**Matthew 19:9**

A sentinel passage regarding what God says on divorce and remarriage is Matt 19:9 which reads: And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

Let’s break that down into two parts. First: Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery

That implies a man may divorce his wife for cheating on him sexually and remarry with God’s approval, but let’s don’t overlook the fact that it rules out any other cause for divorce as being unscriptural. So if a person divorces their spouse for incompatibility (the most common cause in the state of Alabama) and remarries, Jesus calls the second marriage adultery. That doesn’t sound like a person can stay in such a marriage and be pleasing to God, does it? Since when can a person be living in adultery and still be pleasing to God?

Now let’s look at the second part of Matt 19:9: whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

So if a man divorces his wife and someone else marries her (that put away wife), they are committing adultery in that second marriage.

But why is it adultery for a man to divorce his wife and remarry? Rom 7:2-3 helps us with that question. It reads: For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

So the reason second marriages are called adulterous by Jesus is because at least one partner in the new marriage is still bound or obligated to their original spouse. God expects couples to stay together until “death do us part” and so if they don’t, if they divorce and remarry, they are cheating on their original/rightful spouse.

Now let’s compare Matt 19:9 to Matt 5:32. Here is how 5:32 reads: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

This reads almost exactly the same as Matt 19:9, but there is one significant difference. Whereas Matt 19:9 talks about the remarriage of the one doing the putting away, Matt 5:32 does not. It condemns the divorce by the man even if he never remarries. From Matt 19:9 we learn that divorce and remarriage is adultery. From Matt 5:32 then we learn that divorce all by itself, even with no remarriage, is also sinful.

Lastly I would like to bring out a passage that, though talking about a situation that occurred while the Old Testament was still binding, still illustrates for us what God expects an unscripturally married couple to do. And that passage is Mark 6:17-18: For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

Secular history tells us Herod had divorced his wife, and Herodias had divorced her husband. This text tells us they were now married to each other. Just because they were married, did that make their relationship right? John the Baptist, speaking for God, didn’t think so. He told them their marriage was not lawful. And if he told them their marriage was not lawful, what do you think God expected Herod and Herodias to do to rectify the situation? Get out of their marriage, correct?

Perhaps you are in the listening audience and are in your second or third marriage. What does God think about your marriage? Is it scriptural according to the passages we’ve been looking at? Or are you in an adulterous marriage? If so, don’t you need to terminate said marriage to get right with God?