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February 2 2020

**What is Lawful?...*and the Social Management of Sinners*.**

Mark 10:1-12

Braking Marriage… in Canada…in the white conservative church (Baylor U, 2014, Vancouver Sun Feb. 5 2014)

## DIVORCE IN OT ISRAEL

“Is it lawful for a man to divorce (send away) his WIFE?”

Divorce as a weapon…

* Jesus to teach; Pharisees to test
* What men did to women
* What a hard heart does to the “former” love of their life
* What Satan uses to undermine God’s society/-- to war against God’s universal design
* Divorcing for the purpose of remarrying is adultery

“What did Moses command you?”

 “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send HER away.” (Deut 24:1-4)

 Because… legally, hard hearts require structures to mitigate more wicked social damage.

 But… lawfully, God’s design for marriage is permanent (Gen. 2:24).

THE COMMAND. “***Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.***”

 God’s glorious design in creation makes no place for the dividing up of ONE FLESH in this life.

**DIVORCE AND THE CHURCH**—“This is the rule I lay down in all the churches.” (1 Cor. 7:17)

* A wife must not separate (leave) her husband—if she does, she must remain single or be reconciled. (1 Cor. 7:10-11)
* A man must not leave, abandon, send away (divorce) his wife. (1 Cor. 7:11)
* A Christian must not abandon an unbeliever, but if abandoned by an unbeliever, the believer is “not bound.” (1 Cor. 7:15)
* While there is no direct permission to remarriage unless a spouse dies (in every instance in Scripture outside of death, it is adultery [why remarriage to first spouse wasn’t lawful in Deut. 24:1:4]), it may be permissible to remarry once reconciliation is impossible (through remarriage of a former spouse who divorces and adulterates the marriage) or if abandoned by an unbeliever.

DIVORCE or/and REMARRIAGE PRIOR TO SALVATION IS WASHED CLEAN BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST (“What some of you were…” 1 Cor. 6:11)—SINS COMMITTED AFTER SALVATION ARE COVERED BY THE SAME BLOOD THROUGH REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS (1 Jn. 1:9).

Our Christian “PRO-FAMILY” rhetoric rings hollow when our attention to our own families is so cavalier—especially when it comes to rejecting same-sex unions. We are fighting against their unions from a place of our own failure. We are forbidding them something to which we ourselves are unable to demonstrate moral high ground. DON’T SIN—“Physicians, heal yourselves!”

GOD IS PRO-MARRIAGE AS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED.