

Hello. /Today we will begin our first lecture on Christian ethics. /I am Professor Young Gil Yoo. /Is it ethical for Christians to abort an unwanted child? /Is it ethical to remove an artificial respirator from a dying patient?

/Is it ethical for Christians to be homosexual? /Is it ethical to have premarital sex with someone you love and plan to marry? /Is a Christian to never divorce under any circumstance?

/Is it ethical for Christians to give bribes or tell lies for a good cause? /Should a Christian be for or against capital punishment?

/Today, many Christians are looking to the church to answer these ethical questions. /Furthermore, many Christians, when faced with such ethical problems, act according to their own thoughts and judgment.

/The important thing is whether those decisions go hand in hand with God's will. /Because Christians are God's people, they must live differently from the people of the world.

/There was a rapid increase of sin among the Israelites during the time of the Judges. /This is due to the fact that there was no king during the period, so the people chose to act in a way that they thought was right.

/Whatever situation we face, we the people of God must act according to the will of God. /Therefore, this lecture on Christian ethics is very meaningful.

/Today, for our first lecture, I will discuss the issue of divorce for Christians. /All over the world today, divorce rates are drastically rising. /Many normal families are being torn apart overnight.

/Divorce incidents due to financial difficulties are frequently happening, and surprisingly, there is a rising divorce rate for older couples who have spent their whole lives together, those who are in the twilight years of their lives. /Also, there are many families that have not signed divorce papers, but are living in separation as if they are divorced.

/For this reason, it is normal for there to be one or two divorced people among our family and relatives. /I am visiting many countries for missions work.

/I have visited many countries including the United States of America, Canada, /China, Russia, / and Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in Central Asia. /Many countries are dealing with high divorce rates.

/Christians are not exempt from this reality. / There are growing divorce rates among Christians. / Therefore, many churches are perplexed about the divorce issue.

/ The marriage system was not constructed according to human will. /It is a system that

God created in the beginning. /Following this fact, divorce is an insult to God who created marriage, /and the Bible makes it clear that divorce is a violation of God's will of creation.

/Malachi 2:16 says, /"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith."

/However, some believers say, "If maintaining a marriage is damaging to one another, it is better to divorce." This is a sad thing.

/Some pastors claim that if a marriage is irreparable due to a spouse's violence and psychological abuse, /and if this condition continues after the best efforts to repair the relationship, it may be acceptable to divorce, under the conclusion that it will be difficult to restore the love and trust in the relationship.

/Due to this tendency, there are many cases in which couples choose to divorce over simple conflicts. /If we look in the Bible, God does allow divorce in some situations.

/Divorce is permitted in special cases, but God does not allow divorce over personality differences or circumstances that are difficult to handle.

/The Bible mentions two types of divorce that are permitted. /Therefore "Do not divorce" does not completely forbid a Christian from divorce. /Scripture mentions two cases in which divorce is allowed.

/First, divorce is permitted when a spouse commits adultery. /Deuteronomy 24:1-4 says, "If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house."

/Here, we have the words "certificate of divorce." /This shows that God is recognizing divorce as one type of reality. /However, it is not to say that because God mentions divorce certificates and recognize marriage as a reality a person must divorce a spouse who has committed adultery.

/It is important to properly understand the intentions and purposes of the law of divorce in the Bible. /The law God gives us does not recommend divorce nor does it legitimize it.

/On the contrary, the law is trying to prevent divorce in the Biblical setting where men could act as their minds wished. /In other words, God gave the law to protect women from being abandoned without any objective reason.

/The passage is saying if a woman becomes displeasing to a man, /he is to write a certificate of divorce and send her from his house. Nevertheless, the law's fundamental intent is not for a man to get rid of his wife with by giving her a certificate of divorce.

/In Matthew 19:3-9, /to test Jesus, the Pharisees ask Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?”

/To answer this question, Jesus refers to the message in Genesis. "Haven't you read," he replied, that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' 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'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

/Jesus is speaking of marriage’s fundamental importance—it is for two to be united, not separated. /The Pharisees responded, “Why then did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?”

/Then, Jesus responded by saying “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. /But it was not this way from the beginning.”

/Thus, divorce goes against the purpose and laws of creation, /but to reduce the damage coming from hardened hearts, Moses allowed divorce through official procedures.

/Second, there are instances when the Bible allows divorce. /Divorce is allowed when a believer, because of religious issues, is abandoned by a non-believer. /1 Corinthians 7:13-15 /speaks of the church in Corinth during Paul’s time, where there were married couples composed of one believer and one non-believer.

/When serious problems caused by different faiths arose, the believing spouse was forbidden from requesting or wanting divorce before the non-believing spouse.

/The reason is the non-believing spouse may receive the gospel and be saved through the believing spouse’s holiness. /Even today, when we look at Christians, we see one believing spouse saving the non-believing members of their family.

/Oftentimes, the wife accepts the gospel first and then saves her husband. /However, if the non-believing spouse requests divorce because of differing faiths, divorce is allowed.

/The non-believing husband might ask his wife to choose between Jesus and himself. /He may ask her to choose between the church and her family. The believer has to choose Jesus and her faith.

/Even if this situation occurs, the believer should work hard to prevent divorce and live together with the non-believing spouse. /Here, we are talking about the non-believer’s one-sided decision to divorce. The believer must not take the first action to request divorce.

/What must we do to prevent divorce? /Right now, there are people thinking about divorce, living their lives in pain. /However, divorce will not solve the problem, but it

will often bring along another problem.

/A long while ago, I met one family's housewife while evangelizing. /She had divorced her husband and was living alone. /As I started evangelizing, she started to cry.

/She was crying because it was very hard living alone. /She was facing realistic and economic difficulties, /she missed her children, /and she was viewed with negativity by society.

/People and families considering divorce must realize that these problems exist. /First, they must be conscious of the purpose of marriage. /Marriage's purpose is for two to be united and bring glory to God.

/Genesis 2:24 defines marriage as a man becoming one flesh with his wife. /Marriage's fundamental purpose is for two to be united, not separated. We must realize this and work to be one.

/Second, even if a spouse makes a mistake or is unfaithful, we must work to forgive and live together. /The Bible clearly says that even with a valid reason for divorce, Christians must try hard to forgive and accept their spouse.

/The reason for this is God, who built the family, wants to see it. /Jesus Christ forgave our sins and tolerated us, so we must think of Jesus and work to forgive our spouse.

/The Lord's Prayer says, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." Therefore, we must also forgive and tolerate our spouse.

/Sometimes, although it may not be easy, forgiveness is only possible when we seek the Holy Spirit's help. There will be a day when we experience the help that comes from the God who gives us peace.

/In some cases, a pastor may divorce. /This is a sad event. /We must forgive our spouse's sin and tolerate them. /The book of Hosea shows us God's love.

/A woman named Gomer lived happily in marriage with Hosea. /They had children and were happy. /One day, Gomer found another man and left the family.

/She abandoned her husband and children, living happily with another man. /At that time, God told Hosea to /bring back his wife and live with her.

/Truthfully, it is a difficult task for a prophet with a holy occupation to live with this type of woman. /When Hosea was troubled by God's for him command to marry Gomer, God spoke to him.

/When the Israelites leave God and worship idols, they are committing adultery in the same way Gomer did. To show that God will accept the Israelites, God told Hosea to take

Gomer as his wife.

/Then, without any complaints, Hosea took the woman and lived with her. /To those suffering with similar problems, God says this:

/"Even with your spouse's unfaithfulness and mistakes, forgive the person and live together."

/Third, to prevent divorce, believers must marry other believers. /2 Corinthians 6:14-16 says /"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?"

/When we study this message, we can see that marriage between a believer and a non-believer goes against Scripture. /God laid down this law to protect the families of believers.

/There are many differences between a believer and a non-believer. /A believer is a child of God. /A non-believer is of the devil, says the Bible. /a believer is born again through the Holy Spirit and the word of God, /but a believer's soul is dead.

/A believer hopes in and looks forward to the afterlife, /but a non-believer puts his hope in this world. /For example, a believer goes to church on the Sabbath. /A non-believer, because it is a day of rest, rests at home or seeks the world's entertainment.

/A few days ago, I received a phone call. /It was about performing ancestral rites. /It was about whether the person should prepare food and bow down to a dead ancestor or not.

/The wife of the man who called me was the only believer in the entire family. /When problems arose because of ancestral rites, he wanted to consult with me.

/If similar problems continue, the family faces conflicts, and the non-believing spouse will request divorce. /To prevent conflicts and divorce, a believer should marry another believer.

/Some people make excuses. They ask, "Isn't it better to marry a non-believer and lead the person to church? /As we saw in 2 Corinthians 6:14, the Bible forbids marriage with a non-believer.

/There is something even more important. /If the non-believing spouse is not chosen by God, the person will never believe in Jesus. /Therefore, people with thoughts of converting their non-believing spouse must be aware of this fact.

/Also, people must put God's joy as their priority in marriage, not external environments. Fourth, **to prevent divorce**, each partner must respect and love one another.

/Many families are in danger of divorce because of self-centeredness. They are accustomed to the selfishness of not putting their spouse first. 2 Timothy says this.

/In the end, people will be lovers of themselves. /By “lovers of themselves,” we mean living in self-centeredness. /The reason for divorce today is oftentimes having a self-centered mentality.

/If I am happy, I do not need to consider my spouse. /If I am happy, my parents or children do not matter. /This kind of selfishness encourages divorce. /Real love is not about one’s self, but about others.

/1 Corinthians 13:5 says, /“love is not self-seeking. /Authentic love puts others first. /A husband puts his wife before him, and a wife puts her husband before her. This is true love.

/Parents sacrifice for their children because they love them. /The message also says, “love is not easily angered. /There may be times of conflict, but we must hold our anger with a loving heart.

/1 Corinthians 13 says that love is patient. /Two people who come from different backgrounds and environments are bound to clash.

/When this happens, we can prevent divorce by understanding each other. /God loves us, and he has been patient with us until now. /He is patient because he loves us.

/Love is patient. /It can defeat any situation. /We, Christians, must be patient in marriage with love, and we must make God happy.

/This ends our first lecture on Christian ethics. /Thank you.