

Audience 1

Pope John Paul starts his entire theology by taking us back to “the beginning, by referring to Jesus’ discussion with the Pharisees about divorce. They asked him if it was lawful under any circumstance to allow divorce. Jesus’ replied that in the beginning God made man male and female, and “for this reason” a man shall leave his parents and be “joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”. Jesus continued “What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.” They pointed out to him that Moses had allowed divorce. Christ pointed out that Moses allowed it because of “their hardness of heart”, but “in the beginning, it was not so.” He did not get into a discussion on the legalities of divorce, but referred twice to “the beginning” to point out that Genesis and scripture was the laws to be followed, and not the man made legal systems.

When Christ added the words “So they are no longer two but one flesh. What God has joined together, let no man put asunder” to the quotation from Genesis, he is stressing the indissolubility of marriage, and the error of divorce, as the very Word of God as expressed in the earliest scriptures He was also casting new light on “the one flesh union”. By stressing “in the beginning” twice, Christ is telling us to look at the way man was created in Genesis as male and female, and how they were created in God’s image, to properly understand the words of Genesis.