

# JESUS ON DIVORCE AND MARRIAGE

JESUS SAID WHAT?! :THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, PART 8 · MATTHEW 19:1-12; 22:23-33 · FEBRUARY 13, 2022 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"Haven't you read," Jesus replied, that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' 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?" (Matthew 19:4-5)

## The First Test (Matthew 19:1-12)

The hostile question from the Pharisees (19:3)

Background on divorce in Jesus' day

Starting in the right place:

- First principles: Genesis 1:27; 2:24 (19:4-6)
- Second principles: Deuteronomy 24:1-4 (19:7-9)

The disciples' shock and the invitation to celibacy for the kingdom (19:10-12)

### Key points:

- The issue of divorce
- The approach to questions
- The deeper issue of hard heart

## The Second Test (Matthew 22:23-33)

The hostile question and parable from the Sadducees (22:23-28)

Background on levirate marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-10)

Jesus' first response (22:29-30)

Jesus' second response (22:31-32)

### Key points:

- The issue of remarriage and resurrection
- The approach to questions/debates
- The deeper issue of disregard for Scripture and God's power

## Responding to Jesus

God and Our Relationships

Questions and Motivations

Hearts and Minds

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is one of the most important relationships in your life and why?
2. This week we continue the series "Jesus Said What?!" by looking at two passages related to marriage, divorce, and singleness. Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you and grow you with Him. Then, whether you're on your own or with others, read Matt. 19:3-12 aloud.
3. *Background: There was a great debate in Jesus' day about whether a man could divorce his wife for any reason or only for very selective reasons. Jesus already addressed this topic in the*

*Sermon on the Mount, and you can find that in Matthew 5:31-32.*

4. The Pharisees ask Jesus a question rooted in Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Read that passage. How does Jesus change the starting point of the discussion in verses 4-6?
5. Why do you think Jesus' different starting point might be important?
6. When the Pharisees return to the question about Deuteronomy 24, what rationale does Jesus give for God's allowance of this?
7. What would you say this passage tells you about the meaning of marriage and the allowance of divorce?
8. Now turn to Matthew 22:23-33 and read that second passage aloud. How would you summarize the Sadducees' question of Jesus?
9. *Background: The Sadducees were a minority religious group supported by the wealthy who held a lot of power and were pro-Roman. They reference here the concept of levirate marriage, where a surviving relative must continue a dead man's family line and support the surviving widow (see Deuteronomy 25:5-10).*
10. The situation outlined by the Sadducees in 22:24-28 is outlandish. What do you think they are trying to do?
11. What stands out to you about how Jesus addresses their specific question about the resurrection in verses 22:29-30?
12. Jesus turns a corner to a different issue with verses 31-32. What is Jesus doing here and why is this important within the conversation?
13. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study? If you're on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

## DIG DEEPER:

This week dig deeper in one or more of the following ways:

- Memorize Matthew 19:6 or 22:32
- Take time alone with God this week to let God search your heart and mind. Like the Pharisees, have you become hard-hearted? Like the Sadducees, are you disregarding God's Word or power?
- Pray about relationships this week. If married, pray for God's grace and power in your marriage. If single, pray you might live for God's glory in your singleness. If desiring marriage, pray the Lord would provide a spouse who honors Him but also for true contentment. If divorced, pray for healing from the wounds and scars of divorce. Regardless, ask God to minister to our church so that in all our relationships we would seek Him first.