

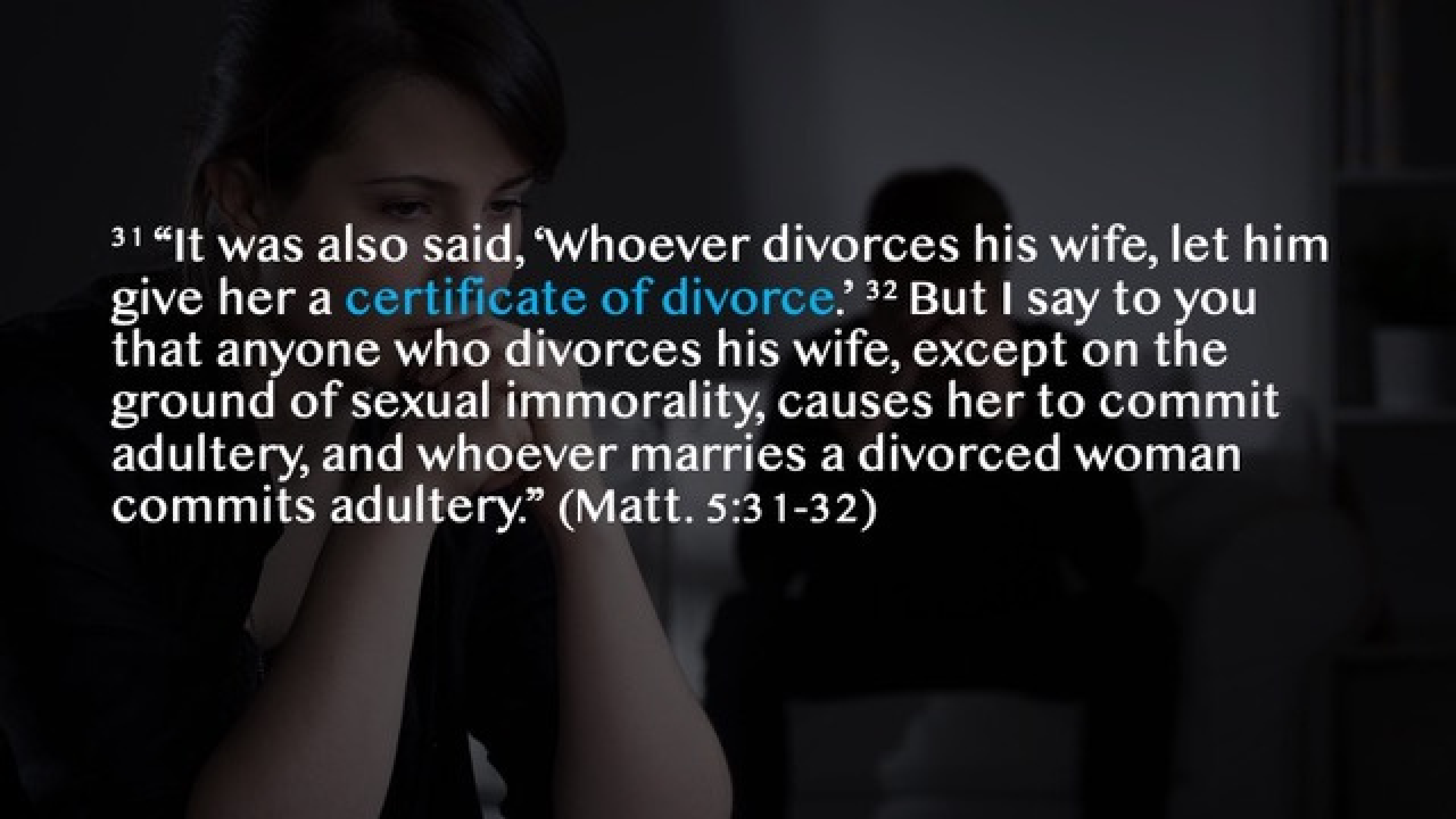
IN ATLANTA

AS IT IS



In
Heaven

MATT 6:10



³¹ “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a **certificate of divorce.**’ ³² But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” (Matt. 5:31-32)

Deuteronomy 24:1-2

“Suppose a man enters into marriage with a woman but she does not please him because he finds something objectionable about her, so he writes her a **certificate of divorce**, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house; ² she then leaves his house and goes off to become another man’s wife.

Deuteronomy 24:3-4

³ Then suppose the second man dislikes her, writes her a **certificate of divorce**, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house (or the second man who married her dies): ⁴ her first husband, who sent her away, is not permitted to take her again to be his wife after she has been defiled, for that would be abhorrent to the Lord, and you shall not bring guilt on the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a possession.

Deuteronomy 24:1-2

“Suppose a man enters into marriage with a woman but she does not please him because he finds **something objectionable about her**, so he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house; ² she then leaves his house and goes off to become another man’s wife.

The Certificate of Divorce

- A person could not hastily divorce, there was a process involved
 - Write the document, put it in the woman's hands, send her out
- It is assumed the woman will remarry after receiving the certificate
- The first husband needed to think carefully because he could not take his wife back if she remarried
 - This cautioned against "serial" or "trial" marriages
 - Protected the woman from being "reclaimed"

Matthew 19:3-6

³ Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for **any and every reason?**”⁴ “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’

⁵ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’⁶ ? ⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

**Battle of the
Rabbis:
“something
objectionable
about her”**

- **Hillel:** can mean things like spoiling a meal or losing her beauty
- **Shammai:** means adultery or a serious breach like neglect (Exodus 21:10-11--> food, clothing (protection/physical support), marital/sexual rights (emotional support))

Matthew 19:10-12

¹⁰ The disciples said to him, “If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.”

¹¹ Jesus replied, “Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. ¹² For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others—and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.”

Matthew 19:7-9

⁷ “Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?”⁸ Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. ⁹ I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”



A Word to the Unmarried

⁸ Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. ⁹ But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. (1 Cor 7:8)

1 Corinthians

7:32-35

³² I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord. ³³ But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife—³⁴ and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. ³⁵ I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.

Thoughts...

- God instituted marriage. "What God has joined together, let no man separate."
- No 1st century Jewish group prohibited remarriage after divorce.
- Is lifelong celibacy/singleness for someone who has been divorced gracious, compassionate and redemptive?
- God issued Israel a certificate of divorce to Israel (Jeremiah 3:1-8)
- Church discipline (Matthew 18) as a resource for hurting marriages?

DJ's synopsis of David Instone-Brewer's works

“It seems unlikely that we will be able to produce any systematic teaching on divorce simply from the scriptural passages. Even if we assume that the Holy Spirit preserved exactly those texts that would, through careful interpretation, yield every detail that we need, it is still unlikely that we will come to a simple consensus about how to reconstruct those clues. The two case laws about divorce in the OT do not add up to a systematic legal code. The two disputes about divorce in the NT, in the Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts, do not add up to a systematic theology. The best we can do is create a set of principles that are based on Scripture.”

Back to where we started

- Matt 5 has a number of hyperboles . The person who remarries is not necessarily a literal adulterer, any more than the one who hates is a murderer.
- There is no record of Jesus ever asking anyone to separate from a second husband or wife if the divorce was invalid. (Consider the case of the Samaritan woman in John 4, or the case of David and Bathsheba in 2 Sam 12.)
- “Just as someone who hates his brother is not to be prosecuted for murder, so one who has remarried is not to be accused in court of committing adultery.”