

Clarity & Compassion

Sermon on the Mount Series – Part 8

Scripture text – Matthew 5:31-32

Introduction

- A difficult passage for us:
 - 1) We've all experienced, directly or indirectly, the _____ & _____ of divorce.
 - 2) Jesus' teaching is rather _____ on such a sensitive subject.

Historical Context

- The Pharisees were very _____ when it came to divorce.
- Basically, you could divorce for _____ reason, so long as you provided a _____ of divorce.
- This mirrors the environment _____. The church doesn't _____ divorce, but nor does it truly _____ it.

Jesus' Teaching

- There's no way to interpret this passage other than Jesus is _____ the door on divorce.
- Given a later opportunity to _____ his position, he again takes a hard line (see Matthew 19).

Question #1 – Why Such a Strong Denouncement of Divorce?

- It's not so much a matter of being _____ divorce, but _____ marriage.
- It's probably Jesus' _____ about marriage that _____ us.
- From Jesus' perspective, marriage is a sacred, holy and _____ union created by _____ to make a man and a woman “_____.”

continued on reverse side

- 3 reasons God is passionate about marriage:
 - 1) Few things contribute as much to human _____ as does a healthy marriage.
 - 2) Every marital difficulty is an opportunity to experience God's mighty _____ power. To give up on a marriage is a _____ of that power.
 - 3) Marriage was a foreshadowing, and is now a living symbol of, the unbreakable _____ that Christ has with his _____. Divorce shows _____ for that bond and for the sacrifice that formed it.

Question #2 – What to Make of the Exception?

- “Marital unfaithfulness” is a translation of the Greek word *porneia*, a broad term meaning _____ sexual behavior.
- It's not an exception, but a _____ on God's part due to the _____ of our hearts.
- According to I Corinthians 6:12-20, sexual relations between non-married partners falls into a _____ category of sin. It has to do with the _____ - _____ melding that takes place during sexual intercourse.
- It's even worse in the case of a _____ due to the intimate presence of the Holy Spirit.

Affirmations to Divorced Persons

1. We view your divorce as profoundly _____. We grieve for you, your ex-spouse, and your children.
2. We too are marital _____. We're no better than you.
3. There is forgiveness through _____. Divorce is not the _____ sin.
4. The church is a _____. We will walk beside you and won't _____ you.
5. True healing requires _____ and obedience to God's commands. When you do that, God will refresh you.
6. God is able to bring about _____ in even the most difficult & hostile of circumstances. Trust him.
7. The consideration of a 2nd marriage after divorce requires considerable _____ and spiritual _____. We will help you.

Family Questions

1. On a scale of 1-10 (1=heading toward divorce) what is the state of our marriage? What would move it a point or two higher?
2. Is there a divorced person (or a child of divorced parents) we can minister to?