

Jesus, Matthew 19, And His Giving Of The Indissoluble Marital Covenant



Marriage at Cana. Painting by Jan Steen, 1676¹

Welcome to this study on Matthew 19 and Jesus giving us the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. Let's begin this study with a word of prayer.

The Come, Holy Spirit Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful;
And enkindle in them the fire of Your love.
Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created.
And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let Us Pray . . .

O God, Who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful,
grant that by the gift of the same Spirit, we may always be truly wise and ever rejoice
in His consolation, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Sts. Louis and Zelig Martin², pray for us. St. Thérèse of Lisieux, pray for us. St. Joseph, pray for us. St. John the Baptist, pray for us.

¹ Marriage at Cana painting by Jan Steen 1676. Oil on canvas. Norton Simon Museum. Public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%27Marriage_at_Cana%27_by_Jan_Steen,_1676,_oil_on_canvas,_Norton_Simon_Museum.JPG

² St. Louis and St. Zelig Martin, are the Saint-parents of St. Therese of Lisieux and are patrons of marriage (and other things). St. Therese is the patron of missions. Marriage and the family these days, are definitely part of "mission territory".

It is beyond the scope of this study to deal with **annulments** (which is just a canonical decree concerning a couple that a valid Sacramental Marriage NEVER took place to begin with, therefore they are not married. Being married is an “impediment” to getting married of course.).

Again, an annulment just means a Sacramental Marriage never took place in the first place after a canonical investigation. For some minor details on this issue, please see Table 3 on your own.

NOTES

Outline Of This Study

Matthew 19:1-12 The actual passage.

Basic catechesis on Sacraments.

Basic catechesis on natural marriage and Sacramental Marriage.

Relevant Mystical Theology (illustrating the hate satan has for marriage and family—a call to spiritual battle).

We will study St. John the Baptist, his ministry defending the sanctity of marriage, his beheading due to his supporting the sanctity of marriage, and the geography associated with his ministry.

Jesus introduces Sacramental Marriage in Matthew 19.

Some relevant Patristics on the indissolubility of marriage.

Closing statements and prayer.

Matthew 19:1-12 Reading The Scripture Passage

For deep insight into the Sacrament of Marriage and its indissolubility, let's read Matthew 19:1-12.

MATTHEW 19:1-12 1 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?" 4 He answered, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined 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 put **asunder***." 7 They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" 8 He said to them, "For 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 unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery." 10 The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is not **expedient** ** to marry." 11 But he said to them, "Not all men can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. 12 For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it."

***asunder** = to break apart.

****expedient** = advisable

Basic Catechesis On Sacraments

BALTIMORE CATECHISM 136 A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

Sacramental Marriage (Holy Matrimony) is a Sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ.

CCC 1114 "Adhering to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, to the apostolic traditions, and to the consensus . . . of the Fathers," we profess that

"the sacraments of the new law were . . . **all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord.**"

Basic Catechesis On The Sacrament Of Holy Matrimony And Its Indissolubility³

The indissolubility of Sacramental Marriage means that a husband and wife Sacramentally Married, will REMAIN husband and wife until death do them part. It is a Sacramental union between one man, one woman and Jesus.

CCC 1601 "The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this **covenant** between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament."⁸⁴

There are "natural marriages" and Sacramental Marriages. First let's look at natural marriages.

CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

. . . First of all, **nature** itself by an instinct implanted in **both sexes** (notice there are only two sexes) impels them to such companionship . . .

For a valid "natural marriage" you need four things.⁴

- 1– One man and one woman.
- 2– Established by two parties via consent.
- 3 – A lifelong irrevocable exclusive partnership.
- 4 – It is entered into for the good of the spouses and for procreation and education of offspring.

And there are Sacramental Marriages or "Holy Matrimony" which adds in a **Baptized** bride **and** groom IN A STATE OF GRACE (which is WHY brides and grooms usually go to Confession the evening BEFORE they marry—to assure they are in a state of grace and not in a state of mortal sin so the graces of the Sacrament can go forth) and openness to life.

CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT Matrimony is **far superior in its sacramental aspect** and aims at an incomparably higher end (then natural marriage). . . . so was the sacramental dignity **subsequently** conferred upon it in order that a people might be begotten and brought up for the service and worship of the true God and of Christ our Saviour.

All marital unions are of this world. In Heaven we won't BE angels (we will always be humans), but in the Resurrection we will be "LIKE" the angels in the respect that we neither marry or are given in marriage.

MATTHEW 22:30 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

Although Sacramental matrimonial unions are of this world, and meant to reflect THE FULFILLED Matrimonial Union (Christ and His Church), that doesn't mean that God has no plans for married couples from this life to have SOMETHING special together in the next life. The mystics (i.e. Saint Padre Pio)

³ It is appropriate to cite Dr. Scott Hahn here who first unpacked these ideas to me. Much of this is a re-presentation of his excellent presentation concerning the indissolubility of the Sacrament of Marriage. See "The Indissolubility of Marriage" by Scott Hahn. Audio number two from the "Becoming A Catholic Family" series.

⁴ Please see **"God's Plan For Your Marriage"** by Fr. Robert J. Altier Sophia Institute Press pp. 61-62

have assured us God DOES have something special for husbands and wives in the next life. We just don't know the details, and it is beyond the scope of this study to try to unpack that element deeper.

The Marriage Covenant is **indissoluble** or unbreakable in this world (and that will be the focus of this study).

CCC 2382 The Lord Jesus insisted on the original intention of the Creator who willed that **marriage be indissoluble** . . . "a ratified and consummated marriage cannot be dissolved by any human power or for any reason other than death."

When a man and a woman Sacramentally Marry, THEY are both the ministers of the Sacrament. The priest in attendance merely "officiates" (makes sure this is carried out Sacramentally⁵).

Despite marriage being of indissoluble nature from the beginning, Original Sin destroyed that harmony, now necessitating special Sacramental graces to help re-establish this permanency (and other gifts) of the marital relationship in this life.

CCC 1607 According to faith the disorder we notice so painfully does not stem from the nature of man and woman, nor from the nature of their relations, **but from sin**.

As a break with God, **the first sin had for its first consequence**

the rupture of the original communion between man and woman. Their relations were distorted by mutual recriminations; their mutual attraction, the Creator's own gift, changed into a relationship of domination and lust; and the beautiful vocation of man and woman to be fruitful, multiply, and subdue the earth was burdened by the pain of childbirth and the toil of work.

Today society "wars" against marriage and family like no other time in history, so people like us, need to fearlessly share these marital truths to help others and to make up for society's unwillingness to do so.

There is great fear from both clergy and laity alike in sharing this wonderful truth about the indissolubility of a Sacrament Marriage. (May those in this study, be fearless in sharing these truths, and thus help society.)

CARDINAL ROBERT SARAH The Church is dying because the pastors are afraid of speaking the truth with clarity. We are afraid of the media, of public opinion, our own brethren!" – Cardinal Sarah. *"The Day is Now Far Spent"*

If a historical review is performed, it reveals that nobody calling themselves "Christians" stated divorce and "remarriage" was acceptable in the early Church.

Divorce and "remarriage" has in some way, touched all of us in America today, even in our own families.

⁵ One Baptized man and one Baptized woman. They knowingly both freely enter into this covenant WITH them AND Christ. Intention of staying together until death do us part. An openness to new life. And they cannot have any impediments. (An impediment to marriage would be you have to profess this soberly, you cannot "marry" a child, a guy who murdered his late wife to "marry" someone else would now be ineligible [the Church calls that "crimen"], you must profess this willingly [no "shotgun weddings"] you must intend to GIVE ALL of yourself to your spouse [no "prenuptial agreements"], etc.) Once again, for a better unpacking of this please see **"God's Plan For Your Marriage"** by Fr. Robert J. Altier Sophia Institute Press pp. 61-62

In this segment we will unpack the relevant portion of Matthew 19 to get deeper insight into the subject of the indissolubility of Sacramental Marriage. We will see the Pharisees are attempting to get Jesus killed (or at least discredit Him).

But before we can do that, we will reaffirm the importance of this topic (via Mystical Theology) and we will NEED some background. And the background we will start with concerns St. John the Baptist.

Brief Mystical Theology On Marriage And The Family

Fatima visionary Sister Lucia had apparitions even after the Fatima Miracle. This is the details of one of those mystical vision messages⁶ . . .

SISTER LUCIA ‘The final battle between the Lord and the kingdom of Satan will be about Marriage and the Family.’ Don't be afraid, she added, because whoever works for the sanctity of Marriage and the Family will always be fought against and opposed in every way, because this is the decisive issue. . . . ‘nevertheless, Our Lady has already crushed his head’. . .

Although this is mere private revelation (and therefore you are not required to believe it), the message resonates with Catholic teachings.

Also see Table 1 quote from our Lady of Good Success.

St. John The Baptist’s Uncompromising Call Concerning The Sanctity Of Marriage

St. John the Baptist was perhaps the last of the Old Covenant Prophets. He is known for many gifts but one of them was his uncompromising approach to even Old Covenant Non-Sacramental marriages. And if that sanctity was true about Old Covenant non-sacramental marriages, how much MORE TRUE is this sanctity to be applied to New Covenant Sacramental Marriages (the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony)?

St. John The Baptist Preaches The Sanctity Of Marriage! This Was The Reason For His Arrest And Eventual Beheading

St. John the Baptist preached the sanctity of even Old Covenant marriage under life-threatening circumstances.

Q: Why was John the Baptist, who set up his ministry in the region of JUDEA BEYOND THE JORDAN arrested, and eventually beheaded?

A: Because St. John outspokenly condemned Herod (and by proxy Herodias) for taking this woman as his “wife” who was already married to . . . Herod’s own BROTHER!! Herod's took his own brother Phillip's wife Herodias, into this adulterous “marriage”!

⁶ <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/34155/fatima-visionary-predicted-final-battle-would-be-over-marriage-family>

John the Baptist had the fortitude to say it is “**NOT lawful**” to divorce one’s wife for ANY cause, even specifically regarding Herod’s situation.

MATTHEW 14:3a 3 For **Herod had seized John** and bound him and put him in prison, for the sake of Herodias, **his brother Phillip's wife**; 4 because . . . (WHY) . . .

MATTHEW 14:3-4 3 For **Herod** had seized John and bound him and put him in prison, for the sake of Herodias, his brother Phillip's **wife**; 4 **because John said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her."**

And notice the “wife”, Herodias had a big part in this murder of St. John too!

MATTHEW 14:3 a, c 3 For **Herod had seized John . . . for the sake of Herodias** . . .

Adultery and murder often go hand in hand. Is it any wonder WHY Herodias would be the one to abuse her position with Herod to have John the Baptist killed!

MATTHEW 14:6-8 6 But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodi-as danced before the company, and pleased Herod, 7 so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. 8 **Prompted by her mother**, she said, "**Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter**."

And so it happened. St. John the Baptist lost his life, for his testimony to the sanctity of marriage.

MATTHEW 14:10-11 10 he sent and had John beheaded in the prison, 11 and **his head was brought on a platter** and given to the girl, and **she brought it to her mother**.

Mideast Geography And St. John The Baptist’s Ministry

St. John the Baptist preached repentance and had a Baptism of Repentance (John’s Baptism’s were not Christian Baptisms but a prefigurement of Christian Baptism which also includes repentance as well as other things).

John exercised his ministry where? . . .

JOHN 1:26-28 26 John answered them, "I baptize with water; but among you stands one whom you do not know, 27 even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." 28 This took place in **Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing**.

The town of Bethany is in **the region of Judea**. Keep that in mind for later.

Jesus was in Galilee, but entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan to be baptized by St. John.

MATTHEW 3:13 13 Then Jesus came **from Galilee to the Jordan** to John, to be baptized by him.

This is interesting! Coming from Galilee, Jesus now is entering the region of Judea to the Jordan. This is certainly the EXACT SAME AREA we saw earlier in Matthew 19 and perhaps the exact same SPOT! Does anyone think this is mere “coincidence”? Let’s go back there for a moment and review this . . .

MATTHEW 19:1b-2 1 . . Jesus . . .went away from Galilee and **entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan**; 2 and **large crowds** followed him, and **he healed** them there.

Keep this location in mind because there is going to be MORE to this shortly. Also notice Jesus is “healing” there too! Keep that in mind also, because Jesus will also heal marriage by elevating it to a Sacrament here. And notice there were “large crowds” of people there as well.

So now we know St. John the Baptist preached the sanctity of marriage.

And we know that Herod arrested him on account of that preaching (specifically related to Herod’s “marital” situation).

We know this bold truthful preaching, eventually did cost St. John his life. He was murdered because of his testimony to the sanctity of marriage.

And we know John was preaching this, in the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.

Now let’s go to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan, and see what happens to **Jesus there**. . . .

Matthew 19 (The Pharisees Are Trying To Get Jesus Killed By Herod Here)

Now back to Matthew 19 and study the geography here . . .

MATTHEW 19:1-2a 1 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. . .

This is right where St. John the Baptist had his ministry. That’s interesting. “Large crowds” were there too (lots of witnesses in case there is a trial in the future). Let’s go on and see “**The Trap**” or “The Test”:

MATTHEW 19:3 3 And Pharisees came up to him and **tested** (Greek root = “peirazo” = to **TRAP**) him by asking, “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for **any** cause?”

The Greek word peirazo means “to trap”. What do you think the “trap” is here that the Pharisees are setting?

The Pharisees may have just as well said: “Well Jesus, now that you are right where John the Baptist was, is it OK for Herod’s wife to divorce Herod-Philip to “marry” KING Herod like as in “ANY CAUSE”?

This is almost certainly at least part of WHY St. Matthew tell us WHERE Jesus was “tested” on the teachings of marriage (and that there were “large crowds” as witnesses).

The Pharisees think they are going to “nuke” Jesus in front of all these people. This is a life and death exchange between the Pharisees and Jesus going on here!

⁷ The Greek root word here is peirazo (πειραζω). (The actual full Greek word here is “peirazontes”.) <https://biblehub.com/text/matthew/19-3.htm>

Peirazo can mean to “test” or “trap” or “tempt”. I would suggest it is all three here.

MATTHEW 19:3-4a 3 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" 4 He answered . . .

If Jesus says "No. Of course not!" The Pharisees run to Herod and there are "large crowds" of witnesses to verify the whole exchange to Herod in a trial.

If Jesus says "Well look. We don't want to be too black and white about all of this. After all, Herod is a king!" The Pharisees would simply turn to the "large crowds" of witnesses and accuse Jesus of being an unholy compromiser. The Pharisees would be discrediting Jesus in front of "large crowds".

The choices are 1. Death via following St. John the Baptist's proverbial footprints.
Or 2. Jesus get publicly discredited as Messiah and labeled a frightened compromiser.

So how is Jesus going to answer in a way that He doesn't get killed (His time had not yet come for His death) or be called a compromiser (and be discredited to the people by the Pharisees)?

Remember the "trap" from the Pharisees concerns "divorce for ANY cause".

Our Lord Jesus answers them with a rhetorical question. Jesus quotes VERY BASIC Scripture to the Pharisees. Jesus answers the Pharisees with a question concerning Genesis 1 and Genesis 2.

Simple easy verses that probably most any Jewish kid could recite by memory at that time (which by the way contextually imply and INCLUDE openness to life — "Be fruitful and multiply"). Here they are. . .

GENESIS 1:27-28a 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said to them, "**Be fruitful and multiply** . . .

GENESIS 2:24 24 Therefore **a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.**

Let's go to Matthew 19 again and see Jesus' reply.

MATTHEW 19:3-6 3 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" 4 He answered, "**Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, (From Genesis 1)** 5 and said, 'For this reason **a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh**'? **(From Genesis 2)** 6 So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

Jesus just did a LOT of things here.

First of all, he gave them an uncompromising "bullet-proof" answer.

Remember. The Pharisees are religious leaders. If they go to Herod complaining that Jesus is quoting Genesis 1 and 2, the Pharisees themselves risk inciting the wrath of Herod because inevitably someone in the King's court will ask the Pharisees if THEY AFFIRM Genesis 1 and 2. **It would be risky for them because someone in Herod's court inevitably will ask them if THEY apply these passages to Herod.**

The other thing Jesus did was insult them in front of all the people giving them condescending questions. **"Have you not read Genesis 1 and Genesis 2?"** Of course the Pharisees have read that! They are the "masters"... or at least THEY THINK they are.

As Scott Hahn says, this is the same type of thing as if you were at a U.S. Constitution Conference. The Conference hall is full of constitutional lawyers. One of them from the audience tries to make the speaker look bad. The speaker asks him in return . . .

. . . **"Have you ever heard of a little document that starts out: 'We the people . . .'"**

What would you be saying to this Constitutional lawyer if you spoke to him in this condescending way?

You'd be asking: "These are very basic teachings. Don't you "experts" know the basics?"

So not only does Jesus escape their trap, but now the Pharisees themselves are discredited right in front of these "large crowds"! And if they go to Herod, THEY themselves run the risk of being implicated!

The other thing Jesus does here is elevate Marriage to a Covenantal Sacrament that includes man, wife and God almighty and also quotes a verse that alludes to openness to life in that marriage (Genesis 1:27)! Amazing!!

MATTHEW 19:6 6 So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

The word "asunder" just means to "break apart." Therefore, verse 6 means the same as . . .

MATTHEW 19:6b meaning What therefore God has joined together, let not man break apart."

Let's listen to Catholic Bishop St. Ambrose (who helped bring the master mind, St. Augustine into the Church).

ST. AMBROSE "You dismiss your wife, therefore, as if by right and without being charged with wrongdoing; and you suppose it is proper for you to do so because **no human law forbids it; but divine law forbids it.** . . . Hear the law of the Lord, which even they who propose our laws must obey: **'What God has joined together let no man put asunder'**"

—St. Ambrose. Commentary on Luke 8:5. From 389 A.D.

The Pharisees are reeling and try to save face now (Remember, in Judaism you can divorce and remarry with impunity) . . .

MATTHEW 19:6b-8 What therefore God has joined together, let not, man put asunder." 7 They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" 8 He said to them, **"For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.**

The Israelites had hardened hearts. Jesus makes that clear. What if in Moses' day there was no divorce and remarriage allowed? You got a guy who is "hard of heart" and wants a new wife. What do you think is going to happen to the "old wife"? They would murder their own wives!

This teaching from Moses was a concession for people that are **hard of heart** AND who ALSO then lacked the grace to overcome their own issues back before the graces of Jesus on Calvary.

CCC 1614 In his preaching Jesus unequivocally taught the original meaning of the union of man and woman as the Creator willed it from the beginning:

permission given by Moses to divorce one's wife was a concession to the hardness of hearts.

The matrimonial union of man and woman is indissoluble: God himself has determined it "what therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder."

CCC 1610b Nevertheless, the law given to Moses aims at protecting the wife from arbitrary domination by the husband, even though according to the Lord's words it still carries traces of man's "hardness of heart" which was the reason Moses permitted men to divorce their wives.

If you looked at "the Law" (of Moses) **even the hard-hearted Israelites were forbidden to pass their wives back and forth to each other.** Even they could not divorce her, and then take her back from that "new husband" (see Deuteronomy 24:1-4). So that proverbial "wife-sharing" would be even worse than divorce and remarriage.

Jesus Teaching On Divorce And "Remarriage"

MATTHEW 19:9 9 And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery."

Protestant teaching interprets this to mean if your wife is unchaste you can divorce her . . . AND . . . REMARRY a new one as many times as you want. (In practicality, just plain "not getting along" is grounds for divorce and frees one up to "remarry" in Protestantism.)

Eastern Orthodox teachings usually interpret this to mean if your wife is unchaste you can divorce her . . . AND . . . REMARRY a new one three times. Why three? Why not 7 or 8? It had to do with their bishops **subordinating Jesus' teachings to the state.** For a more detailed explanation, please see TABLE 2. (This is problematic that Eastern Orthodox bishops lack Biblical uniformity on this doctrinal issue!)

Catholic teaching interprets this to mean if your wife is unchaste you **MAY** (not "should") divorce her . . . BUT NOT remarry as long as your spouse lives (assuming they had a valid Sacramental marriage in the first place). (An annulment is not a "Church divorce" but a decree that a valid Sacramental Marriage never occurred in the first place.)

St. Paul teaches the same thing (by the way: "**only in the Lord**" here below means she must marry a fellow Baptized Christian if her husband dies and she chooses to remarry [so their marriage will be a Sacrament]).

1st CORINTHIANS 7:10-11, 39 10 To the married I give charge, **not I but the Lord**, that the wife should not separate from her husband 11 (**but if she does, let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband**) and that the husband should not divorce his wife. . . . 39 A wife is BOUND to her husband **as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married** to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

Which Verses On Divorce And Remarriage Do You Believe?—Believe Them All!

This verse is unclear (to some) on what a validly Sacramentally married person who divorces, is allowed to do in terms of “RE-marriage” when their spouse is still alive. So let’s go to other verses THAT make it crystal clear.

MATTHEW 19:9 9 And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, **and marries another**, commits adultery.”

Does this mean you can “marry another” while your spouse is alive? No! To get some inspired help on this matter let’s go to the other Gospels of the same discussion. Then Matthew 19:9 should become even clearer.

We’ll begin with St. Luke’s Gospel. It is very clear.

LUKE 16:18 18 “**Everyone** who divorces his wife **and** marries another **commits adultery**, and **he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery**.”

Let’s try St. Mark’s Gospel because here it is a little different. Here in the Gospel of Mark, they are done with the Pharisees and then are back “at the Ranch” or wherever they were staying. And here is what transpired . . .

MARK 10:10-12 10 And in the house the disciples asked him **again** about this matter. 11 And he said to them, “**Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her**; 12 and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

Adultery is not a small venial sin is it? So we want to take these teachings very seriously and live them out.

1st CORINTHIANS 6:9-10 9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived**; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, **nor adulterers**, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers **will inherit the kingdom of God**.

Context In Matthew 19 ALSO Supports Catholic Teaching On Indissolubility

First let’s look at what Matthew 19:9-10 DOESN’T say . . .

NOT MATTHEW 19:9-10 9 And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery.” 10 The disciples said to him, “**Well Jesus. I see not much has changed from the Old Covenant. I can still divorce and remarry!**”

Here is what the passage really SAYS (the disciples were blown away! They wouldn’t react this way unless Jesus just instituted a radical CHANGE from the Old Covenant) . . .

MATTHEW 19:9-10 9 And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery." 10 The disciples said to him, **"If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is not expedient ("not expedient" means it is "not advisable") to marry."**

And Jesus doesn't tell them to cool off. We KNOW what Jesus told them "back at the Ranch" because we just got done reading what Jesus said in St. Mark's Gospel! ("**Whoever** divorces his wife **and marries another**, commits **adultery** against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.")

Finishing The Passage Off

It sounds like for whatever reason, God may not have given some the gifts to see the FULLNESS of Truth concerning divorce and "remarriage" ("**Not all men can receive this saying**"). This is a mystery to me and I won't try to explain what I don't know.

Also some other people are not even called to marriage at all! They may be called to "follow the Lamb wherever he goes" (virginity—see Revelation 14:1-4 or "eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven").

So let's finish the passage off and see Jesus touch on these issues. . . .

MATTHEW 19:10-12 9 10 The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is not expedient to marry." 11 But he said to them, **"Not all men can receive this saying**, but only those to whom it is given. 12 For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it."

But woe to those who KNOW, and ignore this teaching anyway (as we already saw in 1st Cor. 6:9-10).

Some Patristics—The Early Church Concerning Jesus' Teaching In Matthew 19

ST. JUSTIN THE MARTYR "In regard to chastity, (Jesus) has this to say: 'If anyone look with lust at a woman, he has already before God committed adultery in his heart.' And, '**Whoever marries a woman who has been divorced from another husband, commits adultery.**'

According to our Teacher, just as **they are sinners who contract a second marriage**, even though it be in accord with human law, so also are they sinners who look with lustful desire at a woman. He repudiates not only one who actually commits adultery, but even one who wishes to do so; for not only our actions are manifest to God, but even our thoughts"

— St. Justin the Martyr. First Apology 15 A.D. 148-155.

ST. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA "That **Scripture counsels marriage**, however, and **never allows any release from the union**, is expressly contained in the law: 'You shall not divorce a wife, except for reason of immorality.' And it regards as adultery the marriage of a spouse, **while the one from whom a separation was made is still alive**. '**Whoever takes a divorced woman as wife commits adultery,**'

—St. Clement of Alexandria. Stromatesis 2:23:145:3 (post A.D. 202).

ORIGEN "Just as a woman is an adulteress, even though she seem to be married to a man, while a former husband yet lives, so also **the man who seems to marry her** who has been divorced **does not marry her**, but, according to the declaration of our Savior, **he commits adultery with her**"

— Origen Commentaries on Matthew. 14:24 A.D. 244.

Although Origen is not a "Church Father (because he had some bad doctrine regarding angels and demons), he for the most part is a great historian on what was being taught in the early Church. Furthermore, on this subject (and almost all other subjects, this is congruent with what the early Church Fathers taught.

We heard from St. Ambrose earlier in the study, here he is again . . .

ST. AMBROSE "No one is permitted to know a woman other than his wife. . . . 'If you are bound to a wife do not seek a divorce'; for **you are not permitted, while your wife lives, to marry another.**"

— St. Ambrose. Abraham 1:7:59 A.D. 387.

ST. JEROME "Wherever there is fornication and a suspicion of fornication a wife is freely dismissed. Because it is always possible that someone may calumniate the innocent and, for the sake of a second joining in marriage, act in criminal fashion against the first, **it is commanded that when the first wife is dismissed a second may not be taken while the first lives.**"

— St. Jerome. Commentaries on Matthew. 3:19:9 A.D. 398.

The Patristics are all exactly consistent with what we read in St. Paul's letter to the Romans. . . .

ROMANS 7:1-4 1 Do you not know, brethren--for I am speaking to those who know the law-- that the law is binding on a person only during his life? 2 Thus **a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the husband.** 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.**

In Closing

We studied Matthew 19:1-12, the actual passage.

We reviewed basic catechesis on Sacraments.

We also studied some basic catechesis on natural marriage and Sacramental Marriage.

We touched on Mystical Theology (illustrating the hate satan has for marriage and family and how this is a clarion call for us to do spiritual battle pushing back against this).

We studied St. John the Baptist, his ministry defending the sanctity of marriage, his beheading due to his supporting the sanctity of marriage, and the geography associated with his ministry.

We studied Jesus introducing Sacramental Marriage in Matthew 19 in the same region as St. John.

We saw some relevant Patristics on the indissolubility of marriage.

And now we will have any closing discussion/statements and prayer.

TABLE 1

Prophecy From Our Lady Of Good Success (from Quito Ecuador)

17th century prophecies made by Our Lady of Good Success in Quito, Ecuador:

OUR LADY OF GOOD SUCCESS “Thus I make it known to you that from the end of the 19th century and shortly after the middle of the 20th century... the passions will erupt and there will be a total corruption of morals... As for the Sacrament of Matrimony, which symbolizes the union of Christ with His Church, it will be attacked and deeply profaned. Freemasonry, which will then be in power, will enact iniquitous laws with the aim of doing away with this Sacrament, making it easy for everyone to live in sin and encouraging procreation of illegitimate children born without the blessing of the Church... In this supreme moment of need for the Church, the one who should speak will fall silent.”

— From the 1600’s. Our Lady of Good Success in Quito, Ecuador.

TABLE 2

Why Do The Various Eastern Orthodox Churches Allow For Divorce And Remarriage Three Times?

Deacon Daniel Gordon Dozier (Eastern Catholic) helped me (Dr. Taylor Marshall) find some primary sources on this matter.

- [Patriarch Alexius I of Constantinople](#) (Patriarch from 1025-1043) no longer upheld the practice of suspending priests who blessed second marriages after divorce. Patriarch Alexius, however, only allowed second marriages to the innocent party in a separation. That is, if the husband abandoned a wife, she (but not him) could have a second church wedding while that offending husband still lived. And vice versa.
- [Archbishop Cyril Vasil](#), S.J. observes that in 1086 (after the schism with Rome), the Byzantine Empire made the Orthodox Church the “only institution with legal competence for the celebration of matrimony...As a consequence the Eastern Church had to conform its practices to State and civil legislation (a regretful consequence of caesaropapism⁸). Then once civil legislation began to allow divorce and successive remarriages, the Eastern Church was obligated to recognize these practices.”
- It seems to me as the Eastern Church fell away from union with Rome, it inevitably followed the secular practice of the Empire.

<https://taylormarshall.com/2017/01/eastern-orthodox-divorce-remarriage.html>

TABLE 3

Are Marriage Impediments Unbiblical?

October 08, 2010 Jimmy Akin

The Catholic Church's practice of granting annulments is based on the idea that there are certain situations in which something prevents a valid marriage from coming into existence. The things doing the blocking are known as "impediments," and a variety of them are recognized in canon law.

When one or more impediments exists in a particular case and blocks a valid marriage from coming into existence, that union--upon due review by the Church--can be declared null or "annulled." An annulment, thus, is a finding of fact that there was some impediment that kept the marriage from coming into existence.

Annulments generally are not practiced in the Protestant community (though there are some civil-law annulments), and the concept of impediments is often unfamiliar to our Protestant brethren.

⁸ Caesaropapism is where you see the state as the “pope”.

Recently I was asked how to respond to the claim that there are impediments to marriage is unbiblical.

It is true that the term "impediment" is not used in Scripture in regard to marriage. This is similar to the term "Trinity," which also is not used in Scripture. In both cases the term is a later way of making *explicit* something that is *implicit* in Scripture itself.

There is more than one type of marriage impediment, and they relate to Scripture in different ways. One type is the natural law impediment. Marriage corresponds to a certain natural law reality (a partnership between a man and a woman of the whole of life oriented to the good of the spouses and, if possible, the procreation and education of offspring). Marriage has certain properties (e.g., unity, indissolubility, the making licit of sexual love). These correspond to both the natural law and the biblical understanding of marriage. They are presupposed whenever Scripture talks about marriage.

It follows that if someone--in attempting a marriage--has fundamentally excluded one of these criteria then they are not agreeing to be married in the sense that God's law defines the institution.

This is also why homosexual marriages are impossible. Two men or two women cannot agree to have between them the same kind of union that is possible for a man and a woman. The fact that the parties are of the same sex creates an impediment to their ability to marry each other.

The idea of homosexual marriage was, of course, unthinkable to the biblical authors, and it was not an idea being entertained in their society. (Though homosexual behavior was common in Greek society, they at least understood that marriage was between a man and a woman). Consequently, this impediment is not mentioned explicitly in Scripture, but it is surely implicit in the biblical vision of what marriage *is*.

Another impediment which is clearly implied in Scripture is the existence of a prior marriage bond. If you are already married to one person, you are not free to marry another. This is explicit in the teaching of both Jesus (Mark 10) and Paul (Romans 7), with both indicating that the attempt to marry someone when you are already married will result in adultery.

It is clear that, in the minds of Jesus and Paul, being married to one person creates an impediment (something that blocks or impedes) one from marrying another person. The term "impediment" may be more recent, but the concept is clearly there.

Similar examples of impediments could be given--what if you're too closely related to each other so that there would be incest (can you marry one of your parents?) or what if you were severely retarded or mentally ill and did not understand what you were doing?

It is hard to imagine the biblical authors, who certainly shared the biblical vision of marriage, saying that such marriages would be valid. If such marriages are not valid then the factors preventing them from being valid are, by definition, impediments.

The question then would not be *whether* impediments exist but *what* impediments are there.

As I point out in my booklet, [Annulments: What You Need to Know](http://www.jimmyakin.org/2010/10/are-marriage-impediments-unbiblical.html), the Church has a pastoral responsibility created by the teaching of Jesus on the permanence of marriage not to simply rubber-stamp any union. To do so would be to downplay or deny what Jesus taught. It is out of a sense of duty to her Lord, and of pastoral responsibility to the faithful, that the Church undertakes the difficult work of examining particular marriage situations to protect the validity of marriages.

<http://www.jimmyakin.org/2010/10/are-marriage-impediments-unbiblical.html>