

LIVING THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT: BROKEN BOUNDARIES PT 2

SERMON DISCUSSION FOR SUNDAY JULY 19, 2015 | SPEAKER: PASTOR RON GORMONG

SERMON DISCUSSION

Ice Breaker (Everyone): What is one big criteria you would, did, or do have for your children when choosing a spouse?

RECAP

Pastor Ron spent time recapping the past four weeks of preaching on the Sermon on the Mount. Four weeks ago we covered *Anger*, three weeks ago *Lust*, and two weeks ago *Promises*.

Which message has been the most impactful on you? Why do you think that is?

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 5:31-32 ESV

“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32 But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

DIFFICULTY OF THIS PASSAGE

This is a difficult passage because it is loaded with feeling, always personal, and sometimes painful. *“Guilt. Anger. Anxiety. Disappointment. Dreams dashed. Betrayals absorbed. Failure. Rejection. Frustration about alimony payments, Custody Rights and Custody Fights, the Ongoing realities of a ‘split family’... When ONE MEMBER of OUR BODY SUFFERS—we ALL SUFFER. For we are FAMILY. We are BELIEVERS TOGETHER. And so, it is MY HEART as YOUR PASTOR not to ADD TO YOUR FREIGHT. Not to ADD to YOUR HURT. Not to SAY THINGS that would UNNECESSARILY WOUND or OFFEND.”*

Sunday’s message certainly had freight along with it. How do you deal with passages of Scripture, sermons, or advice from other Christians that bring up hurt in your personal life? Do you avoid it, accept it, rationalize, argue about it, or something else?

GOAL OF THE MESSAGE

The goal of the message was not to bring up hurt. Pastor Ron shares the goal of the message was twofold.

1. Prophetic call: To speak clearly what God has said the Kingdom of God ought to look like here on earth. The way Christians are supposed to live.
2. Pastoral call: To explain what Jesus’ teaching means for us regardless of our marital past.

CONTEXT

The common-held understanding toward divorce in Jesus' culture was very permissive. This developed due to the understanding of the Old Testament provision of a "certificate of divorce" Jesus is challenging this idea. He goes into greater detail recorded elsewhere in Matthew.

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 19:1-6 ESV

Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, he went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. 2 And large crowds followed him, and he healed them there. 3 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" 4 He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

COMMENTARY

The Pharisees here have impure motives of heart. They are attempting to trap Jesus in a popular argument of the day on the details of lawful divorce. The pop debate sprang from disagreements on reading Deuteronomy.

SCRIPTURE: DEUTERONOMY 24:1-4 ESV

"When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, 2 and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, 3 and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, 4 then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the Lord. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance.

FIRST CENTURY RIVAL SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Two schools of Rabbinical interpretation emerged around the meaning of "some indecency" Rabbi Shammai had a narrow, conservative approach and believed this meant only a sexual offense. Rabbi Hillel interpreted this phrase in a much broader way. Legitimate divorce was possible due to a wife who was displeasing, who was quarrelsome, or in a situation where a man lost interest in the woman.

What "schools of thought" are in our society today? Where do each of those "schools of thought" base their authority?

JESUS WAY OF DEALING WITH THE SCRIPTURE

How does Jesus deal with the question “is it lawful to divorce for any cause?”

1. Jesus explains that the divine intention is permanence (Matthew 19:4-6)
2. Divorce is from hardness of heart (vv.7-8)
 - a. From the Sermon: *“Divorce is a divine concession to sin. It is never the divine intention or will.”*
3. Remarriage after divorce is adultery except in very limited situations. (v.9)
 - a. Parallel Scriptures: Mark 10:11, Luke 16:18.
 - b. Incompatibility is not a reason for divorce.
 - c. Sexual immorality in an ongoing way is legitimate. (v.9)
 - d. A nonbeliever who leaves a believing spouse is legitimate. (1 Corinthians 7:10-16)
 - e. An abusive situation is legitimate grounds for divorce.

How does a “hardness of heart” lead to divorce?

Do you have any reservations about the statement “incompatibility is not a reason for divorce”? Why or why not?

Do you believe sexual immorality need be in an ongoing way for grounds of divorce? Why or why not?

How would you counsel someone who shares they feel they may be in an abusive relationship?

PASTORAL CALL

- Young people should get good pre-marital counseling.
- Married people should seek counseling when things are rocky.
- If you divorced and remarried for an illegitimate reason, don’t seek another divorce.
- Married people should stay married.

Did you have premarital counseling? If so, what was the benefit? If not, do you think you missed much?

Would you or have you been willing to consider counseling? How else might you address marital issues in a healthy way?

APPLICATION

Write out a renewal of your marriage covenant “I promise, with the help of the Lord...”

Did you complete the assignment?

Bonus Thought: More and more it is abnormal to be married for a long period of time. This is another opportunity for Christians to stand out in the darkness. Do whatever it takes!