

DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE:
Meet Goliath
Matthew 14:1-12

INTRO: Our first main point in these messages is the sin of divorce and remarriage. We have looked at the major Scriptures such as Deuteronomy 24:1-4 and Matthew 19, and 1 Corinthians 7. We briefly went through the clear passages, and gave the hermeneutical rule that the unclear must give way to the clear. I believe the view we presented gave a consistent view of what the Old Testament taught and the New Testament.

So having looked at the biblical factors involved, we want to look at some historical factors. We will look briefly at the time of the Old and New Testaments, and then spend most of our time in the Church age. You will understand that we will be speeding again this morning, but not just because I have so much material to cover, but rather because we will cover a lot of years of history.

B. The Historical Factors

1. Old Testament

We begin with the Old Testament. History has not been a great focus in my years of study. But it seems clear that liberal and conservative viewpoints on different issues have always existed. And I think that there are not two viewpoints of life, liberal and conservative, but three. There is the liberal viewpoint, the conservative and the right or biblical view. There may be times when the liberals are right on some point or other, but I expect if either of those is right, it is more often than not the conservative. But the conservative view is not necessarily always right.

When one comes to such matters as divorce and remarriage, we are dealing with the most precious of human relationships. How one views such a subject has a lot to do with whether one is humanist or theistic in one's thinking. Let me explain. A humanist sees life from man's perspective. When you look at our subject from man's perspective, there is no question

but that we believe for man's best good we must allow for both divorce and remarriage.

A theist sees life from God's perspective. When you see life from God's perspective, it is not that which is in man's best interest from man's point of view that is most important, but that which is for man's best good from God's perspective. When we live according to the dictates of our human sympathies, we can easily become destroyers of the world.

I am convinced that no one has come to the view that divorce and remarriage is acceptable to God from an objective study of God's Word alone. Certainly the vast majority have bowed to the pressure of divorce and remarriage because of pressures within the family. I have watched this in those who were determined not to bow to that pressure, and when it came in their family, they caved in.

And once it hits so close and one now begins to study God's Word to see what it says, guess what one finds it to say? Of course. It says in one or two circumstances it is acceptable. And the law of divorce and remarriage later kicks in and then it is another and another and another and there is no end to the *anothers* when it enters society, until you have a no-fault divorce law.

I think that everyone who allows divorce and remarriage for one or more reasons, contributes to the downfall of society.

a. The liberals - Rabbi Hillel

Well, by the time Christ was born, Judaism had basically divided into liberal and conservative views on the divorce subject. Rabbi Hillel was the champion of the liberal school. The dates given for Rabbi Hillel are 110 BC to 10 AD. This would make him around 120 years old when he died, and that seems rather stretched. But his death at 10 AD is more likely. Rabbi Hillel was a very influential

Rabbi. The Jewish Encyclopedia says, "In the first century [BCE](#), [Babylonian](#) born Hillel (later known as Hillel the Elder) migrated to the [Land of Israel](#) to study and worked as a woodcutter, eventually becoming the most influential force in Jewish life. Hillel is said to have lived in such great poverty that he was sometimes unable to pay the admission fee to study [Torah](#), and because of him that fee was abolished. He was known for his kindness, gentleness, concern for humanity."

Now that which is interpreted by mankind as 'kindness, gentleness, and a concern for humanity' wants to bring about what we call a humanist. A humanist centers his views around that which he thinks is good for mankind. Anyone who considers human relationships and wants to do what looks as if it would be the best for humans, will always be permissive and allow for divorce and remarriage, and that is the view of Hillel. In brief, he allowed divorce for almost anything.

b. The conservatives - Rabbis Shammai

A friendly opponent to Rabbi Hillel was Rabbi Shammai. He lived from 50 BC to 30 AD, so he died, probably just about the time Christ died. As an opponent to Hillel, of course he was more conservative. He came to the conclusion that only for marital unfaithfulness could divorce be granted. In Judaism at the time of Christ, as in our day again, liberalism prevailed. As I pondered this, I could not help asking: Could it be that divorce and remarriage was largely responsible for the fall of Judaism? Could it be?

So turn to Matthew 19 (read 1-3). What are the Pharisees seeking to do here? You see, by this time they wanted desperately to find ground to kill Jesus. That is mankind's general response to moral truth. Kill the messenger. So, they tried to trap Jesus between Hillel and Shammai. And what was Jesus answer, though He did not say it like that?

His answer was, Hillel is wrong and Shammai is wrong. There is no ground for divorce. You see, the liberals allowed divorce in almost any case, and the conservatives only in rare cases, and Jesus is saying no divorce allowable. So the disciples clasped their hands over their mouths, and said, "Master. If that is the case, it is very unwise to ever marry." And you might wish to ponder Jesus' answer to that. And I think that when you think it through, and no divorce is permissible and marriage is for life, only then is it truly safe to marry.

2. New Testament

Well, when we come to the NT we have the liberal view of Hillel and the conservative view of Shammai. But the NT brought about a major change on the views of divorce and remarriage. We have seen the teachings of Christ and Paul already. But let me mention one more person in the NT worthy of consideration on this subject, and that is John the Baptist.

John the Baptist was the forerunner of the Messiah. He came to prepare the way for Christ. I believe John the Baptist held to the same view as Jesus and Paul. Go to Matthew 14 (read 1-12). Now Herod had a long list of sins John could have picked on. He was not a moral man at all. But if exposing someone's sins to them is dangerous, exposing sins of the nature John the Baptist pointed out is deadly, literally. Herod had great respect for John but his divorced wife, who was also his brother Philip's wife, hated John, and she could outfox that fox Herod.

Now you put any modern preacher in John's place, and he would never start witnessing to such a lost man by pointing out his adulterous life. You see, we would get such a man saved, and then they repent of that sin and then continue to live in that very same sin. Maybe we would try the seeker friendly route, see if we could invite him for coffee, and win him over. Then get him saved, and then let him continue with his wife.

Now you may say, "Just a minute. John said it was not lawful for him to have this woman because she was Herod's brother's wife, not because she was divorced." Well, if divorce ended a marriage, then she was no longer his brother's wife either. No, the problem was Herod was living in adultery because Herodias was the wife of another.

If John had believed that 'physical immorality' as so many view Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, was grounds for divorce, no doubt Herodias would have qualified, and John could have picked on other sins. Why did John point out Herod's adultery? Could it be that here is his chief sin?

So, in short, as I see it, John, Jesus and Paul held to a no divorce view.

3. Church History

a. From Christ to 1500 AD

Let's consider now the time after the NT was completed. We'll begin with the first 1500 years, because after that a great change of view took place. We ask, what has happened in Church history on our subject? Well, here is what we can say: a major change took place in the Church on the view of divorce and remarriage, from the views held in Judaism. For some 1500 years, the view of no divorce was maintained.

And I ask, why such a drastic change from the view of Judaism to the view of the Church? One reason, and one alone. The view of Jesus and the view presented in New Testament writings brought about this change.

Interestingly, many believed divorce was acceptable, but not remarriage as long as the first partner was alive. That view is still held by many today. I do not view separation as a divorce. A reunion after separation does not require a

remarriage. But if it is called divorce but separation is meant, I am OK with that.

The early Church, in general, held the view I have presented that Jesus and Paul taught. A new marriage could not be contracted unless the first spouse died. But not only did they hold to absolutely no divorce and remarriage, but numerous early church teachers held views so strict that they felt that not even a widow or widower should remarry.

For example, one article said this, regarding Tertullian (c. 200), that he "like his contemporaries, held that the marital bond is indissoluble. In his *Treatises on Marriage and Remarriage*, he strongly objected to a woman's remarrying even after her husband's death, because then she would have "one husband in the flesh and another in the spirit. This would be adultery-joint knowledge of one woman by two men." We would, of course, not agree with such a view.

(http://theologicalstudies.org.uk/article_divorce_snuth.html). And so, if anything, some of these early church preachers would hold a more strict view than we do, and what we hold to is unacceptable to the vast majority of Christians today.

Let me give a reduced version of David L. Snuth's article, "Divorce and Remarriage From the Early Church To John Wesley." This is from Winnipeg Theological Seminary in Otterburne, Manitoba.

With regard to divorce and remarriage in the secular world he writes: *All peoples in the Roman Empire, regardless of their religious affiliation, had the right to divorce their spouses. Marriage was considered a private contract which, like all other contracts, might be dissolved. Divorce was easily attained and, because the state placed heavy financial burdens upon single people, remarriage was encouraged.*

The Shepherd of Hermas, written around 140 AD says a husband with an adulterous wife must divorce her, but 'for the sake of her repentance' he must not remarry. If she repented, he must take her back.

Athenagoras about 170 AD said, "'For whosoever puts away his wife,' says He [meaning Jesus], 'and marries another, commits adultery.'" The article then said, "Indeed, the marriage bond for many of the Ante-Nicene Fathers was so indissoluble that it continued beyond the grave."

Tertullian, around 200 AD said, "...strongly objected to a woman's remarrying even after her husband's death, because then she would have "one husband in the flesh and another in the spirit. This would be adultery-joint knowledge of one woman by two men." However, he did allow for remarriage in the case of death of the firsts partner before conversion, or divorce occurred before conversion.

Origen seems to not have been as strict and confessed that some allowed for divorce.

Around 300 AD the Council of Elvira was held and divorce was strongly opposed. Women who divorced their husbands, as Roman law permitted, were to be excommunicated. If a woman divorced an unfaithful man, she was not to be allowed to have communion until her first husband died.

In 314 the Council of Arles was convened and was more lenient. It dealt with the young Christian whose wife became an adulteress. I quote: "Its counsel was similar to that of Elvira, that he should refrain from marrying a second time as long as the adulterous wife lived. No mention was made, however, of excommunication should he remarry."

I think, without doubt, the prevailing Christian view from the time of Christ until the beginning of the Roman Catholic Church was the no divorce view. Soon after the Roman ruler Constantine professed to become a Christian, Augustine of Hippo became a prominent Roman Catholic theologian. His influence is felt in the world today in both Catholicism and Evangelicalism.

But Augustine set the major trends for Roman Catholicism, and he was a staunch defender of the

no remarriage after divorce view. So Catholicism, to this very day, is stronger against divorce and remarriage than Protestantism has ever been. But Augustine's views prevailed until the 1500's and for Catholicism, up until our very day.

The present Roman Catholic Pope, Pope Francis is a liberal to the core and it may be that Rome will drop its stand on divorce and remarriage.

b. From 1500 until today

-So we will now consider from the 1500's until today. We know that the Protestant Church of today is very weak on divorce and remarriage and we ask, what eroded the permanence view of marriage during this time?

By the time we come to the early 1500's the winds that brought the reformation were blowing strongly. If the reformation can be viewed as a big moment for true Christianity as far as justification by faith is concerned, from the standpoint of divorce and remarriage it can be viewed as the great disaster. I believe E.S. Williams rightly calls the right to remarriage after divorce a Protestant doctrine.

I think that while Evangelicalism views the Protestant reformation as the great moment for the Church, Satan, subtly implanted something that he knew in the end could destroy Protestantism. Here is what he did, as I see it.

He saw the growing unrest among many Catholics, and saw that Catholicism's hold on mankind through the apostatized Roman Catholic Church would lose a large segment of mankind. He found a man, a Catholic, named Desiderius Erasmus. In this man he found fertile soil to plant a seed of discontent with the 'marriage for life' view of Catholicism. This seed would grow, and in the end, as I see it,

would be the destruction of Protestantism as we see it today.

Protestantism brought about denominationalism, and I do not know of a major denomination that is not liberalizing or has not long become totally liberal. That, of course means, divorce is not a problem to them.

Satan coupled Erasmus' discontent with Roman Catholicism's strict view on divorce and remarriage with the dislike of the reformers, like Martin Luther, for Roman Catholicism. Using these two things, he weakened the stance on divorce and remarriage in Protestantism. And so in early Protestantism he planted the seeds that would eventually bring about a Goliath and this Goliath would threaten to destroy the Church and more.

Let me read to you from an article on Erasmus:

Erasmus held traditional Christian marriage in low esteem. He had a dim view of the Church's position on divorce. To see how this came about, we need to look into his early life. Erasmus' childhood experiences provided ample motivation for him to compose his lenient views on divorce and remarriage.

*Erasmus was an illegitimate child. His father, **Gerrard**, grew up in the Netherlands and was attracted to a physician's daughter named Marguarit. Gerard did not live by Christian principles, and soon Marguarit was pregnant. Gerrard's parents and 9 brothers urged him to enter a monastery and become a monk. Instead, he fled to Rome leaving Marguarit behind, soon to give birth.*

Later, Gerrard was falsely told by his parents that Marguarit had died. In a siege of grief he then entered the priesthood and took the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience.

Years later he returned to Holland to discover Marguarit and his son Desiderius were really alive. She had refused to marry anyone but Gerrard. However, he stayed loyal to his vows

*(prohibiting marriage). The two parents continued to give **Desiderius** their affection, and focused on his education. End quote.*

Well, surprisingly Desiderius, with that background, still became a Catholic priest. But he saw through a lot of the false teaching in Catholicism. The article I mentioned further said this:

Erasmus was an outspoken critic against the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church of his day. However, his methods and motives were quite different from those of the great Reformers who followed afterward.

*His sharp wit and cutting pen exposed the vices of the Church and lashed out at the monks. One of his famous books was **In Praise of Folly**, which exposed the disorders, ignorance, impurity, and absurd conduct of Church leaders.*

One of the most well-known characteristics of Erasmus, like Hillel of the Jews, is that he was a full blown humanist. It is not necessarily wrong to be a humanist, but when humanism, which is a man centered view of life; violates theism, a God centered view of life; liberalism will be the outcome. And so it was with Erasmus, in light of his parent's experience in life. And he was the forerunner of divorce and remarriage in Protestantism though he himself remained a Catholic.

Well, he was born in 1466 and died in 1533, just as the changes that would bring about the protestant reformation was gaining strength. And when men like Martin Luther came along, they had already been infected with the teaching of Erasmus. So when Luther finally rejected Catholicism, and nailed his 95 thesis on the Catholic Church door, he was also finished Catholicism, and with certain aspects Catholicism's view on marriage.

And so when it came to divorce and remarriage, Luther and numerous other Protestants, that is

those who protested against Catholicism, readily fell under the persuasion of Erasmus. These early reformers were ready to reject Catholicism's strong view on divorce and remarriage, not because they had carefully studied the Bible, but because of their opposition to Catholicism, a very poor reason to change one's theological position.

Of Erasmus Luther said, "Erasmus knows well how to expose error, but he knows not how to teach truth." I suspect he was right about that but his own error then was in following Erasmus' teaching on divorce and remarriage.

There are those who say Luther held a high view of marriage. That is not so, if simply for one fact. E.S. Williams writes of Luther, "He acknowledged that before the Reformation marriage was considered as being absolutely indissoluble and was regarded as a sacrament of the Church. However, the Reformation had changed the feelings of the community upon the subject. The opinion of the reformers was that there was nothing of a sacramental nature connected with marriage, which they thought to be a mere civil contract which ought to be dealt with in the same way as other civil contracts - by considering what was in the best interest of the parties concerned" (73).

You cannot take a high view of marriage, as many say Luther had, and say marriage is not in the realm of the sacred, but in the realm of the secular state. That is not possible! Roman Catholicism viewed marriage as a Christian sacrament.

And what is a sacrament? Well, it is Augustine as well that defined sacrament in words we understand. He said it is, 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace.' We might not call it an invisible grace, but an invisible bond. Webster's 1828 Dictionary says the word *sacrament* has as its root the Latin word *sacramentum* meaning

an oath, which comes from the word sacer, or sacred. If the word sacrament is used to refer marriage to a sacred event, I would agree with that. It is a divine bond, not a bond of the state.

To downplay marriage as a responsibility of the state, is not a high view of marriage. Marriage was never the idea of the state. It was God's idea and belongs solidly in the realm of the responsibility of God's people. The Christian should maintain this most sacred institution regardless of what the state does.

So we might well ask, should the Church set the standard for marriage, or the secular world? It is the Church no doubt. And because the Church has failed, so has the secular world! Why did the world ever have a high view of marriage? Because of the Church! Why did the church drop their high view of marriage? Because of the world!

Well, what happened in the Church after the Reformation? Denominationalism began. Many of the major denominations of today were begun shortly after the Reformation. I quote from E.S. Williams again, "The Christian voice in the debate (*i.e. of divorce and remarriage*) was confused. While the Protestant Episcopal Church was conservative on the issue of divorce, most Protestants such as the Methodists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Lutherans and Baptists accepted the Protestant doctrine that divorce was permitted for certain reasons" (Italics mine 270).

What happened in the Church after the Reformation? Protestantism became the vehicle through which divorce and remarriage entered the church, which has led to mass divorce.

-Well, having seen what eroded the indissolubility of marriage in the last 500 years, we now ask, what continued to preserve this view in the world?

Why did marriage remain such a strong force in the world after the Reformation? First again, I think is the teaching of Jesus and Paul in the NT. They are just very hard to change, when one takes them at face value. We may redefine the words, explain them in different ways, but the words remain and they remain to have an influence and will continue to do so. Those who read the NT will always be confronted with this issue. Those who divorce and remarry will always be made uncomfortable by them, no matter what their pastors say.

Second, without doubt, was the strong stance of Roman Catholicism. They have never flagged until today. Today, Pope Francis is making, I think, unparalleled changes. The Catholic Online said the other day that as it stands, priests that take the vow cannot be married, and divorced persons who remarry are committing adultery. But Pope Francis has said, and it may be only in private this far, that his priorities as Pope are to change the rules for divorced couples and to allow priests to marry. Of celibacy he said that it was archaic and not a doctrine of the church. Of divorce nothing like that was mentioned. But if he succeeds he will have done one of the best things he could have, and one of the worst, I think.

The third great influence against divorce and remarriage, in my view, was the English parliament. Amazingly, long before Catholicism gained power, the Gospel went to the British Isles. Wikipedia says that as early as AD 47 the Gospel arrived there. The NT had not even been completed yet. There seems to be no sure way of determining when the Church of England began, some say it was around 597 AD. The Church of England dates its history to 597 AD. Long and difficult were the relations between the Catholic Church and the church we now know as the Church of England. Henry the VIII broke relationship with the Catholic Church because they did not allow him to get rid of his wife and marry

another. So many Roman Catholics see 1534 as the beginning of the Church of England. Henry the VIII also set himself up as the supreme head of the Church of England.

This act made the secular state head of the Church. In Catholicism, the Church had exercised authority over the state. Neither of those is right. Church and state should never be the one over the other.

So here we are at the same time as Erasmus influence was felt by the world on this subject, and as the winds of change were blowing towards the Reformation. And with King Henry wanting divorce and separating from Catholicism, how did England remain such a strong force against divorce and remarriage?

Well, after Henry VIIIth, the queen now known as 'Bloody Mary' put the church back under Catholic rule. When her half sister, Elizebeth came to the throne she became a determined opponent to Roman Catholicism. When Pope Pius the V excommunicated her, the break between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Church became final and once more the ruling king or queen became the head of the Church of England. And so even today, Queen Elizebeth is the head of the Anglican Church, though it is mostly a symbolic role, as is her role in many other things.

So, the Church of England did not separate between church and state. And thus, when divorce came up for discussion in England, it was dealt with mostly as a political issue. I think it would be hard to argue that the view of the Roman Catholic Church continued to have great influence on the Church of England and thus it maintained a strong stand on divorce and remarriage. And as I see it, the British parliament stood stronger against divorce and remarriage than any other church ever has, with the exception of the Roman Catholic church.

But in English politics, year by year liberal forces chipped away at the strong stance on divorce and remarriage. And in a meeting in 2002, a General Synod meeting dealt with this issue once more, and the outcome was that 269 votes against 83 votes made the decision to allow for divorce. So the English were a great force in maintaining a strong stand on divorce and remarriage in the world.

Those then, I see as the major influences in the world in the last 500 years that helped a strong conscience on this subject to continue.

-And last, let me ask, what has happened in the Untited States of America and Canada?

America was discovered in 1492, just before the Reformation. By the early 1600's the first settlers arrived. By now denominations had formed in Europe, and many of them came to America. E.S. Williams, in his book, "The Great Divorce Controversy' has a chapter on American. The first paragraph begins like this: "America's road to mass divorce was very different from that chosen by England. While England accepted divorce reluctantly and only after a fierce struggle, the American people right from the beginning yearned after divorce. Whereas in England the debate revolved around the indissolubility of marriage, the American debate was more concerned with finding the right grounds for divorce. So it is no surprise that the divorce rate in the USA is the highest in the world" end quote(252). Let me say to that, the English has a theistic concern; the Americans had a humanistic concern.

What was one of the main causes of such a move in America? It goes right back to Erasmus and Luther and other Reformers. In England, until 1940 or so, divorce was almost non-existent. That is not long ago. Why was divorce so low? Was it because there were not marriage problems? That has never been the case. It was because of their strong stand on

divorce. In America, by the late 1800's divorce was beginning to climb. In the 1970's it was already into mass divorce.

What kept America quite low in divorce until say about 1940? We can say this, it was not due to the teaching and preaching of the Evangelical church. It was, I think, to a large degree the influence of the Church of England, because there were many English in America from early years onward. And it was also due to the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. Sad to say, among so called Evangelical churches, there was very little influence to help stem the tide of divorce and remarriage. Evangelical churches have been very influential in the skyrocketing of divorce and that includes many Mennonite churches. Today, Mennonites are as liberal as most liberals in almost every way except going to war. We still resist that, but usually not for the right reasons.

What about Canada? Let me read bits and pieces from the Canadian Encyclopedia. It says, "Traditional Christian concepts of marriage dominated Canadian society since the founding of the country. Since the end of the Second World War, however, the formal rules, family customs and societal expectations around marriage and divorce have steadily been eroded and relaxed."

And again, "Long before the founding of Canada, the Catholic and Protestant churches had established that marriage was a lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman who freely consented to join their lives for procreation and mutual comfort." Now listen to what Canadian historians say about Catholicism and Protestantism, "However, the various Christian denominations were divided on several issues. The Roman Catholic Church held marriage to be a sacrament (a sign of God's presence), while Protestants simply considered it blessed by God."

And again, "Catholics believed the marriage bond lasted until death, while Protestants accepted the possibility of divorce and remarriage in limited circumstances. Catholicism prohibited a broad range of unions among people, but offered some leeway in the enforcement of its rules. Protestantism imposed fewer restrictions on who a person could marry. Despite these differences, broad agreement on the fundamentals of Christian marriage existed in western Europe after the Reformation. These beliefs and ideas were brought to Canada by European settlers and church leaders."

And again, "In the past, marriage in Canada was usually a religious rite. Civil marriage has always been possible, at least since the end of the French colonial era, but until recently it has been relatively uncommon."

And then with regard to divorce: "The history of divorce in Canada contrasts sharply with that of marriage for, while most Canadians married, divorce was extremely uncommon until after the Second World War. In fact, until that time, Canada had one of the lowest divorce rates in the Western world. Respectability - articulated by social and religious leaders - condemned divorce as a threat to the family, and the strength of this opinion prevented the relaxation of Canadian divorce laws. Consequently, access to divorce in Canada was extremely limited until 1968."

And last, with regard to alternative unions: "In the 21st century, marriage in Canada no longer requires the union of a man and a woman. In 2003 some provinces began legalizing same-sex marriages, and in 2005 the federal Civil Marriage Act made same-sex marriage legal across the country. Some religious denominations, however, continued to restrict church marriage ceremonies to opposite-sex couples." Note that it says, "some religious denominations..." This means most accepted the

government's reforms and that shows us the state of the Church in Canada.

And last, "The other major change to marriage in Canada in recent decades has been the growing preference for couples not to formally marry, but to live in common-law relationships. Canadian couples who live together for at least a year generally have the same legal and taxation rights and obligations as married couples."

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/history-of-marriage-and-divorce/>

I think I got this next quote from the Berean Call, and they got it from World.com (7/20/16), "Why aren't profamily groups cheering the drop in divorce?" And here are some excerpts they give: "The marriage rate has been trending downward for decades. From 2004 to 2014, the U.S. marriage rate fell by 20 percent, a drop of 8.3 marriages per 1,000 unmarried women over age 15.... The report also noted the divorce rate's steady decline since 1979....But those numbers do not tell the whole story, according to experts. "[T]he declining marriage rate is not so much a reflection that marriage is no longer desired, but that, in a culture of distrust and divorce, it is fragile," write Amber and David Lapp, research fellows at the Institute for Family Studies and coauthors of the report's essay on marriage. The Lapps assert young people today are not opposed to marriage—they are conflicted about it. They want a healthy, sustaining marriage relationship and desire to raise their kids within marriage, but they are afraid of divorce."

CONCL: Well, that is a very brief 6,000 year history of divorce and remarriage, with almost no time spent in the Old and New Testaments, or the first 1,500 years of Church history. We spent more time in the last 500 years of the Church age, and that was an overview.

The lessons to learn are that when divorce is allowed for one reason, it will never stay with that. It will eat and eat until you have a no-fault divorce rule. I think it must always harm one's moral compass.

And also, if one becomes humanistic in one's thinking, one is most likely to become liberal in morals. And humanism will always end up in allowing divorce and remarriage. When our view is a man centered view, we will liberalize. When our view centers around God, then only can we see marriage and divorce from the right perspective.

I think theologians would not yet disagree with the first question of most Catechisms, "What is the chief end of man?" That is, "Why did God make man?" And it is not for man's sake, but His own. We have been created to exist for the glory of God. And He is the one who decides what will bring glory to Him. And when we do that, we find that what brings glory to Him, is in the long run, for the good of man.

The indissolubility view of marriage brings glory to God, and in the long run, preserves mankind. The view that divorce may be entered for one or more reasons is a destroyer of mankind. All you have to do is look at our own country or the Church. And in the next message I want to look briefly at the social factor in our subject. What does divorce do to society?