

A WORD ON WORSHIP

DECEMBER 16, 2012

BY PASTOR ANDREW KICKERT, SUNRISE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Mark 10:5-9

"But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. "But from the beginning of creation, God MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. "FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so they are no longer two, but one flesh. "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

Divorce has become so common in our culture that hardly a person can be found who has not been affected by it, directly or indirectly. Each year in the United States there are more than 1 million divorces, which involves more than 2 million adults. Beneath that rubble are the lives of millions more children who are the secondary casualties on the battleground between spouses. None of them escape unscathed, no matter how amicable the divorce may be.

Many decades ago, the vast majority of marriages held together and divorce was the rare exception. There are many reasons for this stability. The family was a moral force which held marriages together in hard times. This was not the case just in the immediate family, but the extended family as well, as the example of grandparents, aunts and uncles re-enforced the covenant of marriage. This moral force was reflected back by the community. Society recognized the value of a strong family unit and the legal system protected the biblical model of the family. All of this was tied together by teaching from the pulpits of churches across every branch of Christianity. The church strongly supported family life and just as strongly opposed divorce.

Sadly today, in the name of Christian love, many not only condone divorce, but insist that sometimes it is God's will. Even when Christians go to Scripture for guidance concerning divorce, they come with so many preconceptions and predispositions which make responsible interpretation impossible. A human standard may be more lenient or more restrictive than Scripture, but it can never be better. When God's Word is ignored or twisted in any area, tragedy is always the consequence. This is most evident in the standards God has set for marriage and when divorce is permitted.

God has not changed His standard just because society has changed its standards. The prophet Hosea was a picture of the power of godly marital love, a living illustration of God's undying love for His people, Israel. Hosea's love for his wife Gomer and his commitment to her as his wife, like God's covenant love with Israel, was exceedingly gracious and forgiving. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God expects His redeemed people in Christ to reflect the original beauty of the marriage covenant as well as the grace of forgiveness. The husband and wife who are walking in the Spirit will be walking in unselfish humility and forgiving, restoring love that always puts the other first.

Sunrise Community Church

Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst

EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.

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