**Do NOT Remove by Scott Miller**

My car’s license plate renewal sticker came recently. As I was putting it on top of the other stickers from prior years, it reminded me that this sticker, once applied, cannot be removed without being ruined. I’m sure they designed it this way so that it couldn’t be stolen from one vehicle and put on a different one. Knowing this to be the case, I am more careful to put it on correctly.

**Matthew 19.3-6**

*And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?” He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 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’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”*

God designed marriage to be for life. What He “has joined together” was never intended to be separated by man. We live in a society of “no fault” divorce, where a marriage commitment lasts only as long as the husband and wife are both happy, and there is a denial of the permanent damage caused by the breaking of the marriage union. It is impossible to divorce and not have damage. The intimacy and trust that God made to be a part of the marriage union is irreparably damaged. Children whose parents divorce may deal with feelings of rejection and even guilt as they imagine they are somehow at fault for their parents’ decision.

Much like the sticker that cannot be removed without being destroyed, divorce cannot happen without doing damage. For the unmarried, great care must be given when choosing a spouse. Those of us who are married must understand that divorce must be an absolute last resort even if it is for a scripturally permissible reason. Spouses must make every effort to address the issues that exist between them with the goal of reconciliation. If such efforts are ineffective, then we must humbly seek wise counsel from other mature Christians.

**Malachi 2.14-16**

*But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union?And what was the one God seeking?Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. “For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the Lord, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the Lord of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.”*

May God help us to be faithful in our promises, especially in the covenant of marriage. Let us see the damage that will certainly come from discarding one’s commitment to a spouse. Let us reject the world’s view that divorce is a harmless option. We must commit to serving God in our marriages and seek the holiness and godly offspring He desires. May we bring God glory rather than shame in our marriages and draw closer to each other in holiness as we faithfully serve our spouses as Christ commands.