

**Sovereign Grace Church**  
**“Original Intent” outline**  
July 8, 2018

**Matthew 5: 31-32; 19: 3-12**

*Having just corrected the Pharisees legal “easy out” of lust replacing the actual practice of adultery by stressing that uncontrolled & purposed desire is the first step in committing adultery, Jesus now turns his attention briefly to a closely related problem: the issue of easy divorce. In Jesus' day only men had access to the legal out of an undesired marriage. Though the Mosaic legislation had attempted to do damage control by limiting divorce to “uncleanness” (a word closely identified with sexual impurity) the word left enough wriggle room to justify a debate as to exactly how much a man would have to put up with before he could issue his wife a certificate of divorce and send her out.*

*In essence, Jesus drives the issue back to the original intent of marriage and suggests that life in the Kingdom which He was currently making available gave rise to a different question. The issue is not how to get out of a bad marriage but how to turn a bad marriage into a glorious one! This morning we will consider this very controversial question of divorce as Jesus deals with it in His sermon.*

**1. The Mosaic Divorce Law of Deuteronomy 24 (v. 31; Deut 24: 1-4)**

- **Civil punishment for adultery Lev. 20: 10; Gen. 9: 6**
  
- **“Uncleanness”**
  
- **The Male Focus**

**2. Jesus' Correction (v. 32)**

- **Jesus appeals to Original Intent  
Matt. 19: 4-5; Gen. 1: 27; 2: 24**
  
- **Reason for the Mosaic Legislation: Hardness of Heart**

- **The Current Debate: Shemai vs. Hillel**
  
- **Does Jesus contradict Himself (Luke 16:18)**
  
- **Costs of Divorce (Matt. 19:9)**

**3. What about now?  
I Cor. 7: 15-16**

**Questions for Conversation and Reflection**

- 1. What is your own view of divorce and remarriage? What is the basis for your view? Is it an adequate basis? Have you ever given counsel to someone tempted to get a divorce? How did you handle it? If you were faced with that situation today would you give the same advice? Why or why not?**
  
- 2. What is the central question that people face when seeking a divorce? Who's interests are of primary concern? What character traits feed the question? How might different character traits change the question? How does living in Christ's Kingdom change ones perspective on painful issues?**
  
- 3. What is the church's role in mediating questions of divorce and remarriage? What questions should motivate the church's counsel? If formal discipline becomes a necessity, how can it be implemented with the most productive results? What is the goal of church discipline?**
  
- 4. In what way can ones marriage be looked upon as a "spiritual discipline?" How can our marriages be sanctified? Which is worse....an emotionally painful marriage or adultery? Why? Why is the choice not either/or?**