

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S7E29

Divorce - Matthew 5:31-32

Description – Join us today as we look at Matthew 5:31-32 and what Jesus says here in the sermon on the mount about divorce.

Matthew 5:31-32

³¹ “It was also said, **Whoever divorces his wife must give her a written notice of divorce.** ³²

But I tell you, everyone who divorces his wife, except in a case of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Why did Jesus give us 6 times of “You have heard it said... but I say to you...” Because 6 is the number of incompleteness or imperfection.

Jesus is reminding them that they think they’re good, but in fact, they have not kept the law.

The fruit of your life reveals the root of your heart.

These Scribes and Pharisees said they were good. They looked outwardly like they were religious and could check off all the boxes. But Jesus is saying, “not so fast.” They’ve missed the heart of the issue.

Busyness is the death of prayer.

The question really is, “How much time have you spent with the Lord?”

God doesn’t want your rules. He wants a relationship with you.

Rabbi Hilel & Rabbi Shammai, the two prominent rabbis of the 1st century.

When a Rabbi said to a pupil, “come, follow me” it was you taking on the Yoke, the teaching, the expectations of the Rabbi.

Rabbi Shammai said, “a man was justified and legal in separating from his wife only in the event of adultery.”

Rabbi Hilel said, “a man was justified in divorcing his wife for any reason, whatsoever...”

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

If a man marries a woman, but she becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, he may write her a divorce certificate, hand it to her, and send her away from his house. ² If after leaving his house she goes and becomes another man’s wife, ³ and the second man hates her, writes her a divorce certificate, hands it to her, and sends her away from

his house or if he dies, ⁴ the first husband who sent her away may not marry her again after she has been defiled, because that would be detestable to the LORD. You must not bring guilt on the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

This certificate of divorce had to be signed in public with multiple witnesses for all to see. But this certificate was also used for those who were betrothed or engaged.

Think about the account of Mary & Joseph.

Matthew 1:18-20

¹⁸ The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ **So her husband, Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.** ²⁰ But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

In the cultural context of what’s happening here from Deuteronomy 24, and what Jesus is saying is that you have to think long and hard about divorcing your spouse, because once you do that, there’s no going back.

According to Jesus here in this text, the only reason for a divorce would be sexual immorality. This would include pornography, adultery, sexual promiscuity. But we do know from the totality of scripture that there are other reasons for divorce.

This is a repeat offender, people who don’t want to get help. They have a habitual, continual persistent sin that they keep running towards instead of seeking help.

You realize that if you’re married, to love your neighbor as yourself applies to your spouse. He or she is the “nearest” one to you. And this could apply to your children.

Marriage is intimacy. Are you still intimately connected to your spouse? Is there any relational intimacy with your spouse?

Marriage is permanent. It’s a picture of the gospel. The reason you shouldn’t divorce is because marriage is a mystery (according to Paul). It’s a picture of the Gospel. The man a type of Christ, and the woman a type of Church.

When the wife leaves the husband, she’s saying, “Jesus isn’t enough, that Jesus doesn’t satisfy” but that’s not the case.

When the husband leaves the wife, he’s saying, “The church isn’t worth it” or even worse, displaying that Jesus abandons his followers.

David Platt says that marriage isn't about your happiness. It's about your holiness.