

7 Are We Compatible?

Matthew 19:3-10

The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?"

⁴ And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who ^[a]made *them* at the beginning 'made them male and female,' ⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave [*future, active, indicative*] his father and mother and be joined [*future passive indicative*] to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? ⁶ So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined [*past, active, indicative*] together, let not man separate."

⁷ They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"

⁸ He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted 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; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

¹⁰ His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with *his* wife, it is better not to marry."

1. **God made humanity in the complementary genders of male and female to be joined together by God in one flesh.** (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18, 20-25)

This union, created by God in marriage, is for the procreation of children and the gracious care of the creation. It is a union that reflects the commitment of love among the persons of the Holy Trinity in whose image we were created.

2. **It is God who has joined together the man and the woman in holy matrimony so that they become one flesh.**

The basis for the sanctity of marriage and that man is not to separate the union is based upon the fact that God created the union.

3. **God's act of joining together the man and the woman in holy matrimony is the basis for the husband's and wife's delight in one another.** (Gen. 2:21-23)

God created woman from the rib from Adam's side; God brought her to Adam; and Adam confessed his faith in the Lord and his intimate delight in the wife that God gave him: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." (Genesis 2:23)

4. **The act of leaving father and mother to be joined to and hold fast to one's wife and one's husband ought to be based upon the compatibility of faith.**

That the man and the woman entering into marriage each hold to the same confession of the Christian faith and what God teaches concerning marriage and family is the single most important criteria for marriage.

5. **"We are not compatible" is an assertion of the self-centered sinful flesh that does not want to honor God's union of marriage and the sacrificial love to which the union calls us.**

Desire, feelings, emotion, appetites, and feelings of attraction can never be the foundation of fidelity within the marriage union. God's Word is the only foundation for the one flesh union in marriage. Adam's feeling of desire was created by the reception of his wife according to the Word of God. In a similar way, delight in one's spouse can be cultivated by embracing what God's Word teaches concerning marriage, and by the ministry of God's love to us in confession and absolution, and the life of prayer and meditation upon God's Word individually and communally within marriage.

6. **The Word of Jesus, "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate" is God's protection around the institution of marriage and His call to us to remain faithful to His Word.**

If divorce is an option, it will often become a reality. God's Word is our strength to remain faithful to each other and to cultivate self-giving love within the marriage union.