

A READY DEFENSE: MDR

INTRODUCTION

A. Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18

The words of the Lord on the subject of divorce and remarriage are extraordinarily plain and clear.

B. 2nd Corinthians 11:3

Sadly, however, the simplicity that is in Christ is something which the devil seeks to corrupt through deception.

C. 1st Peter 3:15

For that reason, therefore, we ought to be prepared with a ready defense against false doctrines which oppose the Lord's will.

I. IS MARRIAGE AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE?

A. False Doctrine:

Marriage is available to all people, without exception.

1. Genesis 2:18

God does not consider it good for man to be alone.

2. 1st Timothy 4:1-3

"Forbidding to marry" is a departure from the faith.

B. Ready Answer:

1. God's desire for man to have companionship is limited.

a. 1st Corinthians 7:10-11

Those who sinfully divorce must remain unmarried if they are unable to reconcile.

b. Matthew 19:10-12

"For the kingdom of heaven's sake" some must become eunuchs. They are required to exist as though castrated.

2. Marriage is intended as an alternative to sin, not a method of carrying it out.
 - a. **1st Corinthians 7:2**
Every person is entitled to his or her “own” husband or wife, **not** someone else’s!
 - b. **Hebrews 13:4**
“Marriage is honorable among all” except “fornicators and adulterers [whom] God will judge.”
 - c. **Mark 10:11**
Jesus identifies some marriages as adultery.
 - i. **Galatians 5:19-21**
Adultery is forbidden.
 - ii. Therefore, the Lord has forbidden some to marry.

II. DO THE WORDS OF JESUS APPLY TO THE OLD OR NEW TESTAMENT?

A. False Doctrine:

Because the New Testament did not come into force until Christ died, His words apply to the Old Testament, not the New; therefore, the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are Old Testament books.

1. **Chart #1: False Doctrine**

2. **Colossians 2:14**

It is true that the Old Law was in effect until the death of Christ, when it was then done away with.

B. Ready Answer:

1. Contradicts the nature of a testament.

a. **Hebrews 9:16-17**

Just as a person’s will does not take effect until that person’s death, the testament of Christ could not take force until He died.

- i. True as that is, it is normally understood that the will must be written while the testator is alive! Those who assert this false doctrine seem to be saying that a man must **die before he can even write his will!**
 - ii. While it is true that the New Testament didn't take effect until Christ died, it remains equally true that what Christ said is effective under the New Testament. Otherwise, the words of Jesus were only effective for the last few years of a Covenant that lasted thousands of years!
 - b. Compare **Chart #2: Tradition** to **Chart #3: Truth**.
- 2. Contradicts the biblically stated timeline.
 - a. **Mark 1:1-8**
 - i. The very first words in the book of Mark are: "*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*" (1). If we want to know when the gospel began, this is the place to look!
 - ii. The verses which follow describe the ministry of John (4-6), pointing to Christ (2-3, 7-8).
 - b. **Luke 16:16**
 - i. "*The law and the prophets were **until John.***" By the time John began his ministry, the Old Testament was no longer to be preached.
 - ii. "***Since that time** the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.*" John and all who came after him were preachers of the kingdom, the gospel, the New Testament – even though they may not have been under it yet, themselves.
- 3. Rejects whom God sent (**Matthew 10:40_b**).
 - a. **Matthew 17:1-5**

While Jesus was living on earth, God decreed that His disciples should listen to Him, not Moses and Elijah – representatives of the law and prophets.

b. Hebrews 1:1-2

God still decrees that we should listen to Jesus Christ.

4. Ignores the nature of the New Covenant.

a. 2nd Corinthians 3:6

The New Covenant is “*of the Spirit,*” giving life.

b. John 6:63

Jesus’ words are spirit and life.

c. Therefore, the New Covenant contains Jesus’ words.

5. Matthew 5:31-32

If the words of Jesus, including his commands about divorce and remarriage, are part of the Old Law, then why did He present those words in direct contrast to the Old Law?

III. DO THE WORDS OF JESUS APPLY TO ALL PEOPLE OR CHRISTIANS ONLY?

A. False Doctrine:

Because they have not submitted to the law of Christ by obeying the gospel in baptism, non-Christians are not subject to the words of Jesus.

B. Ready Answer:

1. Contradicts the authority of Christ.

a. Matthew 28:18

Christ Jesus has total authority.

b. John 17:1-3

Christ has “*authority over all flesh,*” meaning all mankind, saints and sinners alike.

c. John 12:48

The words of Christ will be the standard of judgment on the last day, **especially including those who have rejected Him!**

2. Contradicts the nature of sin.
 - a. **Romans 3:23**
Everyone is guilty of sin.
 - b. **1st John 3:4; Romans 4:15**
Sin is the transgression of **law**.
 - c. If sin is the violation of law, and all have sinned, then all are under law – specifically, the law of Christ.
3. Contradicts the nature of law.
 - a. **James 2:10**
Failure to keep even one aspect of a law makes one guilty of the whole thing
 - b. Non-Christians are at least accountable to the law of Christ insofar as it requires them to do what is necessary to be saved.
 - i. **Romans 8:2**
The law of Christ is what frees people from sin.
 - ii. **Mark 16:15**
Christ commanded that the saving power of the gospel be preached to every creature in the world.
 - iii. **2nd Thessalonians 1:8**
Those who disobey that gospel will suffer the flaming fire of His vengeance.
 - c. If even partial submission to a law requires total submission to that law, and all alien sinners are accountable to the law of Christ for salvation, then all alien sinners are accountable to the entirety of Christ's law, including what He said about divorce and remarriage.
4. Contradicts direct statements.

- a. **1st Corinthians 5:9-11**
There are immoral people in the world guilty of specific sins, including sexual immorality.
 - b. **1st Corinthians 6:9-11**
Before being washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, some of the Corinthians were guilty of specific sins, including sexual immorality.
5. Contradicts the scope of Jesus' divorce and remarriage law.
- a. **Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18**
Jesus stated that His law on divorce and remarriage applied to "whoever". Who is left out by the term "whoever"?
 - b. **Matthew 7:24**
Jesus identified as wise "whoever" hears and obeys Him. Who is left out by the term "whoever"?
 - c. **Romans 10:13**
Salvation is available to "whoever" calls on the name of the Lord. Who is left out by the term "whoever"?

IV. IS REMARRIAGE JUSTIFIED FOLLOWING BAPTISM?

A. False Doctrine:

Divorce not for fornication and subsequent remarriage is sin, but baptism washes away sins, so once forgiven the relationship may continue.

- 1. **Acts 22:16**
Baptism does indeed wash away sins.
- 2. **2nd Samuel 11:2-5, 26-27; 12:24**
David was permitted to keep Bathsheba as his wife.

B. Ready Answer:

- 1. Contradicts the nature of repentance.
 - a. **Acts 2:38**

Baptism only remits sins that have first been repented of.

b. Matthew 12:41; Jonah 3:10

Repentance means turning away from evil ways. Baptism does not change evil ways into good ways.

2. Contradicts the design of marriage.

a. Matthew 19:3-6

God joins a man and woman in marriage, making them one flesh. He prohibits the separation of what He has joined.

b. 1st Corinthians 7:39; Romans 7:2-3

In marriage, there is a lifelong bond. God's forgiveness does not sunder that bond.

c. 1st Samuel 11:17, 26

When Bathsheba married David, her first husband Uriah was already dead.

CONCLUSION

- A.** The Lord's will regarding divorce and remarriage is plain.
- B.** There are no loopholes.