

Matthew 19:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

Analysis

Jesus answers the divorce question by appealing to creation: 'Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female?' This grounds marriage in God's creative design, not human custom or Mosaic concession. The phrase 'at the beginning' takes the discussion back to Genesis 1-2, before sin corrupted human relationships. Reformed theology sees here the foundational importance of creation ordinances—marriage between male and female is God's design from the beginning, not culturally constructed.

Historical Context

The Pharisees' question about divorce (19:3) was contentious, with rabbis debating grounds for divorce. The school of Shammai allowed divorce only for adultery; Hillel permitted it for any cause. Jesus bypasses this debate to establish marriage's original design. His appeal to 'the beginning' transcends Mosaic Law's accommodations to human hardness of heart (19:8).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does grounding marriage in creation affect your view of its nature and permanence?
2. What cultural marriage practices need evaluation against biblical creation design?
3. How should Christians respond to society's redefinition of marriage?

Interlinear Text

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτούς Οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε ὅτι
he which And he answered and said them not Have ye that
G3588 G1161 G611 G2036 G846 G3756 G314 G3754

ὁ ἐποίησεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἀρσεν καὶ θῆλυ
he which made them at the beginning male and female
G3588 G4160 G575 G746 G730 G2532 G2338

ἐποίησεν αὐτούς
made them
G4160 G846

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 2:23 (Parallel theme): And Adam said, 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 1:27 (Creation): So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Genesis 5:2 (Creation): Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

Malachi 2:15 (Parallel theme): And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

Luke 10:26 (Parallel theme): He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

Genesis 2:18 (Parallel theme): And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Matthew 22:31 (Parallel theme): But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

Matthew 12:3 (Parallel theme): But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him;

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