

Family Lessons 1: The Permanence of Marriage

- I. Introduction
 - a. Marriage in our society
 - i. Marriages are failing
 - 1. Over 1 Million divorces every year in the US
 - 2. A fast growing trend to not get married in the first place – nearly 7.6 million couples living together outside of marriage, over 14 times the number 35 years ago SOOU 2012
 - 3. One in four children live with only one parent – a number that has doubled in the past 35 years
 - 4. Source SOOU 2012
 - 5. 53% of births in US today are to unwed mothers [SOOU 2012]
 - b. What does God think of it?
- II. Key Thought: God has always intended marriage to be a permanent relationship
- III. The Beginning – Gen. 2:18-25
 - a. The source of marriage – God
 - i. He invented it
 - ii. He knows how it works
 - b. The components of marriage
 - i. One man
 - ii. One woman
 - iii. God
 - c. The purpose of marriage –
 - i. provide
 - 1. companionship & love
 - 2. life-long intimacy
 - 3. Mutual support and help
 - 4. Raise children (Mal. 2)
 - ii. These could not be provided to man in his solitary state or by any other created being
 - d. The permanence of marriage –
 - i. A closer relationship than even parent and child
 - ii. One flesh cannot be divided
 - 1. Joined - "to cling, cleave, keep close." Used in modern Hebrew in the sense of "to stick to, adhere to," [dabaq](#) yields the noun form for "glue" and also the more abstract ideas of "loyalty, devotion."
- IV. The Decline of Marriage
 - a. Sin and its consequences – Gen 3:15-17
 - i. Polygamy and concubinage – Abraham (Gen. 16), Jacob (Gen. 29-30)
 - ii. Divorce – Abraham (Gen. 21)

- iii. Promiscuity – Dinah (Gen 34), Reuben (Gen. 35:22), Judah (Gen. 38), Joseph (Gen. 39)
 - iv. And these were the people of God! Imagine what the rest of humanity was doing!
 - b. The Law of Moses
 - i. The law was added because of transgressions (Gal 3:19)
 - 1. Boundaries were placed
 - 2. To prevent God’s people from becoming more and more wicked
 - 3. It could not prevent or cure sin
 - 4. It put a floor below which an individual could not sink without being cut off from Israelite society
 - 5. As long as the law was respected, the nation as a whole was morally upheld
 - ii. Constraints on marriage:
 - 1. They could not marry the Canaanite nations (Deut 7)
 - 2. A Levite could not marry a woman who was not a virgin and an Israelite (Lev. 21)
 - 3. A Husband could not marry his previously divorced wife (Deut. 24)
 - 4. Man could not marry a woman who had been married to a relative (Lev. 20)
 - 5. Women with property could only marry a man from her own tribe (Num. 36)
 - iii. Constraints on divorce
 - 1. Some could not be divorced (Deu. 22)
 - a. A man who had lain with a woman before he married her
 - b. A man who had falsely accused his wife of unfaithfulness
 - 2. All divorces had to meet certain standards (Deu. 24)
 - a. Must be for a cause
 - b. A writing of divorcement
 - c. The divorced wife was free to marry another
 - iv. Constraints on polygamy and promiscuity
 - c. God’s view of His law
 - i. Adultery was a capital crime – Lev. 20:10
 - ii. Divorce is treachery – Malachi 2
 - 1. It covers God’s altar with tears – from the abandoned, neglected and impoverished wife and children
 - 2. They were one because God joined them together
 - 3. Now they had divorced their wives
 - 4. The purpose of that union was to produce godly children
 - 5. Their treachery was the same as violence against the wife and children
 - 6. God hated it!

- iii. Unlawful marriage must be ended Ez. 9-10
- V. The Restoration of Marriage in Christ's Law
 - a. Christ's Law (Matt. 5:32; 19:1ff)
 - i. Restored God's original plan for marriage
 - ii. Male and Female
 - iii. No divorce
 - iv. One exception
 - v. Violation results in adultery
 - vi. Bond ends at death – Rom 7
 - vii. Paul in Corinthians (1 Cor. 7)
 - viii. Can Christ's law on Marriage be Understood?
 - 1. Seating Chart Rule
 - a. Without exceptions
 - i. Compare with Lk. 16:18
 - b. With exceptions
 - i. Can't see board
 - ii. Malfunctioning Desk
 - iii. Bad behavior
 - iv. Compare with Matt. 19:9
 - 1. There is only one case in which God gives permission for divorce and remarriage
 - 2. In the case of sexual immorality
 - c. If a 3rd grader can understand the seating chart rule, an adult can understand Christ's Marriage Rule
 - d. EXAMPLE: Someone not a Christian
 - i. Having a conversion study
 - ii. Let us know they were getting married
 - iii. Fiancee had been married six times before
 - iv. Had this person read Matthew 19:9
 - v. The first thing they said after reading it was
 - 1. "If I get married, I'll still be sinning!"
 - 2. Can the law of Christ on marriage be understood
 - 3. Yes, you have to work hard to misunderstand it
 - a. Even if you are in an unscriptural marriage or contemplating one you can understand it
 - b. It was given by a God who wants what is best for all mankind
 - c. And who knows how to communicate with human

beings in a way that they can understand!

- b. How serious is it? Those who commit adultery
 - i. Forfeit fellowship with the church (1 Cor 5)
 - ii. Forfeit the kingdom of heaven (1 Cor. 6)
 - iii. Do something God hates (Mal 2)
 - iv. It covered one's garments with violence:
 - 1. A single or divorced woman is 50% more likely to die from any cause than a married woman [TCFM]
 - 2. A couple's divorce reduces the lifespan of their children by an average of 4 years [TCFM]
 - 3. Swedish children being raised by single or divorced parents are "twice as likely to suffer from psychiatric disorders, diseases, suicide attempts, alcoholism, and drug abuse" [CR]
 - 4. In the US, children of divorce are more than twice as likely to have serious social, emotional, or psychological problems as children of intact families—25% versus 10% [AMPB]
 - 5. Children whose parents live apart, the authors find, are twice as likely to drop out of high school as those in two-parent families, one and a half times as likely to be idle in young adulthood, twice as likely to become single parents themselves. [GUWSP]
 - 6. The State of the Nation Report in Britain, published in 2006, found that 70 percent of young offenders come from lone-parent families, and children who had grown up in lone-parent or broken families were between three to six times more likely to have suffered abuse. [CR]
- c. Reducing Divorce
 - i. Nearly Half of all marriages end in divorce in our country, but these divorces are NOT EVENLY SPREAD ACROSS ALL MARRIAGES!
 - ii. Some groups have MUCH LESS DIVORCE than the general population
 - iii. "one upside of generations of widespread divorce is that we've now learned a lot about what makes a marriage succeed." SOOU 2012
 - iv. Notice three of the critical factors to reducing divorce involve doing it God's way!
 - v. Top two ways parents can prevent divorce in their children:
 - 1. Raise them in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord:
 - a. Teach them about God's law that sex belongs within marriage, and you will have eliminated half their risk of divorce
 - b. Teach them that God comes first in their life, and you will most of the rest of the risk
 - 2. Honor God's law on the permanence of marriage
 - a. Not breaking up the home where your children live through divorce or separation

- b. And you will virtually eliminate the risk of divorce for your children

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Percent Decrease in Risk of Divorce</i>
Annual income over \$50,000 (vs. under \$25,000)	-30
Graduated college (vs. high-school dropout)	-25
Having a baby seven months or more after marriage (vs. before marriage).....	-24
Marrying over 25 years of age (vs. under 18)	-24
Own family of origin intact (vs. divorced parents)	-14
Religious affiliation (vs. none)	-14

Source: [SOOU 2012]

- VI. Conclusions
 - a. Preview Series
 - i. The husband’s role
 - ii. The wife’s role
 - iii. The Blessed and Blessing Home
 - iv. The God-Centered Home
 - v. The Parent-Led Home
 - vi. The Child-Rearing Home
 - vii. The Overflowing Home
- VII. Invitation:
 - a. God’s Way is the Best Way
 - i. In Marriage
 - 1. He tells us the right way
 - 2. All we have to do is follow it
 - ii. In Life
 - 1. It’s the Same
 - b. My Story
 - i. Divorce
 - ii. Worry: can I be a good husband and father?
 - iii. The Answer: YES, God tells us how and shows us how
 - c.
- VIII. Sources:
 - a. [GUWSP] - Sara McLanahan and G. Sandefur, Growing up with a Single Parent, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994)
 - b. [AMPB] – Mary Parke, Are Married Parents Really Better for Children?, 2003.
 - c. [SOOU 2007] – David Popenoe, Ph.D., and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, Ph. D., The State of Our Unions 2007, 2007.
 - d. [SOOU 2008] – David Popenoe, Ph.D., and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, Ph. D., The State of Our Unions 2008, 2007.
 - e. [SOOU 2012] – David Popenoe, Ph.D., and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, Ph. D., The State of Our Unions 2012, 2012.

- f. [CR] – David Popenoe, Cohabitation, Marriage and Child Wellbeing – A Cross-National Perspective, 2008.
- g. [TCFM] – Linda Waite and Maggie Gallagher The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier and Better off Financially, , 2000.
- h. [AP] - Mike Stobbe, US births break record; 40 pct out-of-wedlock, AP Report, Wed Mar 18, 2009.