

Mat 19:1-3 Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, he went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. (2) And large crowds followed him, and he healed them there. (3) And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?”

Who asked the question? – the Pharisees!

Mat 13:10-12 Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” (11) And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

Mat 13:34-35 All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. (35) This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.”

Is this a parable? -- no -- so Jesus is not teaching New Covenant doctrine as that was restricted to the Jews.

Was it a test?

What kind of test? – Jesus' understanding of the Law of Moses on a very disputed point.

Hillel and Shammai were two leading sages of the last century BCE and the early 1st century CE who founded opposing schools of Jewish thought. There are 316 issues on which they debated. The House of Shammai held that a man may only divorce his wife for a serious transgression, but the House of Hillel allowed divorce for even trivial offenses, such as burning a meal.

Which side would Jesus come down on?

Mat 19:3 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?”

Deu 24:1-4 “When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, (2) and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, (3) and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, (4) then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

Mat 19:4-6 He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, (5) and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? (6) So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

God wanted men to marry and stay with their wives.

Only two men in the OT could not divorce  
One who said his wife was not a virgin when they married and the parents had proof she was . Deu 22: 18) Then the elders of that city shall take the man and whip him, (19) and they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name upon a virgin of Israel. And she shall be his wife. He may not divorce her all his days.

The second was a man who had sex with a virgin to whom he was not married.

Deu 22:28-29 “If a man meets a virgin who is not betrothed, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are found, (29) then the man who lay with her shall give to the father of the young woman fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he has violated her. He may not divorce her all his days.



So the Law of Moses permitted divorce.

Mat 19:7 They said to him, “Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?” (8) He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. (9) And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.” (10) The disciples said to him, “If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry.”

If a man put away his wife, Jesus said the clause in Deu 24.1 “he has found some indecency in her” was immorality.

To divorce for any other cause was to commit sin.

“except for sexual immorality, and marries another,  
commits adultery” (ESV)

Mat 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. (KJV)

The last phrase not being present in the two oldest  
manuscripts.

The question Jesus is asked and which He answers is, “Why did God require the certificate of divorce?”

-- “Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.”

What did the certificate of divorce allow a woman to do? -- to get another husband

Deu 24.2 “she may go and be another man's wife.”  
(KJV) (ASV)

Deu 24:2 and if after she leaves his house she becomes the wife of another man, (NIV)

Who could the woman not remarry after she took another husband?

Deu 24:4 then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled.

Why?

“That would be detestable in the eyes of the LORD. Do not bring sin upon the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.”

Is divorce wrong? No – God divorced Israel.

Jer 3:8 And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

So the woman in Deu 24.1-4, whether immoral or not had to be provided with a certificate of divorce so she could be another man's wife.

Without the certificate, she couldn't remarry, immoral or innocent.



Rom 7:1 Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? 2 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. 3 Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

Whether innocent or guilty, she is called an adultress.

Mat 19:13 Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them. 14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Little children are not accountable as they do not know right from wrong – get the CD or look at the PPT on the “Age of Accountability” from last week.

Mat 19:16 And behold, a man came up to him, saying, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” 17 And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” 18 He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, 19 Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Which ones do I have to keep?

Mat 19:21 Jesus said to him, “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

two things – 1. get rid of what you have  
- 2. come follow me

Mat 19:22 When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Jesus then focuses on the real problem.

Mat 19:23-24 And Jesus said to his disciples,  
“Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich  
person enter the kingdom of heaven. (24) Again I  
tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the  
eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the  
kingdom of God.”

There was no discussion of “come follow me.”

Mat 19:28-30 Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (29) And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. (30) But many who are first will be last, and the last first.