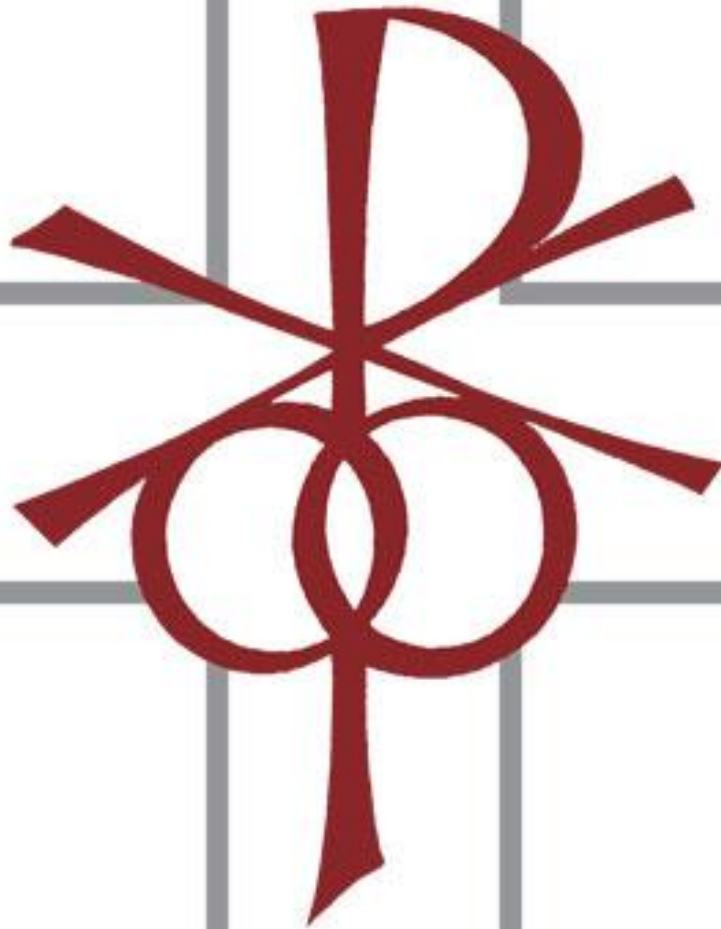


# *Theme: Our Relationships*



The Christian view of a Union in Christ was a slow development in Christian thought.

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

In 2017 the portion of the the American population who co-habitat without marriage surpassed those who are married. This occurred in the Roman Empire during the 1<sup>st</sup> Century BC. The impact on Roman society was dramatic. Garrison Church of God



In Matthew 19 and Mark 10 Jesus expounds the Christian view of marriage.

Feb. 12, 2023

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

In Matthew 19 there are 3 words are used for divorce:

**Vs. 3, 8, 9** – *apoluo* – “to release or dismiss”

**Vs. 6** – *chorizo* – “to separate”

**Vs. 7** – *apostasion* – divorce – or “a writ of divorce” - comes from a verb meaning “to remove” – “apostasy” [*to fall away*]



In Matthew 19 and Mark 10 Jesus expounds the Christian view of marriage.

## Matthew 19:3-6 [ESV]

3 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?"

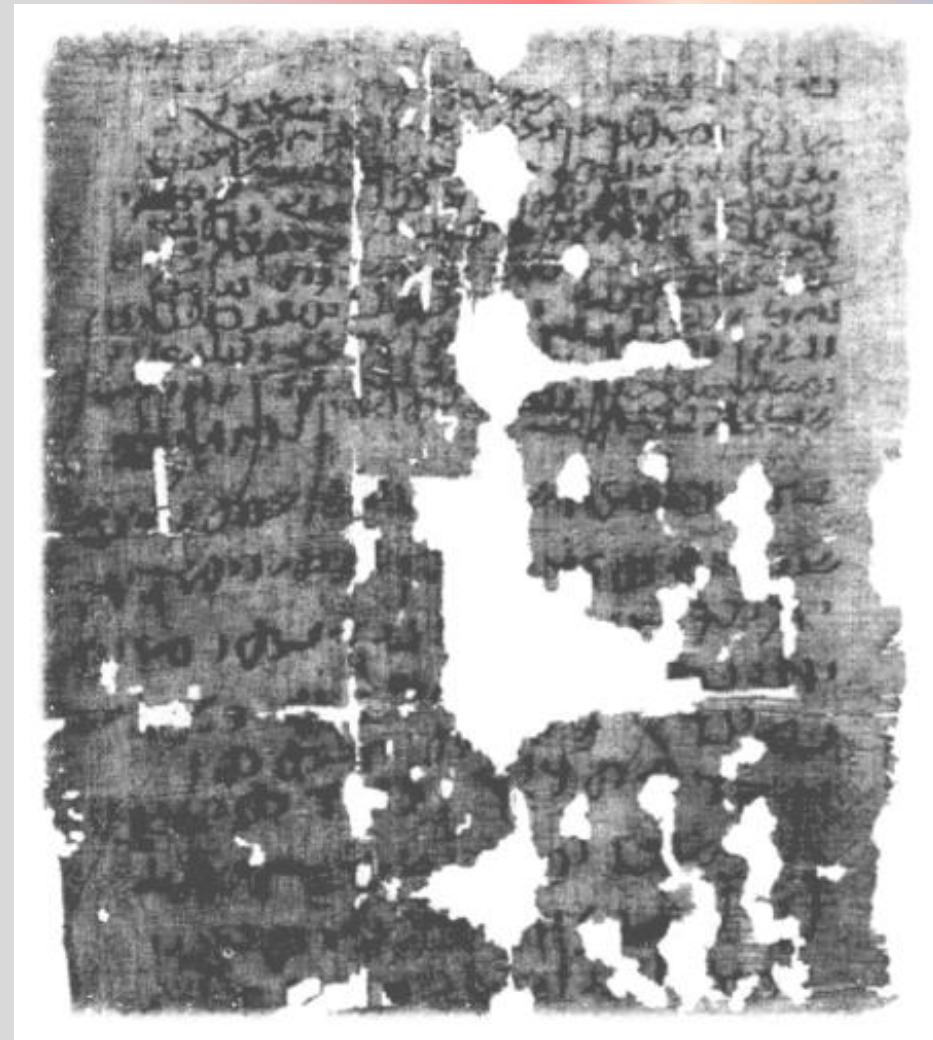
4 He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female,

5 and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast 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 separate."

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

In verse 3 Jesus is tested by the Pharisees with a question “is it lawful”. It is a challenge to Jesus concerning the sanctity of marriage. The Jewish culture at the time of Jesus was in confusion about the issue of Divorce. The struggle questioned the very meaning of marriage.



A writ of divorce for  
AD 71

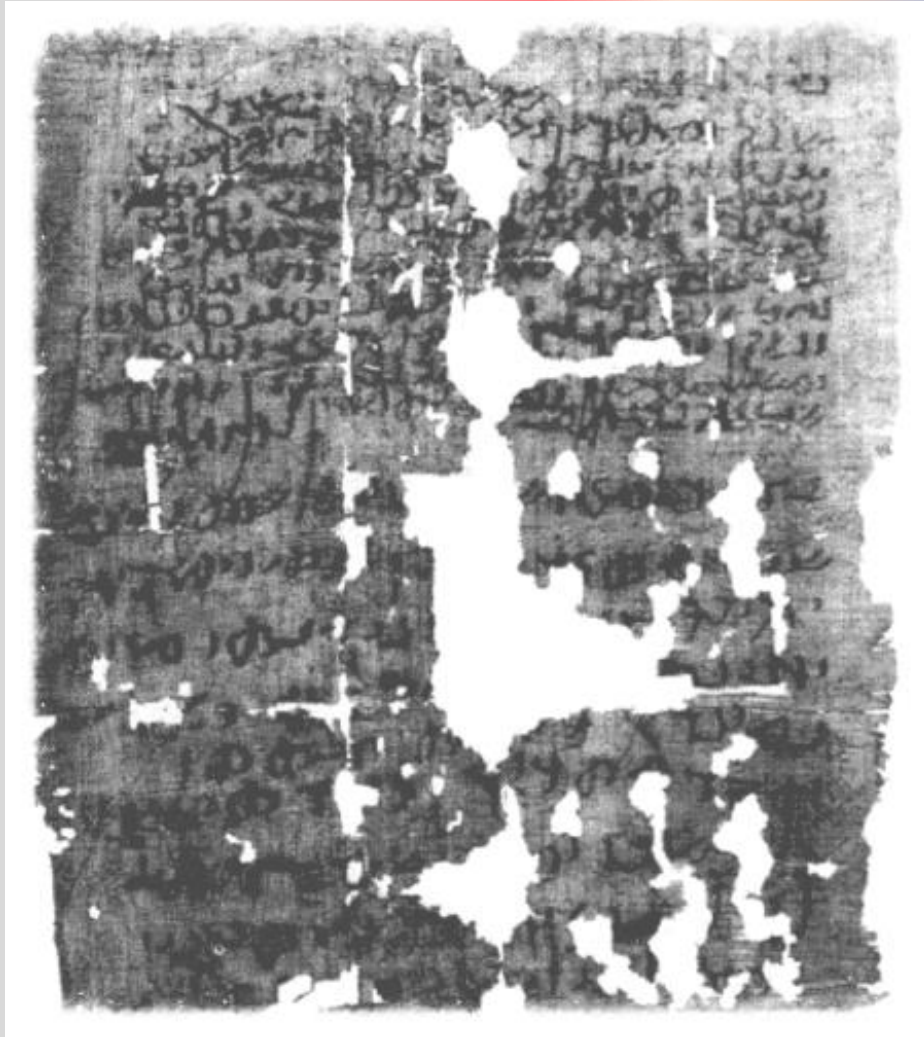
Feb. 12, 2023

## Deuteronomy 24:1-4 [ESV]

1 "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, 2 and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, 3 and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, 4 then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

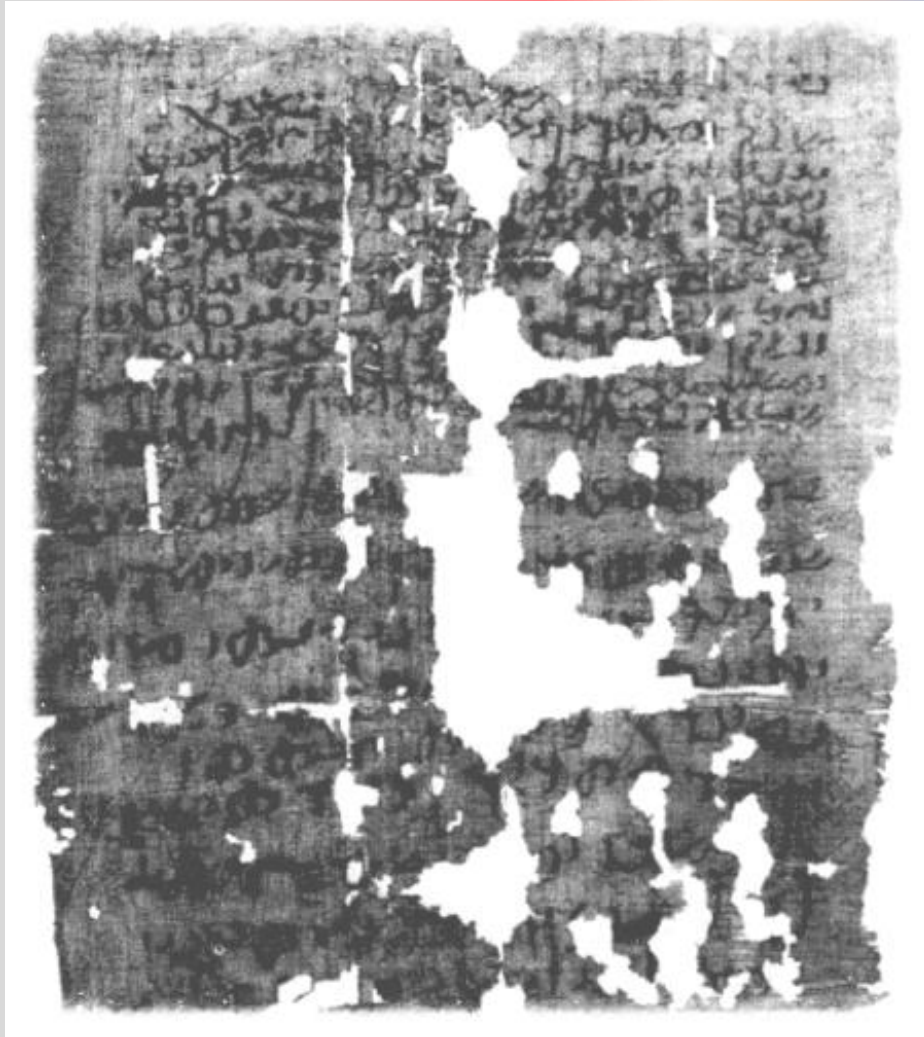
In the 1<sup>st</sup> Century world there were 2 views of marriage that dominated the culture. The Hellenistic [Greek] culture viewed marriage as a family treaty much like that between nations. The concept of a betrothal where the woman was required to maintain purity was enforced.



A writ of divorce for  
AD 71

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

The Roman view was that of a contract like a business arrangement. The Roman culture focused on the dowry. Romans often co-habitated for years without marriage. The marriage contract brought financial obligations. People declared both their marriages and divorces.

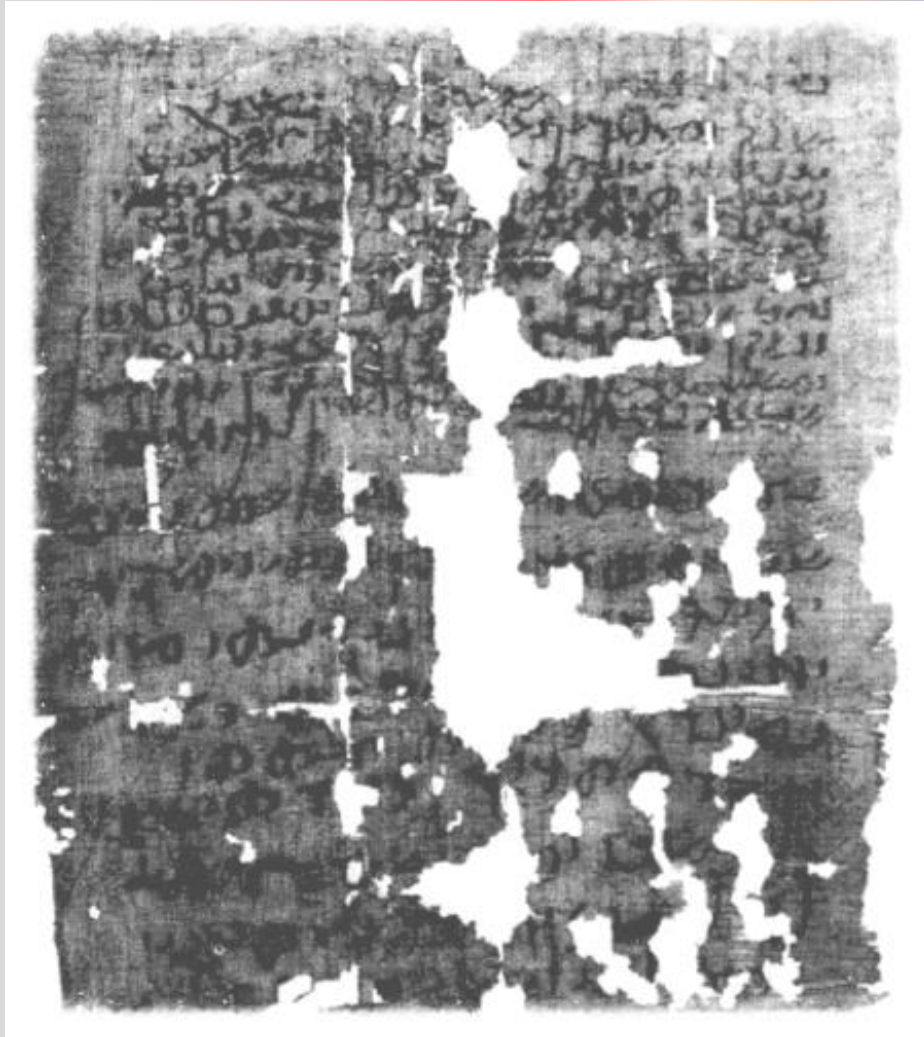


A writ of divorce for AD 71



# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

The Roman government did not become involved in “marriages” unless there was a formal contract and the concern was the distribution of property. In a divorce, children’s fate was determined by the stronger financial partner. Women could initiate a divorce.



A writ of divorce for  
AD 71

## Matthew 5:30-33 [ESV]

30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

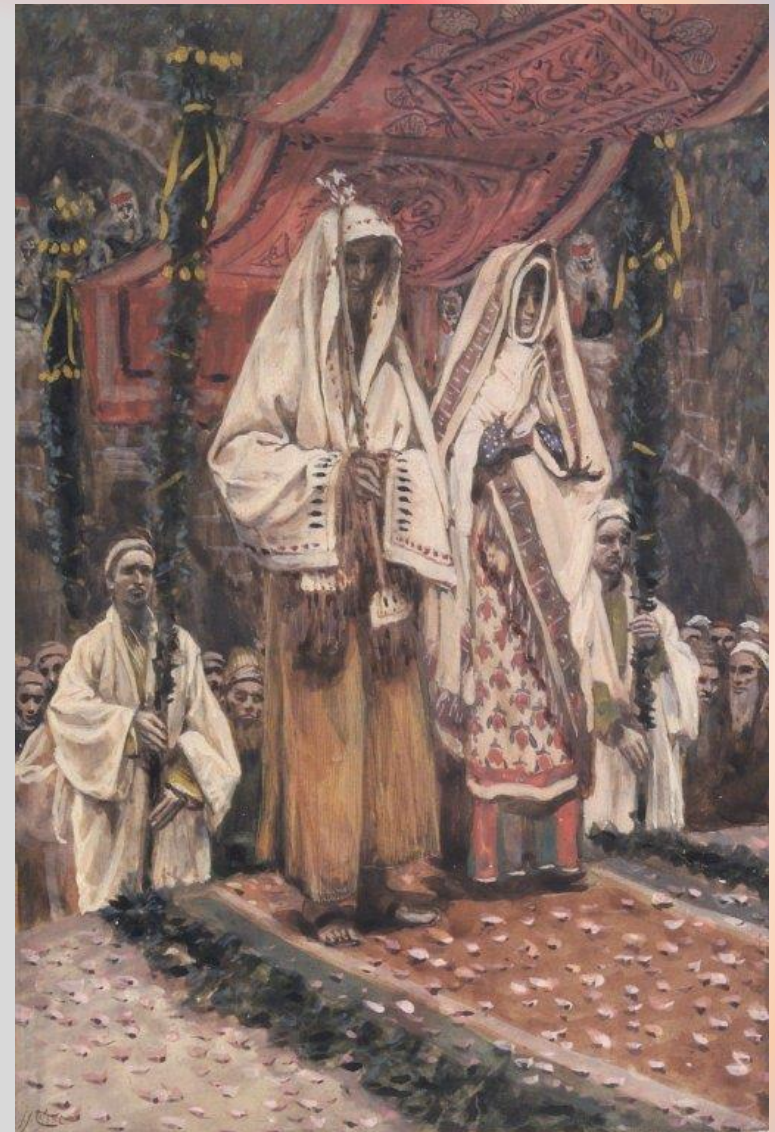
31 "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'

32 But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

33 "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.'

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

Divorce was permitted to men in the Hellenized culture it could be initiated by the husband or by the father or brother of the wife. At the betrothal the treaty was enforce, the betrothal was a test of purity. The Jewish people applied this to both the man and woman.



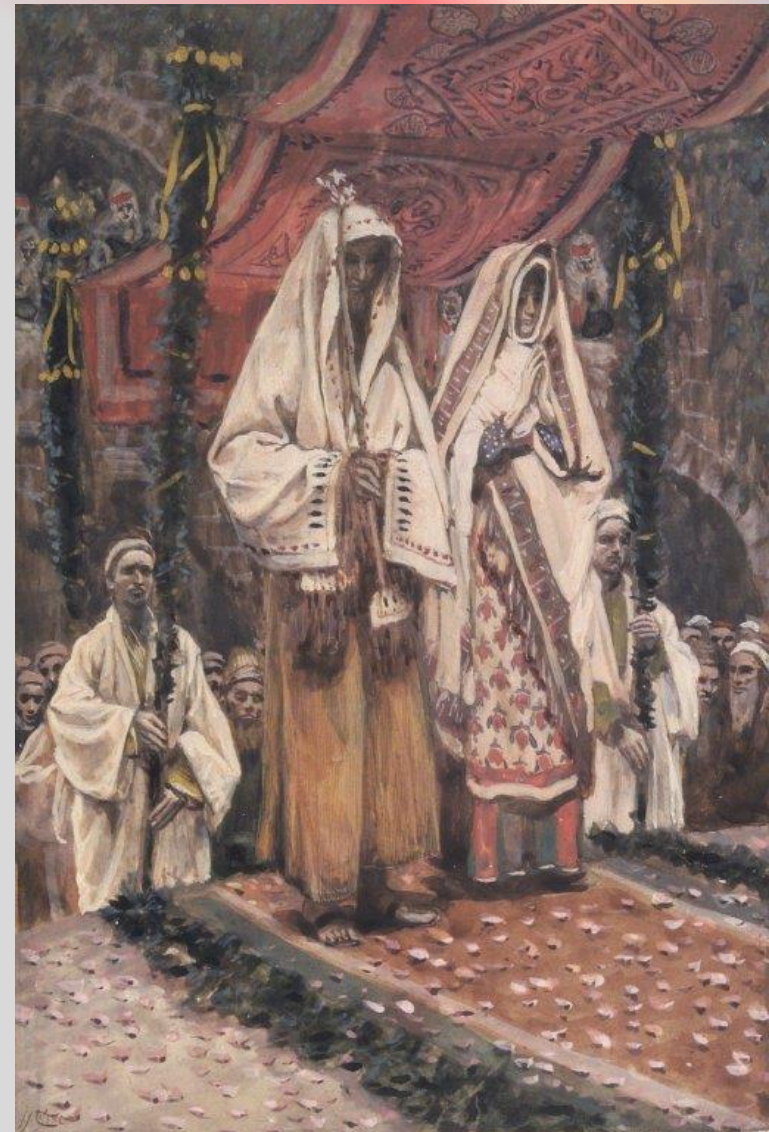
The marriage of Joseph and Mary  
– James Tissot

Feb. 12, 2023

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

The betrothal could only be broken by divorce. A young couple violating the betrothal period were seen as lacking integrity and self-control. And brought shame on the family.

In Jewish culture at the time of Jesus there were 2 views of divorce among the Jewish scholars.

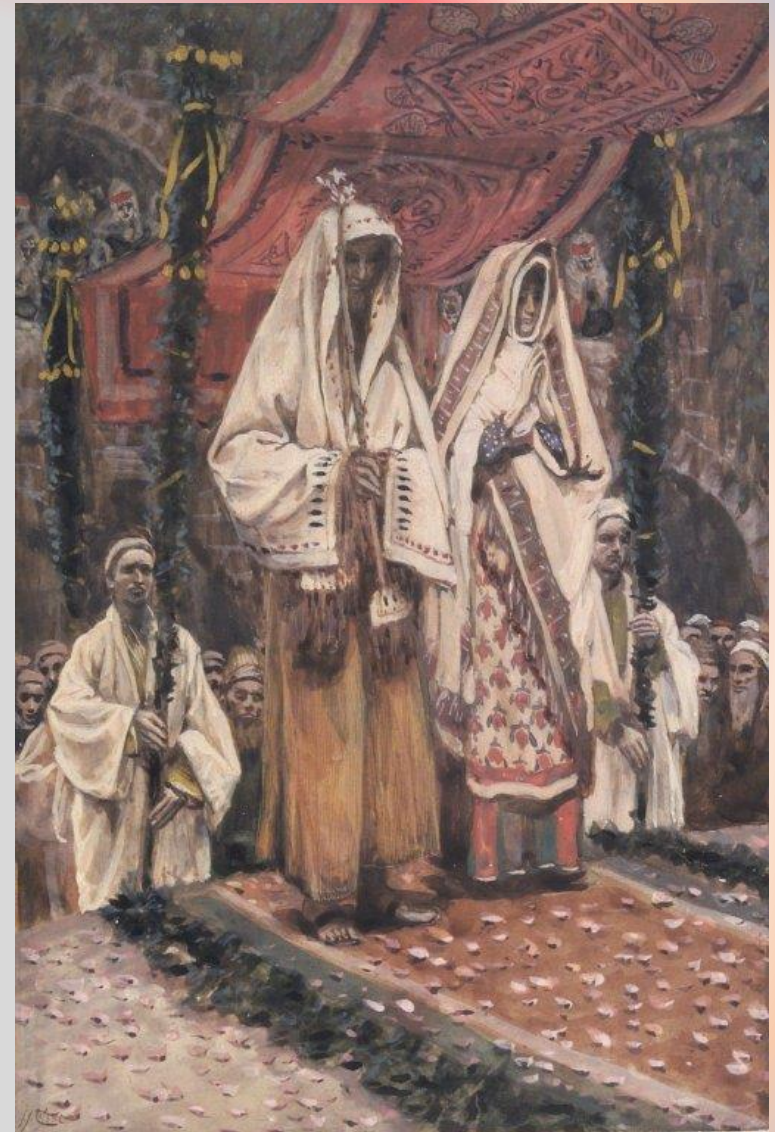


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# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

The School of Hillel began almost 30 years before Jesus’ birth. It generally held a broad understanding of divorce. And allowed divorce for almost any reason. The other was the school of Shammai which began just a few years before the birth of Jesus and strictly curtailed divorce to reasons of immorality.

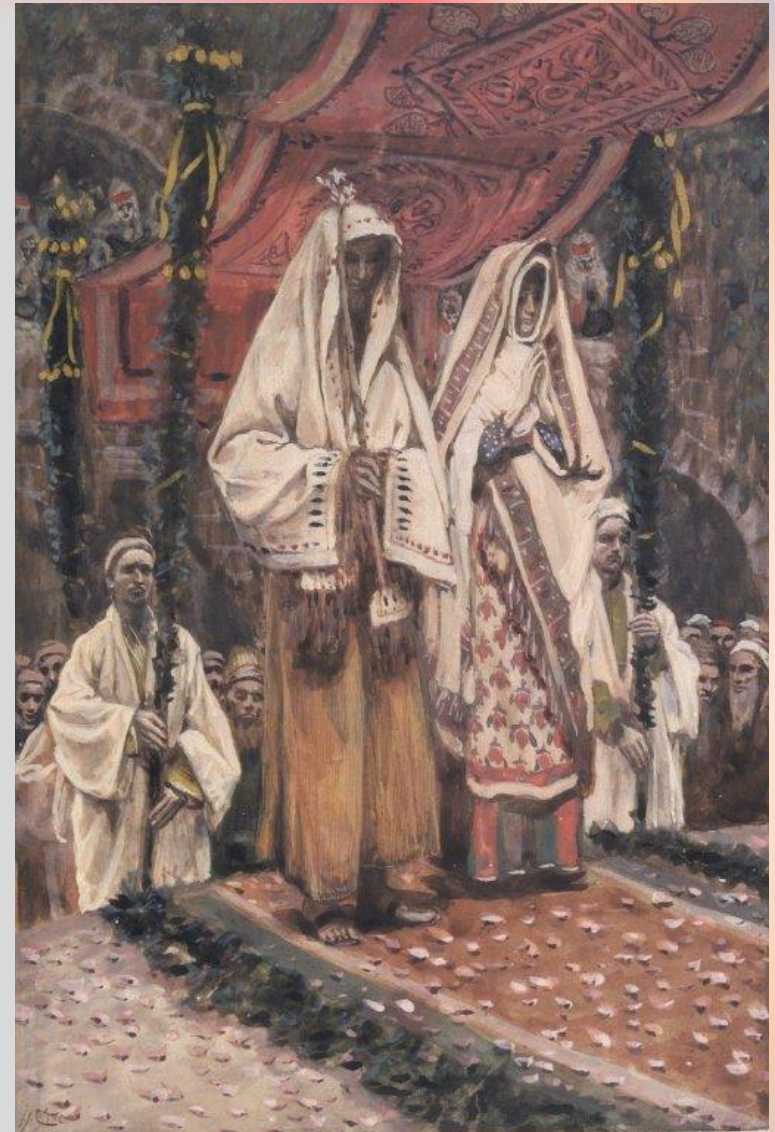


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# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

The Pharisees at the time of Jesus leaned toward the School of Hillel while the Galilee Judaism leaned toward Shammai. Because of Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 5 the Pharisees believed that he represented Shammai thinking and this would alienate him from the Judean Jews.



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## Mark 10:10-12 [ESV]

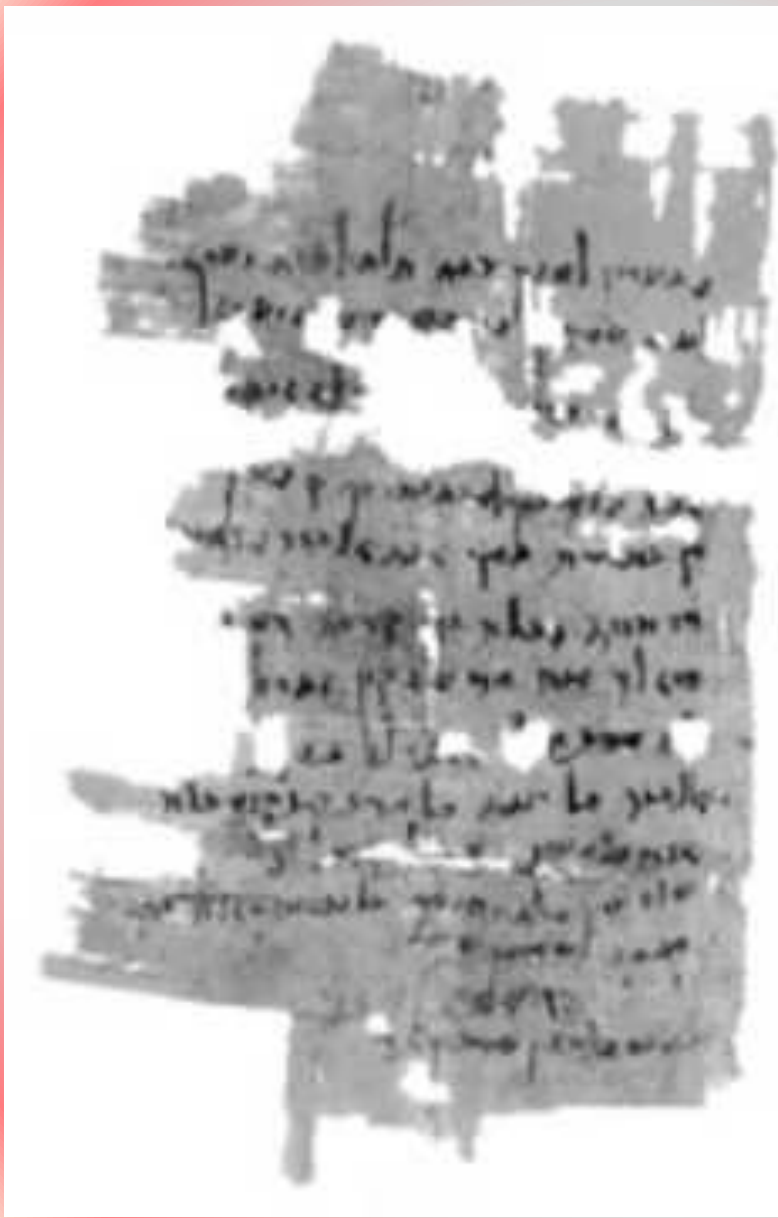
10 And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter.

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."

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

This divorce decrees is from an early 2<sup>nd</sup> century Jewish woman who initiated the divorce.



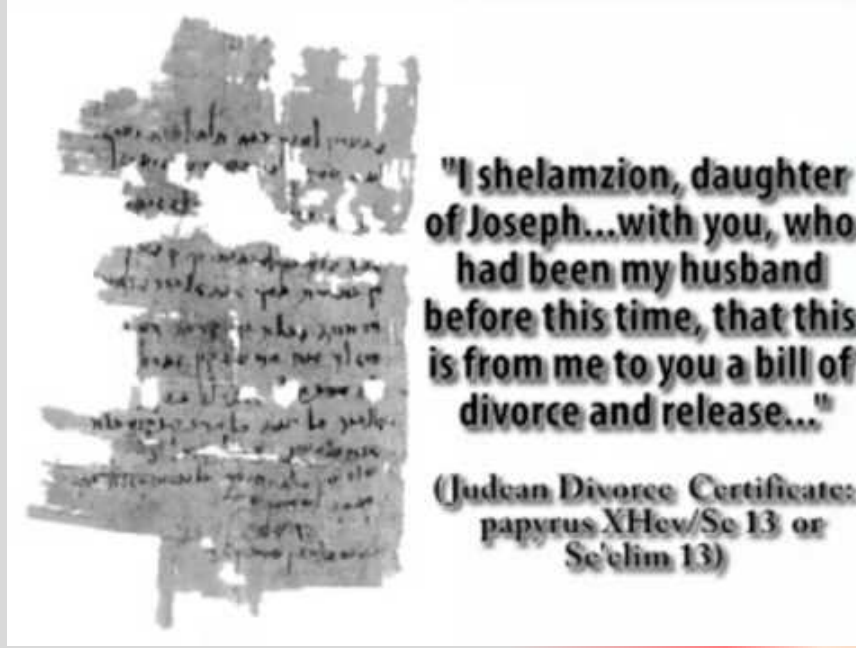
**"I shelamzion, daughter of Joseph...with you, who had been my husband before this time, that this is from me to you a bill of divorce and release..."**

**(Judean Divorce Certificate: papyrus XHew/Se 13 or Se'elim 13)**



# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

In Mark’s account the disciples ask Jesus privately about his statement. He states that “if a woman gets a divorce”. This statement was used to challenge the authenticity of Mark’s gospel because it was believed that Jewish women could not initiate a divorce. But Jewish women in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century could.



This divorce decrees is from an early 2<sup>nd</sup> century Jewish woman who initiated the divorce.

## **Genesis 2:15-18 \*18 [ESV]**

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

An Egyptian marriage from around 1200 BC of a artisan from his tomb.



# **“The Plan of Marriage”**

## **Matthew 19:3-6**

An Egyptian marriage from around 1200 BC of a artisan from his tomb.



Jesus restored the vision of marriage that God established in creation. It is a covenant relationship between 2 equal individuals, a man and a woman, before their Creator. It's purpose was to establish an independent family that was in relationship with God. Jesus indicated that “the hardness of human hearts” is what corrupted this ideal.

# **“The Plan of Marriage”**

## **Matthew 19:3-6**

An Egyptian marriage from around 1200 BC of a artisan from his tomb.



The brokenness we see in the marriage relationship in our world is the result of this and does not reflect God’s intention. Human culture in strange ways tries to desperately recreate parts of this desire for Eden. We create a “contract” of mutual benefit, but selfishness breaks it down. We create a treaty of personal responsibility but our hardness of heart builds hatred and resentment.

## Matthew 19:7-9 [ESV]

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

8 He said to them, "Because of 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 sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery."

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

An early 1900s postcard from Switzerland and celebrating a Jewish “Get” or writ of divorce



# “The Plan of Marriage”

## Matthew 19:3-6

An early 1900s postcard from Switzerland celebrating a Jewish “Get” or writ of divorce



If only this brokenness of relationship is left then divorce is the only way to solve the selfishness or hardness of heart. Jesus’ disciples come to this conclusion, missing the point of Jesus’ command. The relation of marriage is established before God, His Holy Spirit empowers it and Jesus Christ the son blesses it.



**Matthew 19:10-11 [ESV]**

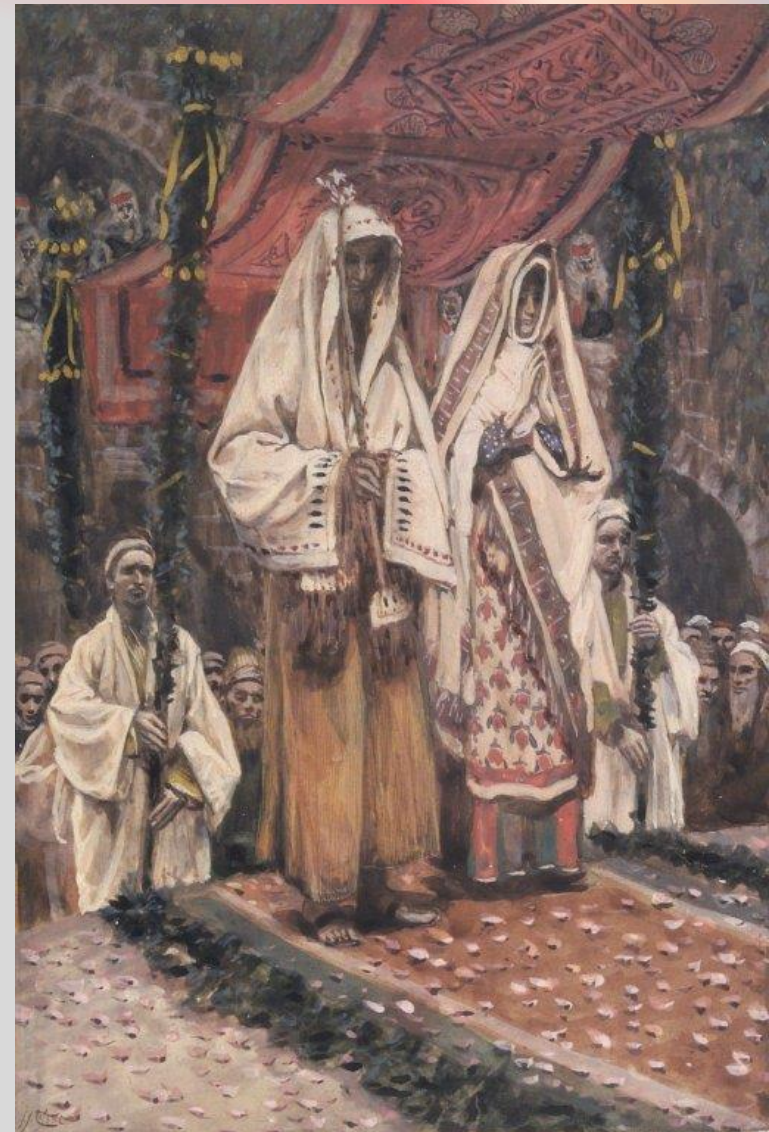
**10** The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

**11** But he said to them, "Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given."

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

Jesus indicates that it is a concept that will take time for his disciples to grasp. The Apostle Paul would be the first to challenge Christians with the concepts of Jesus and the implications in 1 Corinthians 7. Paul begins begins in vs. 10 by recognizing the command of Jesus in Matthew 19 and the foundation of the marriage relationship.

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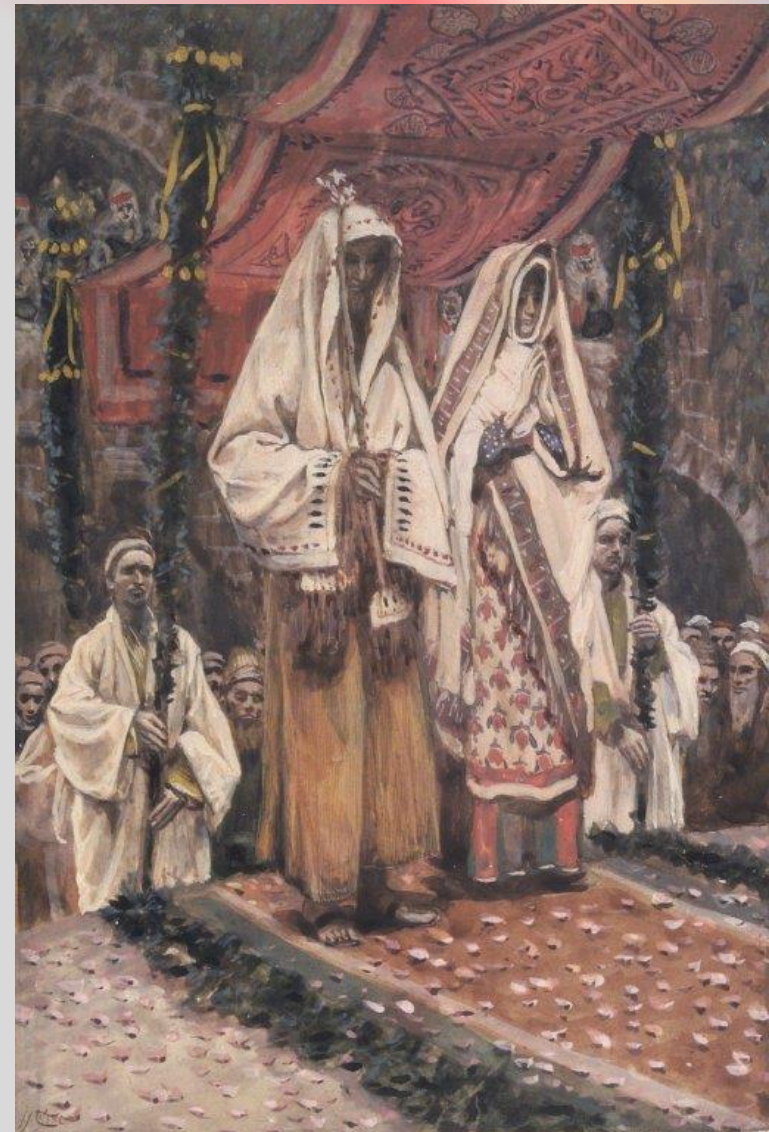
## 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 [ESV]

10 To the married I give this charge (**not I, but the Lord**): the wife should not separate from her husband 11 (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife.

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

It is no accident that this statement on the plan of marriage is sandwiched in between the teaching on integrity of relationships in Matthew 18 and the blessing of the children at the close of Chapter 19. This committed relationship lies at the center of God’s blessing on the family and human society. When it is broken, humanity suffers.

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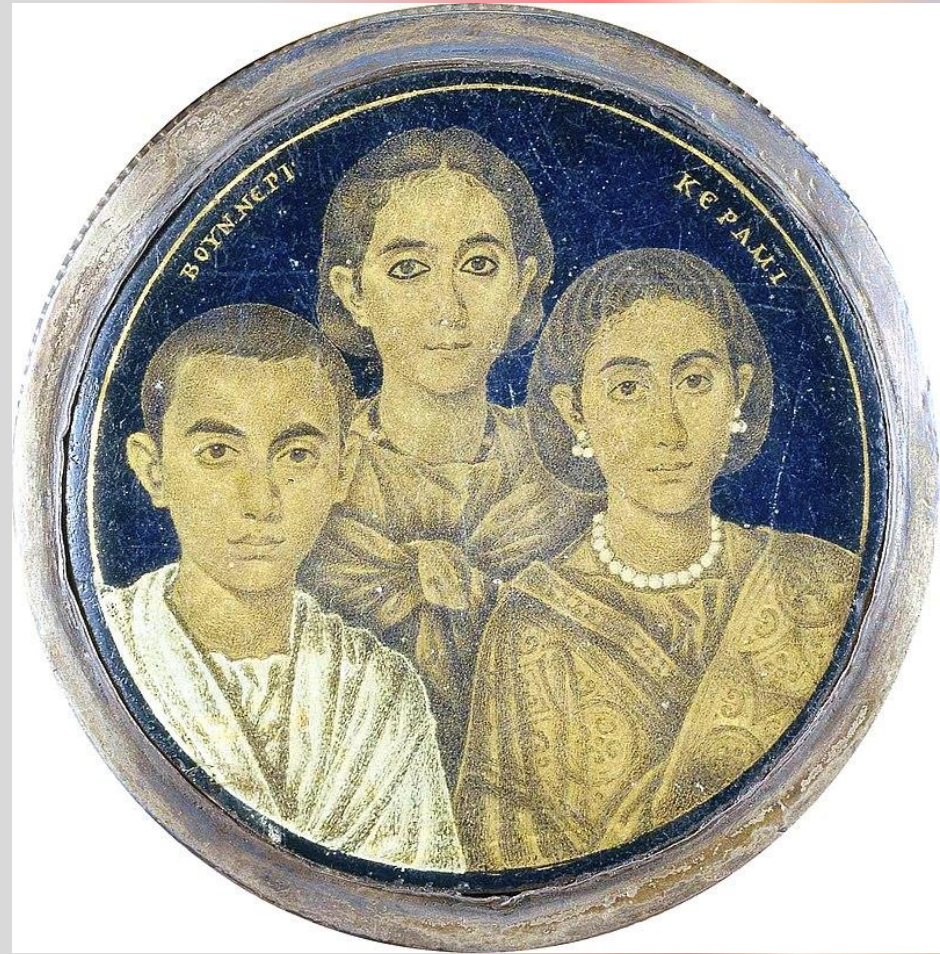
**Matthew 19:13-14 [ESV]**

**13 Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people,**

**14 but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."**

# “The Plan of Marriage” Matthew 19:3-6

This painting of a Roman family from the 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century shows a distinct difference in attitude toward marriage and family. It is quite likely a painting of a Christian family. It reflects a changing idea of marriage and family. Paul states in verse 12 of 1 Corinthians 7, that he is drawing inferences from the teaching of Jesus for the culture they live in.

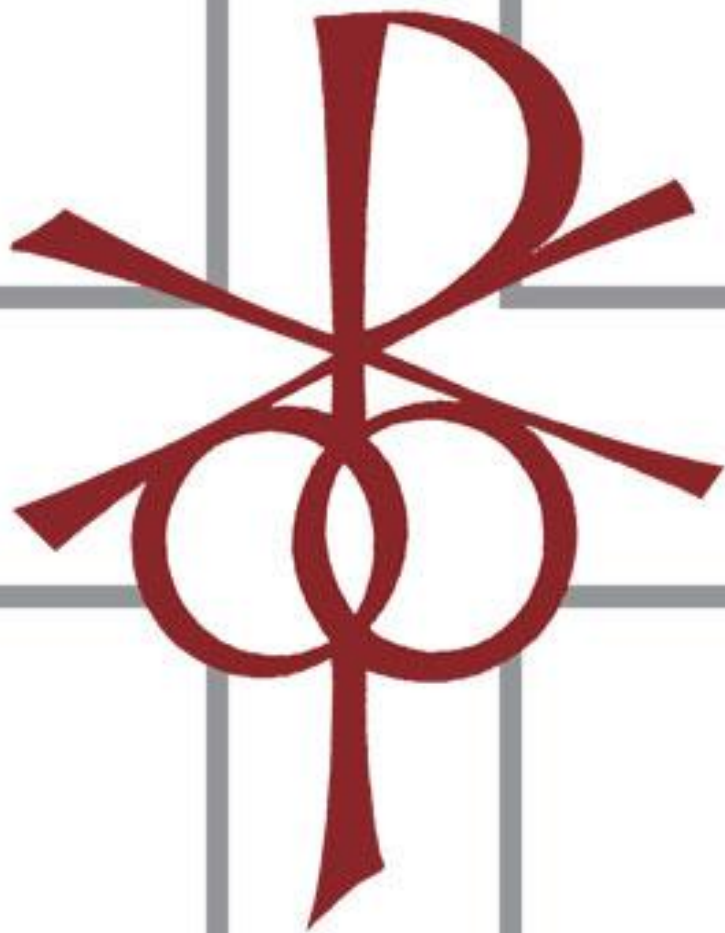


Roman glass painting from the 200-300s of Roman family.

## **1 Corinthians 7:12-16 [ESV]**

12 To the rest I say (**I, not the Lord**) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. 13 If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. 14 **For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.** 15 But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. 16 **For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?**

# *Theme: Our Relationships*



When Jesus told us God's purpose in marriage it was not only transformative for Christians but for the culture as well.