

The Gospels And Matthew 19:9

During my time of preaching, I have encountered Christians teaching that the gospels do not apply as part of the New Covenant. Said another way, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are a part of the Old Covenant which was nailed to the cross when Jesus died (Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:9). The ramification of this argument is that Christians cannot use Matthew 19:9 when teaching on divorce. The doctrine that arises from this error is that there is nothing prohibiting non-Christians from bringing their present adulterous marriage into a relationship with Christ and the church when they obey the gospel.

In Matthew 19:9, Jesus said, *"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."* Not only did Jesus use the word *"whosoever,"* which means that what he was about to say addresses everyone, but He also went back beyond the law of Moses to Genesis 2:24 to show that God is not pleased with and never intended for a marriage to end in divorce (Matthew 19:4-6). Under the New Testament, the only situation where divorce is now acceptable is fornication.

Matthew 19:9 is not an explanation of Jewish divorce laws. Jesus' statement in Matthew 19:9 cannot be an explanation of Mosaic law because the "exception" deals with a subject that had no "exception" in the law of Moses! Adulterers under the law of Moses were put to death (cf. John 8:5).

God's word is a priceless treasure that cannot be "sold" for the sake of allowing someone to remain in an adulterous marriage (Proverbs 23:23). My family is probably as divided as everyone else's when it comes to this issue, but I cannot excuse an adulterous relationship and forsake the revealed word of God. In doing so, I show that I am truly not worthy of the kingdom of God (Matthew 10:34-37).

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