

wife."

- e) If already remarried, remain in that marriage, seek to fulfil your marital role, trust God for His grace, learn from your mistakes, and counsel others to follow God's path to avoid your mistakes.

3. The Application of his Illustration (v.4-6)

a. When a sinner repents of his sin and trusts Christ to save him, he dies to the law and the bondage of sin.

- 1) Note the words in verse 4. "*Wherefore*" takes us back to the illustration (v.2-3). That illustration sheds light on this difficult truth.
- 2) Unbelievers are in a sense married to sin. In an unseen way, a believer becomes dead to the law by the body of Christ. He died with Christ on the cross.
- 3) That unexplainable death with Christ, frees him from the bondage of sin under the law. Just as death is the ONLY thing that can justly break a marriage bond, so death to sin is the ONLY thing that can set us free from sin's bondage.

b. He then is married to Christ to enjoy a new, fruitful life.

- 1) Paul describes our new relation to Christ as that of being married to Him (v.4). We are His fruitful bride.
- 2) Our old life of sinful afflictions produced fruit unto death. But, now, we are dead to that bondage, free to live in newness of spirit for God's glory (v.5-6).

Conclusion: Paul's illustration reinforced the permanence of marriage. I urge you to download my notes and study it carefully. If you have endured the heartache of a broken marriage, obey God's instructions, seek God's forgiveness, and by His grace press on.

As death is the only thing that can justly break a marriage bond and allow remarriage, so death to sin sets us free to marry Christ and produce a new life of fruitfulness for God's glory. Ask God to help you grasp that illustrated truth. If Christ has not yet saved you, speak to me and let me help you.

Song: Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord - 337

The Permanence of Marriage

13 February 2022 AM – Romans 7:1-6 – Ro2022 – Scott Childs

Introduction: We use illustrations to make things clearer and easier to understand. The best illustrations use things that the hearer clearly understands. They help him grasp something he does not understand. For example, if you have never eaten a raw fig, I might describe it as soft as an over ripe banana and as sweet as a tree-ripened peach.

The Apostle Paul knew the value of illustrations, and he used one to open the minds of his readers. He wanted to remove barriers in the minds of his readers to help them grasp that when a sinner trusts Christ, he dies to the law of sin and is alive to serve God. In Romans 7:1-4, Paul used marriage to illustrate this truth.

Transition: As we look at this illustration, I want you to see Paul's intent, his point, and his application.

1. The Intent of his Illustration (v.1)

a. Paul wanted his readers to see the grip of the law.

- 1) God's law condemns all sin.
- 2) No sinner can escape this condemnation. There were no loopholes in God's law.

b. However, Paul also wanted his readers to see that death ended the law's bondage.

- 1) God's law only has dominion over a sinner while the sinner is alive.
- 2) In Romans 6, Paul repeatedly told us that when a sinner repents and trusts Christ to rescue his soul, he actually dies to sin. He is now going to illustrate this.

2. The Point of his Illustration (v.2-3)

a. Marriage is to be permanent (Read v.2-3)

- 1) God ordained marriage right after He created Eve in the Garden of Eden (Ge 2:24).
- 2) Jesus assured us that this (the marriage of one man with one woman for a lifetime) was God's mind from the beginning (Mt 19:4-6).
- 3) The God's law binds a husband and wife together until death. Only the death of the spouse could free a husband

or wife to remarry.

- 4) You might say, “**What about the exception clause?**” Okay, let us examine it. Turn with me to Jesus’ words in (Matthew 5:31-32) “*It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, **saving for the cause of fornication**, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.*” Now flip over to (Matthew 19:4-6) “*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.*” (Matthew 19:9) “*And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, **except it be for fornication**, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso **marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.***” To understand the exception clause, we must use our Bible study skills. We must **not** rely on our feelings or even the teachings of our favourite Bible teacher. We must search it out ourselves.

- a) A search reveals that Matthew is the only biblical author who included the exception. **That is significant!** It is missing in Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; Rom 7:3; and 1Co 7:10-11.
- b) **Why** was Matthew the only biblical author to include the exception?
- (1) Matthew wrote to Jews, Mark wrote to Romans, Luke wrote to Greeks, Paul wrote to Gentile Romans and Corinthians. The Jews had a **strongly** binding betrothal (i.e., engagement) period. This likely influenced his words here.
 - (2) Matthew clearly stated that at marriage, **God** makes the couple *one flesh* and **God** forbids the couple to divorce (i.e., *put asunder*) (Mt 19:6).
 - (3) Perhaps the best explanation is that Matthew’s exception applied to couples who were

betrothed or engaged, but not yet fully married.

For example, Joseph thought Mary had been unfaithful during their engagement (Mt 1:18-25). He contemplated divorcing her to break their engagement. Again, only Mathew, writing to Jews, records this detail.

- c) **If** we apply Matthew’s exception to marriage, it contradicts all the other biblical writers. It also contradicts Jesus’ command “*let not man put asunder*”. It contradicts Paul’s warning, “*Let not the wife depart from her husband.*” Neither does an exception, when applied to marriage, rise above the teachings of the Pharisees as Jesus’ teaching generally did (Mt 5:28). J. Carl Laney, *The Divorce Myth*, p. 66-68 It also nullifies the illustration Paul is making here.

b. Only death releases a spouse to remarry

- 1) At marriage, God joins a couple permanently until death and God said that no one is to break that bond (Mt 19:6).
- 2) Paul's Jewish readers clearly knew that only death could break a marriage bond, **thus, he used it to illustrate his point.**
- 3) Paul reminded his readers that God’s law bound a married woman to her husband as long as he was alive (v.2). However, if her husband died, she was free to marry another man without committing adultery (v.3).
- 4) **This brings up an emotional question.** What are you to do if your marriage bond has been broken by divorce?
- 5) What does the Bible say? Look for yourself.
 - a) Divorce is wrong (verses above).
 - b) When we do wrong, we are to admit it, and confess it to God to receive His forgiveness (1Jn 1:9).
 - c) Accept that forgiven sins still have consequences (e.g., splintered emotions, confused children, etc.).
 - d) God’s instruction is clear in (1Cor 7:10-11) “*And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his*