)*

Lots of folks have questions about marriage and divorce, and so did the Pharisees in Christ’s day. On one occasion they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?” (Matt. 19:3) Jesus responded by taking the Pharisees back to the Garden of Eden. God’s plan for marriage is seen there in Genesis 2:24 – “A man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two become one flesh.” Marriage happens when a man *leaves* his family and *cleaves* to his wife.

Because God is the One who makes one from the two, Jesus said that men are not to dissolve what God has joined together. Among the Pharisees there were two schools of thought. Some felt that a man could divorce his wife only for reasons of sexual unfaithfulness, while others felt that divorce was justified for any reason. The words of Jesus help us understand that divorce is really never God’s plan for marriage. It’s His desire that a man and woman are joined together for life.

The Pharisees were quick to respond, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?” (Matt. 19:7) Jesus responded that God permitted a certificate of divorce, not because it’s His perfect will, but because of the hardness of men’s hearts. Jesus explained that divorce for any reason but adultery was sexual immorality. Later, the Apostle Paul added abandonment to the list (1 Cor. 7:15). Ultimately, God’ plan for marriage is life-long faithfulness, “til death do us part.”