

### **So what?**

So what difference should our understanding of the teaching of Jesus make to the life of the church?

Do you believe that those who have been previously married and divorced with a partner who is still alive should have the possibility of a second marriage within the church?

If so in what circumstances?

However we answer the question above and however we understand the teaching of Jesus there are many, many people in our community today who have been deeply hurt through the trauma of divorce and there are some who are today going through that hurt. How can we, how can you, best share Jesus love with those people?

If anyone comes to mind you may want to pray for them specifically that they will know the grace, love and acceptance of Jesus.

### **Space for Your Sermon Notes:**



ST PAUL'S Sarisbury Green

Sunday 15th February 2009  
Jesus - Divorce and Remarriage

### **Space for Your Sermon Notes:**

#### **Key Passages:**

**Mark 10: 2-12**

**Matthew 19: 3-12**

## Read The Story

### Reading the book

If anyone in your group has managed to read the whole book before you meet than ask them how they found it. What, if anything did they learn? How was it different from reading a chapter or a few verses?

## Going Deeper

### Background

The Church of England's policy on Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage goes all the way back to Henry VIII.

What do you know of the history of Henry VIII and why the Church of England was founded?

What difference did he make to the policies in both civil and church law on marriage?

Up till 2002 it was impossible for someone who had been divorced to be remarried in a Church of England service while their previous partner was still alive. Do you agree with this policy?

In 2002 the General Synod of the Church of England passed the following resolution: "The Church of England teaches that marriage is for life. It also recognizes that some marriages sadly do fail and, if this should happen, it seeks to be available for all involved. The Church accepts that, in exceptional circumstances, a divorced person may marry again in church during the lifetime of a former spouse."  
What do you think of that resolution?

### Old Testament Background

Under Jewish Law at the time of Jesus there were five reasons that were accepted as grounds for divorce. See if you can identify them from the following verses:

Genesis 1:28

Deuteronomy 24:1

Exodus 21:10 (Three reasons here)

At the time of Jesus there was a disagreement about the interpretation of Deuteronomy 24:1. One school of Judaism interpreted that verse as allowing divorce for 'Indecency' but nothing more. Another school interpreted it as saying divorce was possible for 'Indecency' or for 'Any Matter' Read the verse yourself, possibly in different translations. What do you think? How would these different interpretations differ in real life situations?

### The teaching of Jesus in Matthew 19: 3-12

Remembering that one school of Judaism allowed divorce for 'Any Matter' and another for no reason 'Except for Indecency' read the above passage.

Can you find these phrases in the text (or phrases very similar)?

Does knowing this background make any difference to your understanding of the words of Jesus? If so what difference?

I argued on Sunday that Jesus also allowed for divorce for the reasons in Exodus 20 because he did not explicitly refute these. Do you agree with that?

### Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate

Read Mark 10: 5-9

There are two different interpretations of this verse.

The first is that Jesus is saying that it is impossible for man to separate those who God has joined together in marriage.

'Let not man separate' = ' Man CANNOT separate'

The second interpretation is that God does not want man to separate what He has joined together, but it is possible.

'Let not man separate' = ' Man SHOULD NOT separate'

Which interpretation do you agree with?