

Why May One Divorce?

I wish that it were not the case that there are so many failing marriages. Perhaps one day this will be different, but for now, we must adhere to God's word. While man has many reasons for divorcing (current ones commonly include irreconcilable differences, incompatibility or abuse), Jesus gave only one. Matthew 19:4-6 says, *"And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."*

There are four reasons that Jesus gave which negated the Pharisees' question, *"Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"*

The first reason is that God created one man for one woman. Genesis 1:27 says, *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* When God created only one, it demonstrates that there were no extra mates for man if the first marriage did not work.

The second reason is that the man and wife must cleave to each other. To *"cleave"* means *"to join fast together, to glue, cement"* (Vine, pg. 198). It is obvious that God intended marriage to be permanent. It was this way at the beginning and God still wants it this way now.

The third reason is that a man and woman are one flesh. The number one, at least as it refers to people, cannot be divided. Although the first thought that comes to mind with the term *"one"* is usually the sexual union, it means that a couple have total possession of each another. They are *"one"* in mind, spirit, direction, goals, will and feelings.

The fourth reason is that God joined man and woman together in marriage. *"Joined"* means *"to fasten in one yoke, yoke together"* (Thayer, pg. 594). When God joined them together, man has no right to divorce his mate for any cause.

As I mentioned in the beginning, we must respect His word. Although the world will try to tell us that there are many reasons for divorce, and some of them really tug the *"heart strings,"* we have to take our stand with Jesus and reject distortions of His plain statements.

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