

A) There may be a condition in which divorce is the lesser of evils.

B) A Christian response to abuse

C) I am already divorced, and for the wrong reasons, what can I do now?

5) What about being single?

Sources

The Divine Conspiracy, Dallas Willard; The Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom, R. Kent Hughes; The Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. I, William Barclay; and a reference to the Sermon on the Mount Series by Tim Keller. Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones; Sacred Marriage, Gary Thomas.



Christian harmony in an age of chaos
Matthew 5:21-48

Marriage

Matthew 5:31-32

"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery."

Matthew 19:3-12

Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery." The disciples said to him, "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry." Jesus replied, "Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it."

1) **God designed marriage as a covenant.**

“Entering marriage means we enter the regulation of the Creator.”
— Tim Keller

A) A marriage covenant is a public vow of absolute commitment.

Covenant Vows:

Will you love him/her, comfort him/her, honor and keep him/her, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others keep thee only unto him/her so long as you both shall live?

B) A marriage covenant has no lesser party; Jesus speaks to the value of women.

2) **God designed the marriage relationship to be a unity of heart, soul, mind, and body.**

Covenant partnership is a profound and deep friendship.

A) A word to the married: This kind of relationship takes effort.

B) A word to the single: What kind of standard do you have in choosing a spouse?

3) **God designed marriage to be a powerful relationship**

“Marriage is the merciless revealer, the great white searchlight turned on the darkest places of human nature.” — Katherine Anne Porter

“The first purpose of marriage—beyond happiness, sexual expression, the bearing of children, companionship, mutual care and provision, or anything else— is to please God. The challenge, of course, is that it is utterly selfless living; rather than asking, “What will make me happy?” we are told that we must ask, “What will make God happy?” And just in case we don’t grasp it immediately, Paul underscores it ... ‘Those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.’ (2 Corinthians 5:15)”
— Gary Thomas, author of Sacred Marriage

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.” — Ephesians 5:25-28

4) **What about divorce?**

Why is divorce even a consideration?

Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.”
— Matthew 19:8

“It is not an accident that Jesus deals with divorce after having dealt with anger, contempt, and obsessive desire. Just ask yourself how many divorces would occur, and in how many cases the question of divorce would never even have arisen, if anger, contempt, and obsessive fantasized desire were eliminated. The answer is, of course, hardly any at all.” — Dallas Willard